



Contacts: Ceres Solutions | David Smith | 260-571-6990 | [davidsmith@ceres.coop](mailto:davidsmith@ceres.coop)

CountryMark | Belinda Puetz | 317-374-9042 | [belinda.puetz@countrymark.com](mailto:belinda.puetz@countrymark.com)

## **CountryMark, Ceres Solutions and USDA Bring E15 to Rensselaer, Indiana**

**RENSELAEER, Indiana – November 13, 2020** – Jasper County Indiana will soon have its first E15 fueling station thanks to efforts from two farmer-owned cooperatives and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

While most conventional gasoline today contains a 10 percent blend of ethanol, a 15 percent blend of ethanol brings to driving consumers improved engine performance, reduced emissions and better fuel efficiency.

“As we all look to reduce our environmental footprint, E15 is a transportation fuel we can truly feel good about,” said **Jeff Troike**, the President and CEO of Ceres Solutions Cooperative, a farmer-owned company with headquarters in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

Ceres Solutions owns the CountryMark-branded station on North McKinley Avenue in Rensselaer, Indiana, where the new fuel will be made available later this year. Bringing E15 to the public requires new fuel dispensers and blender pumps that draw fuel from two underground tanks – one containing a 10 percent blend of ethanol and the other containing an 85 blend of ethanol.

“With these two underground fuel tanks and the blender pumps we’ve ordered, drivers will be able to choose a 10, 15 or 85 percent blend of ethanol,” said Troike.

The EPA has provided the following usage approvals for ethanol-blended fuel:

- E10 is approved for use in cars, light-duty trucks and SUVs post-1986.
- E15 is approved for use in all 2001 and newer cars, SUVs, and light-duty trucks.
- E85 is approved for use in flex fuel vehicles.

CountryMark, the fuel supplier to this station, and the USDA felt so strongly about bringing this higher octane fuel to the public that they both offered this year competitive grants to assist station owners with their E15 infrastructure costs. Ceres Solutions was awarded separate grants from the USDA and CountryMark that would cover their E15 infrastructure costs, which have been estimated at just over \$111,000.

“We believe high octane fuels are the future for transportation fuels in the United States,” said **Matt Smorch**, CountryMark’s President and CEO. CountryMark is a farmer-owned oil exploration, production, refining and marketing company with headquarters in Indianapolis.

“If we come together now to create higher-octane fuels, the American public will get more efficient vehicles in the most cost-effective manner possible,” said Smorch. “With this move in American energy policy, emission reductions will equal that of putting over 700,000 electric vehicles on the road each year delivering the environmental, economic and security goals that will make our country the envy of all others. It’s time to capitalize on America’s inherent advantages – abundant corn production, affordable petroleum products and the innovative minds of our American workforce.”

The U.S. Department of Agriculture also sees ethanol as a great American resource.

“High octane gasoline is the answer,” said Michael Dora, Indiana’s Director of USDA Rural Development. “Together, we can bring to the driving public more ethanol-blend options, like what Ceres Solutions is offering at this station. High octane gasoline will provide cleaner energy for American families while supporting our great American farming communities and local American refiners like CountryMark.”

Both CountryMark and Ceres Solutions are members of South Shores Clean Cities, one of nearly 100 U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities coalitions, which work to advance alternative fuels, alternative fuel vehicles and sustainable vehicle technologies. The efforts of these coalitions reduce the nation’s dependence on imported oil, improve air quality, support local jobs, drive economic development and promote improved quality of life.

“South Shore Clean Cities was thrilled to write the successful grant application to the USDA to help support this project,” said Carl Lisek, executive director of South Shore Clean Cities. “CountryMark and Ceres Solutions are both shining examples of how supporting sustainable transportation fuels and their infrastructure can help diversify fuel offerings for customers and increase earning potential while supporting domestic fuels. We congratulate them on this accomplishment and encourage others to follow their lead.”

The USDA awarded this year through its [Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program \(HBIIIP\)](#) \$22 million and those investments are expected to increase ethanol demand by nearly 150 million gallons annually.

Two of the USDA grants went to Indiana fuel retailers – Ceres Solutions for their station in Rensselaer, Indiana; and Harvest Land Co-op, which will be upgrading this winter it’s Greenville, Ohio, station to include E15. Harvest Land Co-op is headquartered in Richmond, Indiana.