**Directions: Read the article and answer the questions in COMPLETE SENTENCES.**

As Biofuel Demand Grows, So Do Guatemala’s Hunger Pangs

By [ELISABETH ROSENTHAL](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/r/elisabeth_rosenthal/index.html)

The New York Times

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GUATEMALA CITY — In the tiny tortillerias of this city, people complain ceaselessly *(without stop or pause)* about the high price of corn. Just three years ago, one quetzal — about 15 cents — bought eight tortillas; today it buys only four. And eggs have tripled in price because chickens eat corn feed.

Recent laws in the United States and Europe that mandate *(to order or require)* the increasing use of biofuel in cars have had far-flung ripple effects, economists say, as land once devoted to growing food for humans is now sometimes more profitably used for churning out *(producing)* vehicle fuel.

In a globalized world, the expansion of the biofuels industry has contributed to spikes *(rises)* in food prices and a shortage of land for food-based agriculture in poor corners of Asia, Africa and Latin America because the raw material is grown wherever it is cheapest.

In a country where [most families must spend](http://www.wfp.org/content/country-programme-guatemala) about two thirds of their income on food, “the average Guatemalan is now hungrier because of biofuel development,” said Katja Winkler, a researcher at [Idear](http://idear.congcoop.org.gt/iquienes-somos), a Guatemalan nonprofit organization that studies rural issues. Roughly 50 percent of the nation’s children are chronically malnourished *(suffering from malnutrition)*, the fourth-highest rate in the world, according to the United Nations.

The American renewable fuel standard mandates that an increasing volume of biofuel be blended into the nation’s vehicle fuel supply each year to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels and to bolster *(support or strengthen)* the nation’s energy security. Similarly, by 2020, transportation fuels in Europe will have to contain 10 percent biofuel.

But many worry that Guatemala’s poor are already suffering from the diversion of food to fuel. “There are pros and cons to biofuel, but not here,” said Misael Gonzáles of C.U.C., a labor union for Guatemala’s farmers. “These people don’t have enough to eat. They need food. They need land. They can’t eat biofuel, and they don’t drive cars.”

1) How has the growth of the biofuel industry affected people in Guatemala?

**In Defense of Biofuels**

By [Robert Zubrin](http://www.thenewatlantis.com/authors/robert-zubrin)

The New Atlantis

2008

Fueling Fears About Food

Hoping to reduce at least in some small way their need for oil, several countries have adopted energy policies requiring that a percentage of their national fuel supplies consist of biofuels. The European Union, for instance, is aiming to have biofuels make up 10 percent of its vehicle fuel supply by the year 2020. In the United States, legislation in 2005 and 2007 set mandates for ethanol in the nation’s fuel mix; the current plan is to ramp up *(increase)* biofuels production until 36 billion gallons are mixed into the nation’s fuel supply by 2022.

Unsurprisingly, the result of these mandates has been the rapid expansion of the nation’s ethanol industry. The United States, which produced 3 billion gallons of ethanol in 2002, grew its production to 8 billion gallons in 2007, replacing some 5 percent of our gasoline supply. But while this seems like it would be cause for celebration — with enterprising and innovative American farmers helping to reduce our oil usage — some critics have recently alleged *(said without proof)* that the world’s biofuels programs, especially the U.S. corn ethanol effort, are starving poor people around the world by reducing supply and driving up food prices.

The problem is, that’s completely untrue.

Here are the facts. In the last five years, despite the nearly threefold growth of the corn ethanol industry — actually, because of it — the amount of corn grown in the United States has vastly *(greatly)* increased. The U.S. corn crop grew by 45 percent, the production of distillers grain (a high-value animal feed made from the protein saved from the corn used for ethanol) quadrupled, and the net U.S. corn production of food for humans and feed for animals increased 34 percent.

Contrary to claims that farmers have cut other crops to grow more corn, U.S. soybean plantings this year are expected to be up 18 percent and wheat plantings up 6 percent. U.S. farm exports are up 23 percent over last year. America is clearly doing its share in feeding the world.

So while it is true that there is now much more corn being used for ethanol than ever before, there is also much more total corn than ever before, including much more for food and feed than ever before, and still plenty of land, and room for implementation of improved methods to grow yet more.

2) What evidence does the author present that contradicts *(goes against)* the claim that ethanol is reducing the world’s food supply?

But if biofuels aren’t to blame for the rising food prices, what is?

But the two primary reasons for higher food prices are, first, higher demand, and second, higher fuel prices. The increased global demand for food ought to be seen as a very good thing: it represents hundreds of millions of people, especially in China and India, rising out of poverty and moving to more calorie-rich diets. Escalating *(increase rapidly)* fuel prices, however, are not good news: they drive up the cost of everything we eat.

3) According to Zubrin, why are food prices rising?

And, in this regard, biofuels have already done more good than harm to the world’s poor. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, “Global production of biofuels is rising annually by the equivalent of about 300,000 barrels of oil a day. That goes a long way toward meeting the growing demand for oil, which last year rose by about 900,000 barrels a day.” The paper cites a Merrill Lynch analyst who “says that oil and gasoline prices would be about 15 percent higher if biofuel producers weren’t increasing their output.” So even though the world’s biofuels industry is still just aborning *(being born or produced)*, it has already begun to bring down oil prices.

4) What evidence does Zurbin cite that claims that biofuels have brought down oil prices?