

## TESTIMONY OF RICHARD COCHRAN

Distinguished Senators, Representatives, Honored Guests, Press and Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Richard Cochran of Ladora Iowa, owner and operator of I-80 Custom Feedlot with a one time capacity of 900 head. Beside the cattle operation we also feed 1000 hogs a year and have approx 200 chickens. In addition to the livestock, we farm 450 acres of row crops.

To accomplish this I have the help of my wife, Joyce. We are a Mom and Pop operation with no hired help. My farming back ground and interest in the beef industry began 50+ years ago in high school, starting with FFA and 4-H. My livelihood is also my life.

In these 50 + years, I have seen a lot of changes in the beef and hog industry and in crop production. My generation has gone from grinding ear corn and feeding alfalfa hay to short legged, blocky, fat laden animals that would top out the market from 950 lbs. to 1050 lbs. We have progressed to extremes with long legged, lean, Chiania type cattle back to a crossbred English breed to exotic breeds. These extremes have gotten the next generation of cattle feeders and the cattle industry to where it is today.

In the 1950's and 60's, stilbestrol came along to increase the rate of gain on cattle but was later removed from the market for use in cattle feed.

The later 1960's and 1970's we saw the use of haylage in cattle rations to reduce the cost of gain but then we got cheap corn, so that was not economical to use.

Over the years, our seed stock producers have given us the genetics to produce beef that is lean and yet well marbled, juicy and tender. The All American meat we have all come to love!

But all the changes over the years in the beef industry are now paled in comparison to the breakthrough we are experiencing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With the Bio-Fuel industry explosion, we have come to the use of distillers grain, sweet corn gluten, corn solubles, dried, semi dried and dried pelleted gluten.

In my operation, I have experienced all of these cycles in feeding. For the last 10 to 12 yrs, I have fed with wet gluten, distillers grain and just recently have begun using corn solubles also known as corn syrup.

At the present time we are running an experiment in our feedlot. That is, using corn products in our rations mixed at a rate of 2 lbs of corn, 12.5 lbs of corn syrup, 8 lbs of sweet corn gluten, 5 lbs of dry hay, 8 lbs of soy hulls, ½ lb of mineral and free choice of salt. Since starting these rations, the cattle have gained well but we will not know the final results until the cattle are harvested, so at that time, we will see the results of the grade and yield. Possibly and most importantly by using this ration, the cost of our production of quality meat has been reduced. However, we will not see the final results until harvest.

Even with these attributes, a few problems have been discovered:

1. Transportation of wet products is costly with fuel at an all time high of \$3.00+ per gallon. Water is heavy so weight and distance are a consideration.
2. Storage can be an issue if the product is not used rapidly. In hot weather, the product has a short shelf life. In my particular operation this has not been an issue because I use a truckload or 17 tons in approx. 3 days, eliminating the chance of spoilage. In cold weather, the corn solubles will set up solid so tanks, pipes, pumps and lines must be insulated if you plan to use solubles in freezing temperature.
3. Sulfur content can be a problem. Excessive Sulfur can cause a variety of complications in cattle starting with blindness, they then can also loose the ability to walk steady and will eventually go down if these conditions are not caught and treated in the early stages. Treatment of an injection of Thiamine in the blood stream will usually clear up these conditions.

Some plants use Sulfur dioxide in production of these products, some do not. It just depends on the method of operation.

4. Moisture levels vary greatly at some plants. With all the new plants coming on line, it takes each one time to fine tune the process. This can cause variation in moisture levels.

But even with these problems, the products can and should be used in the beef and dairy industry. It lowers the cost of gain, increases the palatability of the ration, and increases weight gain. The benefits help both the cattle industry and encourages growth in the Bio Fuels industry in the state of Iowa.

The use of these products, in my estimation, will bring cattle feeding back to Iowa where the products are readily accessible. Not only the cattle feeding but also the cow-calf aspect of the industry which will allow cows to be wintered on corn stalks, distillers grain and corn syrup.

So in closing, ladies and gentleman, you can see I live and breathe the livestock industry. If only I could turn back time, to be able to enjoy and participate in the next few years of ground breaking progress in the beef industry.

Thank you for your time and interest. I hope I have given you some insight into Bio Fuels and the by-products segment of todays agriculture.

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