

Acalanes Students Challenge the Community on Global Warming

By Sophie Braccini

When they're passionate, young people have a way of sharing their enthusiasm that's quite powerful. Our youth want to challenge us to act today to fight against global warming. On Earth Day, Acalanes High School students presented the results of a year of study and research on the subject. According to seniors Kennan Cronen and Jeremy Wolff, the question is no longer whether global warming is happening, but what can we do to prevent a global catastrophe. To convince us and propose solutions, the Acalanes students led by teachers Janet Thomas and Thomas McNamara, invited Professor Dan Kammen, of UC Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group, to speak on the subject.

THE PROBLEM WITH GASOLINE IS NOT SUPPLY, IT'S POLLUTION

Professor Kammen presented his research and understanding of the problem. For the scientist, transportation is the single most important factor influencing carbon levels in our atmosphere. It's clear that we have to find alternatives to burning gasoline; not because we have less and less fossil fuel at our disposal but because of the overwhelming evidence that emission of CO2 is creating a future that threatens us and our children.

CALIFORNIA TAKES THE LEAD

Kammen emphasized the fact that even though the United States represents only 5% of the world's population, it consumes 25% of the world's energy. According to Kammen, the Federal Government is not doing enough to address the problem. On the other hand California's Governor is providing leadership by setting a goal of reducing CO2 emissions before 2050. Other forward looking States are following California's leadership on this issue.

NOT ALL ETHANOLS ARE CREATED EQUAL

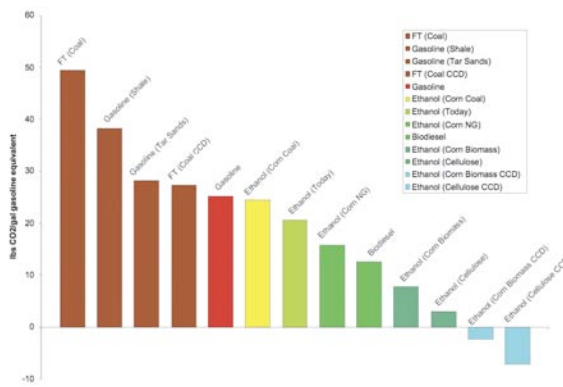
Kammen conducts research on the use of alternatives fuels. While ethanol has carried the hopes of many, he explains that not all ethanols are created equal. Ethanol derived from corn produces as much CO2 as gasoline because of the way we subsidize farmers. Because they are encouraged to use more water and pesticides, that source of energy is not the solution. What Kammen recommends is cellulose ethanol, made from wood. Obviously, it's harder to break down wood than corn to make a usable sugar, but research shows it has less impact on the air we breathe, and provides the benefit of absorbing CO2.

LOCAL SCIENTISTS TO LEAD WORLD RESEARCH

UC Berkeley will benefit from the biggest grant ever made by a private company to a number of research institutions. BP is providing a grant of 500 million dollar to research safe alternative fuel solutions. That's a huge responsibility layed on the

UC's scientific community. Polar bears are rallying in the hope the fruits of these researches will be out sooner than later.

An Alternative Fuel is Not Necessarily a Low-Carbon Fuel, but it can be



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