

# Tips for Creating a Great Video

## Research

The Field to Fuel video contest promotes the benefits of ethanol, so you'll need to know a little bit about the industry to get started. The judges can tell who knows their stuff, so make use of the following links:

- [www.ethanol.nebraska.gov](http://www.ethanol.nebraska.gov)
- [www.americanethanolne.org](http://www.americanethanolne.org)
- [www.growthenergy.org](http://www.growthenergy.org)
- [www.ethanolrfa.org](http://www.ethanolrfa.org)

**TEACHERS:** Nebraska Ethanol Board staff is happy to speak to your class to help them learn more about ethanol. Depending on your classroom locations, we can skype or visit in person.

## Plan, Prepare, & Practice

It's rare to produce a great video on the first take. A little preparation can make the process run a little more smoothly.

- Pick a team. You will need a director (someone who calls the shots), video producer (oversees writing of the script and editing of the video), someone to film, talent, and possibly a crew member who holds cue cards and/or audio. These roles might overlap but it's good to identify whose talents might work best for each job before beginning production.
- Define your audience. Is your video speaking to fellow students, farmers, parents, drivers, fuel retailers, scientists, ethanol producers, or who? Writing with specific groups in mind allows you to tell an authentic and relatable story.
- Clarify your message. Ethanol is made up of many moving parts. Don't try to cram everything in to two minutes. Pick a topic so the point you are trying to make is clear to your audience.
- Write (and revise) a script as a team. Though it's the video producer's role to sign off on the final script, it's important to get the whole teams input on the messaging. **Pro tip:** *The average attention span is just 8.5 seconds. Make your point early in the video to hold the audience's attention.*
- Create a storyboard. This is simply a sketch of the sequence or steps you plan to film to make the story flow.
- Film several "takes" before putting together your final video.
  - Video cameras, smartphones, computers...use the tools you have available. Just be sure you are able to send the entry on a DVD, flash drive or an unlisted YouTube link.

- Practice your lines ahead of time or use large cue cards instead of reading your lines off a piece of paper.
- Check for grammatical and speaking errors.
- Give yourself a few seconds of pause after each “take” to make editing easier.
- Speak loudly! If possible, use a microphone or lapel to record audio along with your video.

### **Be Creative and Have Fun!**

Creativity will make your videos stand out. Our judges like videos that are original and haven't been seen before. The contest is all about educating others about renewable fuels in a fun way – these types of videos are the most fun to watch.

### **Need Help Picking a Topic?**

- Check out the links above, search the internet, or see some of the current trends in ethanol below:
  - Fill up your gas tank with E-15, which is now available year-round.
  - Encourage gas station owners to sell higher ethanol blends.
  - Explain why ethanol is great for the environment.
  - Educate young drivers on how to select ethanol at the pump.
  - Share with your audience the hard work farmers and ethanol producers do to produce ethanol.
  - Explain the many ways field corn is used (ethanol, livestock feed, plastics, etc.)
  - No idea is a bad one. Be creative!

### **Review the Rules**

Review the contest overview document for a full listing of contest rules and guidelines. In addition, an entry form is required for each video participant.

### **Video Submission**

If you are mailing a DVD of your video, ensure it is in the mail BEFORE the deadline. This year's deadline is **Jan. 31, 2020**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

### **Questions? Ask!**

If you have questions about contest guidelines, rules, research or anything else, don't hesitate to contact Jessica Sodeke at 402-471-2941 or [Jessica.sodeke@nebraska.gov](mailto:Jessica.sodeke@nebraska.gov).