

**Subject:** Energy and Fertilizer Costs Rising

**Story summary:** Energy costs are putting upward pressure on other farming inputs, such as fertilizer made from natural gas. Price and availability become question marks.

**TRT:** 1:51

**Suggested lead:** Higher energy costs this season mean more to farmers than just a higher fuel bill. Tom Steever reports.

**Suggested supers:** Jon Doggett  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
@ :09

Dan Kelley  
Growmark, Inc. Chairman  
@ :27

Jerry Slocum  
Tate County, Mississippi farmer  
@ :54

Bill Olthoff  
Kankakee County, Illinois farmer  
@ 1:13

Tom Steever Reporting  
@ 1:25

**Energy, Fertilizer Costs Rise**  
**Tom Steever reporting**  
**March 22, 2001**

Approaching tractor w/fertilizer applicator	VO/ ON THE THRESHOLD OF SPRING FIELDWORK FARMERS ARE HAVING TO DIG DEEPER IN THEIR POCKETS BECAUSE OF HIGHER ENERGY COSTS.
<b>Jon Doggett</b> <b>American Farm Bureau Federation</b>	SOT/ “Everything from the fertilizer we use to natural gas to run pumps, natural gas to heat greenhouses, energy to run tractors and combines.”
Tractor/applicator passes	VO/ FARMING IS AN ENERGY INTENSIVE BUSINESS. FOR INSTANCE, THE NITROGEN IN FERTILIZER IS MADE FROM NATURAL GAS.
<b>Dan Kelley</b> <b>Growmark, Inc. Chairman</b>	SOT/ “For every dollar increase in natural gas prices, anhydrous ammonia goes up thirty-four dollars per ton.”
Ammonia trucks  Z-out from bare ground	VO/ GROWMARK’S SUPPLIER CONTINUED PRODUCING NITROGEN EVEN THOUGH THEY COULD HAVE MADE A BIGGER PROFIT RESELLING THEIR NATURAL GAS ON THE OPEN MARKET. BUT A WARM OCTOBER LED TO CHANGES IN FALL APPLICATION PLANS.
Dan Kelley sot	SOT/ “Well, the demand for nitrogen this spring will be higher than it has historically, because we did not have as much applied last fall.”

<p><b>Jerry Slocum</b>  <b>Tate County, Mississippi farmer</b></p>	<p>SOT/          “So I sit there and scratch my head; I’ve got enough to side-dress wheat and I’ve got enough to plant and side-dress about the corn seed I’ve ordered so, you know, I’m not sure I’m going to plant any more corn than that.”</p>
<p>z-out from Bill Olthoff at computer           c/u of computer screen</p>	<p>VO/          WHILE MOST FARMERS PRE-PAY FOR THEIR FERTILIZER, THE PRICES WERE ALREADY ELEVATED WHEN THE TIME CAME TO LOCK THEM IN.</p>
<p><b>Bill Olthoff</b>  <b>Kankakee County, Illinois farmer</b></p>	<p>SOT/          “They would not guarantee us a price for anhydrous. And so that was difficult, so I locked in a price on 28% nitrogen, which is higher than normal but not to the extent that anhydrous was.”</p>
<p>Irrigation pump           Fuel nozzle           z-out of anhydrous tanks</p>	<p>VO/          FROM ELECTRICITY, TO FUEL, TO FERTILIZER, FARMERS WONDER WHAT THE INPUT COST OF ENERGY WILL DO TO THEIR BOTTOM LINE.</p>
<p>Olthoff sot           Olthoff walking</p>	<p>SOT/          “All those things add to higher costs for us and our prices aren’t going to help us recoup that.”</p>
	<p>VO/          AND IT’S A BIG BILL. FARMER’S ENERGY RELATED COSTS ARE EXPECTED TO RISE THIS YEAR BY THREE BILLION DOLLARS. I’M TOM STEEVER.</p>