

Subject: Planting Costs Continue to Grow for Farmers

Story Summary: It's as certain as spring's arrival. Farmers are out planting their crops. Unfortunately higher energy costs are hitting farmers in the wallet for fuel and fertilizer.

TRT: 1:46

Suggested Lead: Most farmers will admit you've got to be a bit of a gambler in their profession. High energy costs are making spring planting an even bigger gamble this year. Johnna Miller reports.

Suggested Supers:

- Lettsville, LA
@ :02
- Marty Gospard
Louisiana Farmer
@ :10
- Troy Bredencamp
AFBF Energy Specialist
@ 1:06
- Johnna Miller
Reporting
@ 1:36

Anchor Tag: The House has passed its version of a comprehensive energy bill. The Senate is still working on its version.

Spring Planting Costs Continue to Grow for Farmers
Johnna Miller Reporting
April 24, 2003

Tractor planting	VO/ IT'S BECOMING ALMOST AS CERTAIN AS THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING. THE COST OF PLANTING CROPS CONTINUES TO GROW.
Marty Gospard Louisiana Farmer	SOT/ OUR INPUTS INCREASE EVERY YEAR AND THE PRICES WE RECEIVE FOR OUR GRAIN JUST DOESN'T GO UP IN PROPORTION.
Gospard and son walking in field Tractor	VO/ PLANTING TIME IS THE MOST CRUCIAL TIME OF YEAR FOR THOUSANDS OF CROP PRODUCERS LIKE LOUISIANA FARMER MARTY GOSPARD. SUCCESS NOW IS THE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR WHOLE YEAR. THAT MEANS COOPERATION BY MOTHER NATURE AND A LOT OF HARD WORK.
Gospard SOT	SOT/ I'D GUESS, ABOUT 75 PERCENT OF YOUR EXPENSES ARE RIGHT NOW IN THE SPRING PLANTING, GETTING YOUR LAND SHAPED UP AND FIXED UP AND PLANTED AND FERTILIZED.

<p>Guy fueling tractor</p> <p>Closeup of fueling</p> <p>Fertilizer being applied to field</p>	<p>VO/ BUT THIS YEAR PLANTING IS A MORE EXPENSIVE GAMBLE. THE COST OF DIESEL FUEL TO RUN FARM EQUIPMENT IS UP 30 PERCENT. FERTILIZER COSTS ARE UP THE SAME AMOUNT, THANKS TO A PRICE JUMP IN NATURAL GAS, THE PRIMARY COMPONENT OF MOST FERTILIZER.</p>
<p>Gospard SOT</p>	<p>SOT/ WHEN THE FUEL PRICES GO UP AND A TRUCKING COMPANY HAS TO PAY MORE FOR FUEL, THEY CAN ALWAYS PASS IT ON TO THE CONSUMER. WELL, THE FARMER CAN'T. HE HAS TO ABSORB IT.</p>
<p>Troy Bredenkamp AFBF Energy Specialist</p>	<p>SOT/ CONSERVATIVELY WE HAVE FIGURED THAT, DEPENDING ON WHERE THESE PRICES HIT THIS SPRING, U.S. AGRICULTURE WILL BE SPENDING ONE TO TWO BILLION DOLLARS MORE THIS YEAR THAN LAST YEAR JUST TO GET A CROP IN THE GROUND THIS SPRING.</p>
<p>Capitol</p>	<p>VO/ COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY LEGISLATION BEING DEBATED BY CONGRESS COULD HELP THE SITUATION.</p>
<p>Bredenkamp SOT</p>	<p>SOT/ WE WOULDN'T SEE THESE MASSIVE SWINGS UP AND DOWN WHEN WE HAVE A MORE SECURE AND RELIABLE DOMESTIC SUPPLY FOR THOSE PRODUCTS.</p>

<p>Tractor starting on new row</p> <p>Johnna Miller Reporting</p>	<p>VO/ BUT IN THE MEANTIME, THERE'S A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE GROWING FOOD AND FIBER FOR THE WORLD. IN LETTSVILLE, LOUISIANA, I'M JOHNNA MILLER.</p>
	<p>IN LETTSVILLE, LOUISIANA, I'M JOHNNA MILLER FOR U.S. FARM REPORT.</p>
	<p>IN LETTSVILLE, LOUISIANA, I'M JOHNNA MILLER REPORTING FOR AG DAY.</p>