

Press release

CropEnergies pilot project in Mannheim proves: Super E20 works!

Mannheim, 28 October 2025 – In October 2023, Germany's first public E20 filling station opened in Mannheim. The fuel on offer was developed by Mannheim-based CropEnergies AG. The demo fleet shows that E20 works perfectly well in everyday use.

Logistics

E20 can be used entirely within the existing infrastructure. No additional investment is necessary. The fuel is blended and delivered by the mineral oil partner in the same way as Super E10. Only the blending ratio needs to be adjusted at the fuel depot. According to the operator of the Oktan filling station in Mannheim, which offers the fuel, no technical changes to the filling station infrastructure were necessary. Only the responsible authorities were comprehensively informed about the change of fuel type at the E 20 filling station, without any legal obligation on the part of the operator.

Technical compatibility

A total of over 80 vehicles from different manufacturers are taking part in the demonstration. Around 50 of these vehicles regularly fill up with E20 fuel. While BMW and Mercedes have already approved almost all modern engines for E20, Volkswagen AG vehicles are undergoing a so-called extension of use, which is documented in writing within the Volkswagen Group in order to legally cover the factors of warranty/guarantee and leasing. Since the cars do not always refuel at E20 filling stations, some of the fleet is refuelled with a mixture of E5 to E20. After approximately 35,000 litres of E20 to date, there have been no problems whatsoever. Feedback from colleagues has been overwhelmingly positive: subjective impressions include "more power", "smoother running" and "no noticeable increase in fuel consumption". Only one colleague reports minimally higher consumption. As in test bench and real driving emission tests, it became clear that the better the engine control system adapts to the actual advantages of the ethanol content in terms of its combustion properties, the more the positive aspects come into play.

Sustainability

By the end of August 2025, the vehicle fleets of Südzucker, BENEOL and CropEnergies had saved 14,489.6 kg of CO₂ by refuelling at the E20 filling station in Mannheim compared to using purely fossil-based petrol. The calculation is possible because the exact ethanol content and greenhouse gas (GHG) savings of the ethanol used were known for each delivery. On average, these were 15 per cent. For the future, the aim is to communicate the CO₂ savings transparently to end customers.

Conclusion

E20 works in everyday life! More modern vehicles can handle the fuel without any problems, the existing infrastructure can be used, and GHG savings are doubled compared to E10. It is currently the most cost-effective way to involve petrol engines in climate protection. Particularly in view of the EU-wide CO₂ pricing ('ETS 2') from 2027, politicians must open up ways for motorists to run their vehicles on fuels with lower CO₂ emissions and which are therefore cheaper. The widespread availability of E20 could thus make an important contribution to the defossilisation of the transport sector. This would require, among other things, an amendment to the EU Fuel Quality Directive. In addition, European ethanol makes us less dependent on fossil fuel imports, creates jobs in rural areas and reduces soy imports from South America, for example, thanks to the protein-rich animal feed produced during ethanol production.

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CropEnergies AG

Sustainable, renewable products from biomass – that's what CropEnergies stands for.

Founded in 2006, the Mannheim-based group of companies offers its partners sustainable products with certified greenhouse gas savings. The aim is to combine economic success with climate protection and ensure that fossil carbon remains in the ground permanently.

The CropEnergies Group's biorefineries in Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom and France operate a circular economy and utilise all raw material components: regionally grown raw materials and residual and waste materials are used to produce alcohol (ethanol), neutral alcohol, biogenic carbon dioxide and protein-rich food and feed – a regional alternative to protein imports from overseas. Ethanol is used, among other things, as a climate-friendly petrol substitute, as it reduces CO₂ emissions across the entire value chain by an average of over 70 per cent compared to fossil fuels.

In future, CropEnergies aims to contribute to the defossilisation of the chemical industry with ethanol-based ethyl acetate produced in an almost 100 per cent CO₂-neutral process.

CropEnergies is a member of the Südzucker Group and employs over 500 people.

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