

## sugarbeets

Hybrid sugarbeets are being designed for use as an [ethanol](#) fuel [feedstock](#). To optimize their performance, these hybrids are designed to produce a maximal amount of sugar.

One of the appeals of producing these hybrids is their economic benefit: the hybrids, unlike traditional sugarbeets, do not need to be optimized for table top use.

In fact, the hybrids should produce higher fermentable sugars for higher fuel ethanol output.

[Syngenta](#), a global leader in sugarbeet seed production, has conveyed interest in testing six independent cultivars from existing hybrid programs for application in North Carolina across the state's adaptive acreage.

Sugarbeets are not a typical North Carolina crop, though the new tropical varieties may prove to grow well in our climate.



### Quick Facts

- At half-acre test plots in Iowa initiated in 2008, an average of 5.5 tons of sugar could be extracted from 35.4 tons of sugarbeets, translating into 898 gallons of ethanol.
- A number of countries already have working bioethanol plants that use sugarbeet as the source of biomass (U.K., Czech Republic, India, Germany, etc.)
- The U.S. crop of sugarbeets produced a total of 31,912 thousand tons in 2007
- The U.S. is the world's 4th largest producer of sugar, and more than half of the sugar is produced from sugarbeets
- U.S. sugarbeets are generally grown in areas with cooler climates, however, some sugarbeets are grown in warmer climates
- Sugarbeets have a much larger yield per hectare than wheat (The EU currently produces 2 million more tons of sugarbeet than wheat on 20 million less hectares of land)
- [DuPont](#) and BP formed a partnership in 2006 to work on [biobutanol](#) from sugarbeets

*Photo, courtesy of Syngenta, depicts tropical sugarbeets on their way to being processed.*