

## **SUPERETHANOL-E85: 32% INCREASE IN NUMBER OF SERVICE STATIONS IN 2020**

**Bioethanol holds up despite the 2020 Covid-19 health crisis and boosts its growth potential while standard fuels prices are increasing again**

Despite a drastic drop in traffic with each successive lockdown, bioethanol indicators are all pointing up, in response to growing enthusiasm among consumers: Superethanol-E85 consumption has increased, as has the number of service stations selling Unleaded 95-E10 and Superethanol-E85. E85 conversion systems are enjoying growth and vehicle manufacturers are launching new flex-fuel models. In 2020, Superethanol-E85 pulled off two note-worthy achievements:

- the retail network leapt by **32%**, **now boasting 2,305 service stations** (565 more in one year),
- consumption increased by 4% over 12 months: a unique situation since all other fuels plummeted.

Growth prospects are thus buoyant for 2021, all the more because the increase in standard fuel prices have given it an even greater edge.

As the most popular petrol grade in France, Unleaded 95-E10 reached a record market share of 50.6% in December 2020.

### **One in four service stations sell Superethanol-E85**

Compared to end 2019, 32% more stations are now selling Superethanol-E85, i.e. another 565 stations. By early January 2021, it was available at **2,305 service stations, i.e. one in four** (25% of stations<sup>1</sup>). Regions with the highest share of E85 pumps are Occitanie, Hauts-de-France and Provence-Alpes Côtés d'Azur, with 26%, 22% and 21% respectively. **Two networks, Total and Intermarché, account for 50% of stations retailing E85.**

**Guillaume Larroque, President of Total Marketing France**, declared that "In 2020, Total stepped up E85 development throughout its network in France, with Superethanol E85 now available in over 750 stations nationwide. Providing our customers with ever more affordable, eco-friendly energy is a core aspect of our business. We will be continuing these efforts in 2021, thus making this attractively-priced, low-carbon fuel available to as many people as possible."

### **The only fuel to make headway in 2020, in a fuel market that lost 14% overall**

The consumption of **Superethanol-E85 increased by 4%** in 2020, whereas petrol grades dropped by **14%** as a result of the pandemic and lockdown.

Enjoying a lower tax because of its environmental benefits, **Superethanol-E85** remains the cheapest on the market: **at an average pump price of €0.66 a litre**, only half that of Unleaded 95-E10, it affords average **savings** of over **€500/year** per 13,000 km, compared to other types of petrol<sup>2</sup>. This advantage was regained as a result of **price** hikes for standard fuels since early November with Unleaded 95-E10 and diesel respectively costing 10 and 11 cents more<sup>2</sup>.

### **The flex-fuel vehicles offer set to expand in 2021**

To benefit from Superethanol-E85, motorists may opt to drive flex-fuel vehicles.

Further to the popularity of its **SUV Kuga FlexiFuel E85** in 2019, Ford is now rolling out a range of six new flex-fuel vehicles. "Riding on the Kuga Flexifuel's success, we are confirming our commitment to E85 with this broad range of E85 compatible vehicles, combustion and hybrid engines, thus covering 85% of our customer base," **Louis-Carl Vignon, President of Ford France** pointed out.

**Jaguar - Land Rover** have also invested in Superethanol-E85, since Q3 2020, with the Discovery Sport Flex Fuel

<sup>1</sup>Stations declaring their rates on [www.prix-carburants.gouv.fr](http://www.prix-carburants.gouv.fr) (website in French only)

<sup>2</sup>Price on 15 January 2021 on [www.prix-carburants.gouv.fr](http://www.prix-carburants.gouv.fr) (website in French only)

Hybrid, the Range Rover Evoque Flex Fuel Hybrid, and the Jaguar E-PACE hybrid Flex Fuel.

### Government-approved E85 conversion systems: Nearly 10 million petrol-powered vehicles compatible

Over **15,000 approved E85 conversion systems** were fitted in France in 2020.

The Bioethanol Collective has asked the Government to widen the scope of the **regulations pertaining to the approval of E85 conversion systems**, to include **vehicles with 15 fiscal HP and above** and **vehicles fitted with Gasoline Particulates Filter**. **This is about to be accepted: around nine in ten petrol-powered vehicles on the road** may then have this system fitted.

**15 E85 conversion system models have already been government-approved**. They are available from **five manufacturers**: Biomotors, FlexFuel Energy Development, ARM Engineering, Borel and recent newcomer eFlexFuel (for more details see [www.infoe85.fr](http://www.infoe85.fr), in French only).

E85 conversion systems – fitting included - **average out at €1,000 after tax**. Once the conversion system has been fitted, the change of fuel is flagged on the vehicle registration document. The vehicle can run on any proportions of Unleaded 95, Unleaded 98, Unleaded 95-E10 and Superethanol-E85.

Furthermore, **the regional portion of the registration document is free** in 10 regions<sup>3</sup> and half-price in two others - Centre-Val de Loire and Brittany - for vehicles fitted with a government-approved E85 conversion system for which the registration document has been modified, as for the flex-fuel vehicles.

### The top-selling petrol grade in France, Unleaded 95-E10, grabbed a record 50.6% petrol market share in December 2020

**As the top-selling petrol grade in France since 2017**, Unleaded 95-E10 continued to grow in 2020. **Its annual market share increased by nearly 1 point, reaching 48.5% in 2020**. Despite the Covid-19 crisis impacting its progression, it had grabbed a **record 50.6% market share** by December. It retails at an average of nearly 4 cents less than Unleaded 95 in the same station. Against a backdrop of rising fuel prices since early November 2020, it looks increasingly attractive to motorists, as a replacement for Unleaded 95, slated to be discontinued.

### Energy transition, a regulatory environment favourable to bioethanol

French and European regulations encourage decarbonisation in transport with the aim of fostering energy transition. In the EU, the 2018 **Renewable Energy Directive (RED II)** set a goal of 14% renewable energy in transport by 2030. The EU wishes to push even further, so this goal is expected to be raised as part of the Green Deal currently under discussion.

In France, **the goal to incorporate biofuel into petrol** (in energy) **was 8.2% in 2020**, and increased to 8.6% in 2021 then 9.2% in 2022. The specific proportion of ethanol from sugar and starch residues has been set at 0.4%, 0.8% and 1% respectively, above the 7% cap pertaining to biofuel derived from food-grade plants.

Given the climate challenge and the need for energy independence, the Bioethanol Collective calls on France and the European Union to **bolster** the contribution of bioethanol and biofuel produced from the European biomass. They should factor in the fact that their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions comes from plants **and are positive for climate according to life cycle analyses**. Hence, this should be taken into account to measure GHG emissions in **European regulations governing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from vehicles**.

### Bioethanol: plant-derived, made in France, without palm oil

**Made from the fermented sugar and starch content of plants** such as sugar beet, cereal crops and their processing residues, bioethanol is palm oil-free.

**France is the top European producer of alcohol from agricultural sources**, accounting for 24% of European output in 2019 used mainly for **fuel** as well as in the production of **sanitiser** which leapt in 2020, thanks to this local resource, to meet increasing need triggered by the pandemic.

French bioethanol is **manufactured from raw materials of French origin**, in rural distilleries. The same sugar beets are thus used to make sugar, ethanol and animal feed (using pulp residues). Similarly, feed wheat and corn produce as much protein-rich distillers' grains for animal feed as ethanol.

The crop used for ethanol are grown on **less than 1% of available farmland** in France, and only 0.6% when deducting the contribution of co-products for animal feed. On a full-time equivalent basis, bioethanol production accounts for **9,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs in farming and industry in rural areas**.

[2020 figures for bioethanol may be viewed here \(in French only\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> Superethanol-E85 is not available in Corsica

## 2020 Superethanol-E85 figures

### Key figures for Superethanol-E85 in 2020

Record consumption of 350 million litres in 2020, i.e. a **4% increase in growth over 12 months** (whereas petrol and diesel consumption dropped by 14% and 16% respectively)

- A retail network growing at a cracking pace: **2,305 E85 stations** listed as of 31/12/2020 (565 more, i.e. an increase of 32% over 12 months)
- **Five E85 conversion systems manufacturers** have gained approval for at least one of the eight current vehicle categories: Biomotors (approved for six categories), FlexFuel Energy Development (approved for five categories), ARM Engineering (approved for two categories), Borel and eFlexFuel (each approved for one category). Details on [www.infoe85.fr](http://www.infoe85.fr) (in French only). New E85 conversion system regulations are likely to be introduced soon for four new categories for vehicles of 15 fiscal HP and above
- With 65% to 85% bioethanol content, **Superethanol-E85 cuts CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 50%** and particle emissions by 90% compared to fossil fuels<sup>4</sup>
- **Over 20,000 users of “Mes stations E85”** a new application specifying sale price and geo-location for stations selling Superethanol-E85  
Created in July 2018, the “**Communauté Superéthanol E85-France**” Facebook account now boasts over **25,000 members**

### Key figures for Unleaded 95-E10 in 2020

- **48.5% market share in 2020, up from 47.6% in 2019, nearly a whole point.** Nearly 5 billion litres of Unleaded 95-E10 used, the highest volume of all European countries. Record market share of 50.6% in December 2020 since the previous 50.2% spike in February 2020
- **6,800 stations** by end 2020, i.e. **70% of the largest stations (350 stations more than at end 2019)**
- **99% of petrol-powered vehicles on the road are compatible** (up from 65% in 2009)

### Bioethanol: an industry of French excellence

In France, bioethanol is produced from **sugar beet, cereal starch** and their processing residues:

- Over **50,000 farmers** involved every year
- **300,000 hectares** (approx. 1% of available farmland) supplying both energy and food, that's 0.6% of the net available farmland of food co-products

**France is the European leader in agricultural alcohol:**

- **17.3 million hectolitres** of agricultural alcohol produced (1.73 billion litres) in 2019
- **No. 1 in the EU** accounting for 24% of European production of Agricultural Alcohol in 2019
- 60% used in **fuel** and 40% in more traditional alcohol industries, including **sanitiser**
- **13 production sites** including five recently fitted, world-class industrial units
- **9,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs** across the industry, on a full-time equivalent basis

### About the Bioethanol Collective

The Bioethanol Collective is represented by the French Inter-branch Beet and Sugar Association (AIBS) and the French Agricultural Alcohol Producers Association (SNPAA). It aims to raise awareness of the bioethanol industry among professionals and the general public. Up to 7.5% bioethanol (pure or as a derivative, with 5% pure ethanol maximum) is currently incorporated in Unleaded 95 and Unleaded 98 petrol sold in France, while up to 10% is incorporated in Unleaded 95-E10 and up to 85% in Superethanol-E85. For more information: <https://www.bioethanolcarburant.com/> (in French only).

**PRESS OFFICE: Agence CorioLink**

Julie Canlorbe +33 (0)7 84 90 83 16 – [julie.canlorbe@coriolink.com](mailto:julie.canlorbe@coriolink.com)  
Amélie Lebreton +33 (0)6 70 60 25 30 – [amelie.lebreton@coriolink.com](mailto:amelie.lebreton@coriolink.com)