Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman declared September as Renewable Fuels Awareness month in Nebraska during a visit to Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island.

The proclamation was coordinated through the Nebraska Corn Board and Nebraska Soybean Board, who hosted the event at Husker Harvest Days to recognize the contributions of Nebraska farmers and agribusinesses to the nation's renewable fuel supply.

"Renewable fuels are a contributor to the Nebraska economy. The production of these fuels provides marketing options for our crop farmers, creates key feedstuffs for our livestock producers and helps create a more sustainable rural economy by providing jobs and contributing to local and state revenue," Gov. Heineman said. "Renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel help diversify our nation's energy portfolio. We are fortunate to have such a strong biofuels industry right here in Nebraska, with thousands of Nebraskans helping fuel America."

Last year, renewable fuels reduced the nation's need for imported oil by over 480 million barrels of crude oil - and 1.1 billion gallons of imported petroleum diesel. Ethanol production was at an all-time high with over 13.2 billion gallons produced.

Tim Scheer, chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board, and Greg Greving, chairman of the Nebraska Soybean Board, also addressed the crowd.

One of the co-products from ethanol production is distillers grains, which play a key role in the Nebraska agriculture economy. "We are fortunate in Nebraska that beef, swine, poultry and dairy producers can use these co-products from ethanol production to feed their livestock," said Scheer, a farmer from St. Paul. "Only the starch portion of the kernel is used to make ethanol. The protein, fiber, and fat portions still remain for the livestock."

Greving, a farmer from Chapman, said as Nebraska farmers head out to harvest this year's crops, over half will be fueling their equipment with a soy biodiesel blend because of the many benefits it has for engines and because soy biodiesel is a renewable fuel produced in America.

"In addition to on-farm use and a growing presence in diesel automobiles, programs like BioTrucker, which involves making biodiesel available along major truck routes, and BioHeat, a heating oil used in millions of home and businesses, are getting renewable biodiesel into more locations every year," he said. "This is good for farmers and good for the United States by helping provide alternatives to a growing number of petroleum-based products."