

Nebraska corn farmers through the Nebraska Corn Board and Nebraska Corn Growers Association are among the organizations backing American Ethanol, a partnership formed by the ethanol industry, corn growers across the country and NASCAR.

This new partnership, announced in Las Vegas by NASCAR, comes after NASCAR said in October it would take its environmental commitment to the next level by fueling all races in its three racing series with E15, a 15 percent corn ethanol blend, beginning with the 2011 racing season.

“Since NASCAR is one of the most effective marketing and advertising organizations in the world, partnering with it will raise the visibility of ethanol and allow us to communicate to new and larger audiences in exciting ways,” Kelly Brunkhorst, director of research for the Nebraska Corn Board, said at an event held in Lincoln before a live webcast of NASCAR’s announcement.

The live webcast was organized by Growth Energy, one of the American Ethanol partners.

Another partner is the National Corn Growers Association, which supports American Ethanol through funding provided by corn farmers through their state checkoff and membership organizations—including the Nebraska Corn Board and Nebraska Corn Growers Association.

“I am a strong believer in the future of ethanol,” said Brandon Hunnicutt, president of the Nebraska Corn Growers Association, at the event in Lincoln. “A marketing partnership between American Ethanol and NASCAR following NASCAR’s switch to E15 is clearly a powerful move for the American ethanol industry. Together we will tell the story of the most successful renewable fuel in history, the cleanest burning fuel available on a wide scale that is made in America from renewable corn.”

American Ethanol will be highlighted on every vehicle running in a NASCAR race, be prominent on NASCAR’s Green Flag, sponsor a new award for every race, be featured at on-site race day events and more.

“NASCAR did not make the switch to E15 lightly,” Hunnicutt said. “It put ethanol and E15 through its rigorous testing process. Racing teams and engine builders ran it through additional tests, and many have reported they are getting a little more horsepower with Green E15, while emissions are 20 percent less per gallon of fuel.”

Brunkhorst noted that NASCAR’s commitment to being an environmental leader is similar to the commitment made by corn farmers.

“Today’s corn farms, 95 percent of which are family owned, are the most innovative and productive in the world,” Brunkhorst said. “They are using less energy, less fertilizer and tilling less while growing more. It’s an incredibly positive story, and one we are proud to share.”