

Targeting Turkeys

For generations turkeys only had to be nervous around Thanksgiving. Now, if a project in Carthage, Missouri succeeds, they may be pressed into service to solve the energy crisis.

The project under the management of a company called Changing World Technologies (CWT) involves transforming turkey beaks, feathers, bones, etc. into oil. In an interview in "E" Magazine, CWT President Allen Libshutz offered this enthusiastic if indelicate description. Said Libshutz, "it's real. You put turkeys in the front and you get oil out of the back."

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The plant has the capacity to make 3,000 barrels of biofuel from turkey byproducts each week. The raw material it uses is 1200 tons of turkey parts obtained from a nearby slaughterhouse. The US government granted \$17 million towards the cost of building the \$40 million factory. The process is called *thermal detolymmerization* and combines heat and pressure to convert turkey parts into an oil fuel. CWT states that the process works on anything that contains carbon, which could include agricultural byproducts, used tires, sewage, or discarded appliances. The end products are oil, natural gas, carbon, minerals and water. The claim is also made that the biofuel produced in the giant turkey grinding factory does not add to global warming.

So far the only obstacle seems to be cost. The price tag for producing a barrel of turkey biofuel is \$80 (US). Neighbours have also complained and launched a lawsuit citing the "rancid smell of burning meat."

If the United States catches up to Europe in terms of offering financial incentives for consumers who use biofuels, then CWT may one day be 'talking turkey' with the rest of the oil giants.