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Ethanol Popularity Causing Milk Costs to Rise

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by Rebecca Gannon

If you've gone to any grocery store in the last year, you've noticed it.

The total on your receipt keeps climbing.

Take milk - in 3 weeks, the cost of a gallon has gone up 30 cents.

"I have to buy a gallon of milk every day," said Erica Atkins, "for cereal and stuff. So it really hits me in my pocket."

Atkins is a mother of six. "And that's really hard," she said, "because, you know, the kids like milk. I'm going to have to start putting water in it, just to get it to stretch."

The increase in prices is due to, of all things, corn.

With ethanol's popularity climbing, a lot more corn is going towards generating fuel.

"They're taking a big chunk of that for ethanol right now." Dr. Cindy Claycomb is a marketing professor at Wichita State University. She says the increase in ethanol production will make everything cost more.

"That use of corn effects the whole food chain," said Claycomb. "We're using something that's food for energy now, and that's not - at least not something we had planned when we first started planting corn fields."

As for Atkins, she's now spending as much as \$200 a week on groceries. She's got her own solution to the corn shortage.

"Well, I'd rather them give that to the cows so we can eat. Laugh, and then maybe we can find another alternative, another way for transportation, or something. Because I think food is important."

For now, grocers say food prices are staying stable.

But the price of cheese, ice cream, and other dairy products may go up as the price of milk climbs.



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