

Title suggestion: **Fueling-producing cyanobacteria cry foul**

Microalgal fuels are a promising, renewable solution to the world's increasing energy demand and dwindling supply of crude oil. Cyanobacteria, previously called blue-green algae, are attractive candidates for producing these photosynthetically-derived fuels due to the established methods for their genetic manipulation and their ability to excrete fuels and fuel precursors, like free fatty acids. A continuous production system, made feasible by fuel excretion, minimizes the requirement for growth nutrients and simplifies the fuel extraction process. In this issue, Ruffing and Jones genetically engineer a model cyanobacterium to produce and excrete free fatty acids. They show that free fatty acid production causes detrimental physiological effects in the cyanobacterium, ultimately leading to reduced cell growth and limiting the potential for high fuel yields. The physiological effects identified in this work represent a significant obstacle for large-scale cyanobacterial fuel production, necessitating further investigation of this area which has previously received little attention.