

Get an edge with soy biodiesel

Editor's note: The following opinion, from an Illinois farmer, is part of an information campaign from the United Soybean Board and offers the board's take on the role of biodiesel for the ag economy.



Commentary
By SHARON COVERT

FOR years, soy biodiesel has been a staple on our family's farming operation near Tiskilwa, about an hour north of Peoria. During this time, the performance of soy biodiesel has been great. We can't tell any difference between using soy biodiesel and regular diesel fuel, except the exhaust smells better.

That's not to say that our pickup's engine can't tell the difference. Just a 2% blend of soy biodiesel improves fuel lubricity by up to 66%, allowing for less maintenance and a longer engine life. When diesel goes through the refining process to become the required on-road ultralow-sulfur diesel, lubricity is reduced. Using soy biodiesel can be a great way to add back lubricity.

Not only does soy biodiesel help us lessen our dependence on foreign oil and reduce environmental impacts, there are economic advantages from biodiesel that will ultimately benefit both rural and urban citizens of Illinois.

According to a soybean-checkoff funded study conducted by the National Biodiesel Board, biodiesel production could create a projected 39,102 new

jobs in the next 10 years. In addition, America's biodiesel industry could add an estimated \$24 billion to the U.S. economy between 2005 and 2015, assuming biodiesel growth reaches 650 million gallons of annual production in 2015. The bulk of that economic boost will go to rural America, since most biodiesel plants are in rural areas. Illinois is home to four such production plants that provide thousands of jobs to the state's economy.

Anyone who is currently operating a diesel engine can use biodiesel with no modifications. For a biodiesel supplier in your area go to www.biodiesel.org.

In fact, the Olympia Illinois School District has been using biodiesel (B2) since 2002 in all of its 33 school buses and about 20 operation and maintenance support vehicles such as lawn mowers, pickup trucks and tractors.

Little food impact

While some have been quick to criticize biofuels for raising the price of food and feed, the fact is that biodiesel has little effect on the price of food. A soybean checkoff study found that demand for biodiesel made from soy-

bean oil increases the supply of soybean meal, which will be largely used to produce more food, not less. Nearly all the soybean meal will be fed to livestock and poultry, so increased demand for biodiesel will increase the supplies of soybean meal, meaning there will be plenty of feed for our livestock- and poultry-producing friends.

Add all this to the fact that producing more biodiesel at home means less diesel we have to import.

Our country runs on diesel fuel to power trucks, barges and other transportation fleets. As a soybean farmer, I think it's important to use more fuel from U.S. farmers, rather than foreign oil interests.

Right now, about 57% of U.S. farmers use soy biodiesel on their farms. That reflects great progress over the years, but we won't be satisfied until every farmer is able to use soy biodiesel.

And if you are a consumer, a trucker, a school bus driver or anyone else that uses diesel, I encourage you to ask your fuel supplier for biodiesel. By doing this, you will be helping put more money into rural economies, decrease U.S. dependence on foreign oil and increase the life of your engine.

Visit www.biodiesel.org for more information.

Covert is a United Soybean Board director and a soybean farmer from Tiskilwa.

Master passes away

LAMAR Fesser, a Morrisonville farmer and *Prairie Farmer* Master Farmer, passed away on Aug. 6. Fesser had battled ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, for several years.

Fesser was a renowned agriculturalist and community supporter in the Christian County area, where he farmed with his son, Bryan.

In addition to being named a *Prairie Farmer* Master Farmer, Fesser was active in Christian County Farm Bureau and with Trinity Lutheran Church. He was also a member of the first class of Cultivating Master Farmers, where he became highly regarded for his insight into farming with family.

Those who knew Fesser best will remember him as a man who loved his farm and his family, especially his grandchildren, whose photos blanketed his office walls and who were often spotted tagging along with him on parts runs and other errands.

Correction

On Page 12 of our August issue, in the story titled "Stay legal on the road this fall," we gave the incorrect Web address as the source for finding a "trucker's physical" form, also known as a medical card form. The correct address is www.fmcsa.dot.gov/formspubs.htm. We apologize for the error and for any inconvenience it may have caused.

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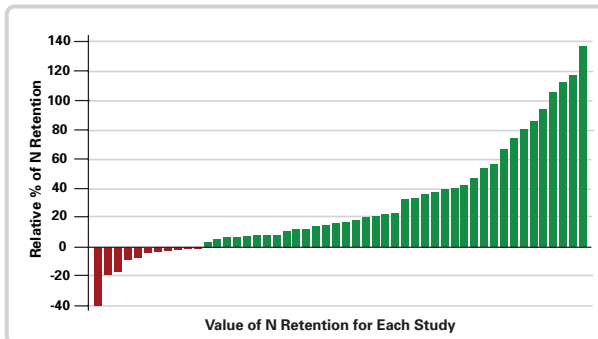
Stabilizing nitrogen (N) slows loss from denitrification and leaching, preventing costly reapplication and contributing to higher yields at harvest.

Research has shown that adding a nitrification inhibitor to the soil slows the conversion of N to the nitrate form, helping to reduce N losses. An analysis of 50 studies from the last 20 years shows that, on average, 28 percent more N is retained when it is protected by a nitrogen stabilizer like N-Serve® nitrogen stabilizer, as compared with unprotected N. (See Figure 1.)

"The most cost-effective N management strategy is to apply only the N that the crop needs and then protect it with N-Serve," says Adam Manwarren, marketing specialist for Dow AgroSciences. "Instead of applying costly, additional units of N to account for anticipated losses from leaching or denitrification, adding N-Serve improves the efficiency of applied N for a more productive and profitable corn crop."

N-Serve stabilizes N in the ammonium form, a positively charged form of N that binds to negatively charged soil particles, and remains available to corn longer than unstabilized N. Keeping more ammonium-N available to corn plants leads to healthier, higher-yielding corn.

Figure 1. Meta-Analysis of N Retention With Use of Nitrogen Stabilizer.



Wolt, Jeffrey D. 2004. A meta-evaluation of nitrification inhibitor agronomic and environmental effectiveness with emphasis on corn production in the Midwestern USA. *Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems* 69(1):23-41.

Field trials conducted by Miles Farm Supply in Kentucky in 2007 found that acres protected with N-Serve outyielded unprotected acres by 8 bu./A, on average, across three trials.

"With today's high N prices, no one wants to overapply N," says Philip Logsdon with Miles Farm Supply. "N-Serve nitrogen stabilizer allows growers to put on the right amount of N and then keep it where it should be."

Visit www.N-Serve.com to learn more.