



## **NBB Position on Sustainable Biodiesel**

**Feb. 2008**

The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) supports efforts to ensure that biodiesel produced and sold in the U.S. comes from sustainable resources. On Monday, Feb. 3, at the National Biodiesel Conference & Expo, NBB Chairman Ed Hegland announced the appointment of a Sustainability Taskforce. The taskforce will look at ways that NBB can support efforts to ensure the world's resources are used responsibly for biofuels production. The NBB opposes the use of non-sustainable agriculture practices worldwide in biodiesel production.

The Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS), recently expanded under the 2007 Energy Bill, includes a requirement that specifies fuels must meet a threshold of 50% carbon reduction to be eligible. NBB is committed to working with the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that this is developed in a meaningful way, and enforced.

Consider the following:

- In the United States, more than 80% of estimated 2007 biodiesel production came from soybean oil. The rest was divided among other feedstocks such as recycled cooking oil, fats, and vegetable oils from other oilseed crops.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that U.S. acreage for crop production has not increased since 1959. Major land use changes are not expected due to biofuels.
- The U.S. is the largest exporter of soybeans in the world, making the importation of soybeans from countries with non-sustainable agricultural practices less likely. Other nations have already been increasing soybean production for decades.
- According to a USDA/DOE life cycle study, soy-based biodiesel has a 78% carbon dioxide reduction. This takes into account the planting and harvesting of the soybeans, producing the fuel and delivering it to the pump. A 2007 update to the study found that for every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 3.5 units of energy are gained.
- According to U.S. Census data, the country currently has the equivalent of more than 400 million gallons of soybean oil sitting in inventory. The 2009 RFS goal is the use of 500 million gallons of biomass-based diesel, which includes biodiesel. Soybean oil only represents half of the available domestic raw materials for biodiesel available in the U.S.

Additionally, the NBB has feedstock development programs in place that have the potential to bring sustainable agriculture to non-productive lands. Arid variety crops, algae and other feedstocks on the horizon have great potential to expand available material for biodiesel in a sustainable manner.