

August 9, 2006

Biodiesel is becoming a household word. The word "biodiesel" appears in a dictionary for the first time ever. The recently published new Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines biodiesel as: "A fuel that is similar to diesel fuel and is derived from usually vegetable sources (as soybean oil)." Nation Biodiesel Board CEO Joe Jobe says, "It shows we are making an impact on getting biodiesel into the mainstream, and that is very gratifying."

As this summer's tractor pulling season enters the homestretch, participants in Wisconsin's inaugural Biodiesel Challenge are running a closely contested race that could be decided during the nationally sanctioned event in Beaver Dam August 12. Sponsored by North Prairie Productions, the Biodiesel Challenge awards a year-end purse to pullers in the Wisconsin Tractor Pullers Association (WTPA) Super Farm Tractor class based on season-long point accumulations. Competitor Mike Linnehan, Sparta, Wis., and his tractor "Green Power" leads the Biodiesel Challenge with 139 points; second place is held by Clint Dornfeld with 135 points aboard "Hayride 2" while the team of Mike Eagen and Bob Gray pulling with Poltergeist sit in third place with 134 points.



NPP's Jeff Pieterick and the NPP biodiesel pickup pose with Super Farm Tractor driver Mike Kaster and Teachers Pet after this win at Osseo in July.

A new dimension of the WTPA/NPP Biodiesel Challenge pairs diesel-engine specialists from the Madison Area Technical College with WTPA Tractor pullers to measure, document and quantify the performance of engines burning biodiesel. They also hope to measure cetane levels of various biodiesel blends and how they affect engine performance. WTPA pullers are required to stay within maximum cetane levels in sanctioned competition or risk disqualification. As a pure fuel, biodiesel contains no petroleum but it is typically blended with petroleum diesel to create biodiesel blends from five percent (B-5) to 20 percent (B-20). Biodiesel significantly improves the lubricity of petroleum diesel fuel at levels as low as 2 percent (B2) and therefore is a preferred addition to petroleum-based, ultra-low sulfur fuels. "It is a widely recognized fact that biodiesel contains higher cetane levels than petroleum diesel, but nobody's actually quantified those levels for the different biodiesel blends," explains Jeff Pieterick, vice president of North Prairie Productions. "It's our intention to document cetane levels so we can advise pullers about the most beneficial blend of biodiesel to burn in competition."

Soybean-based biodiesel returns 93% more energy than used to produce it, while corn-based ethanol provides 25% more energy, according to a new study by University of Minnesota researchers. The study includes inputs used in growing crops, energy to produce tractors and other farm equipment and energy to build an ethanol or biodiesel facility. Biodiesel's higher return is partly due to energy savings in growing soybeans and partly because ethanol production requires more intensive conversion than biodiesel. From an environmental perspective, biodiesel produces 41% less greenhouse gas emissions than diesel fuel, while ethanol produces 12% fewer emissions than gasoline.

Be sure to check out our updated web site at www.npnrg.com and look for updated company information as it becomes available. Any questions, comments or concerns can be addressed to Jeff Pieterick via E-mail at jpieterick@npnrg.com or by phone toll-free at 877-299-2435.

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