

Biodiesel Production Surpasses Requirements, Increases Optimism

Written by United Soybean Board
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Soy Biodiesel Helps America's Advanced Biofuel Top 1 Billion Gallons

ST. LOUIS (February 3, 2012) – Biodiesel became a one-billion gallon industry, setting an all-time production record last year. That's thanks in part to its predominant fuel source: soy biodiesel. U.S. biodiesel production far exceeded the Environmental Protection Agency's 2011 production requirement of 800 million gallons. In fact, production reached nearly 1.1 billion gallons, which surpassed the previous record of 690 million gallons set in 2008.

U.S. soybean farmers and their checkoff helped establish soy's role in the biodiesel marketplace, originally looking for a new use of surplus soybean oil more than 20 years ago. Today, the soybean checkoff continues to support biodiesel through research and education efforts.

"As Americans, we have a need for an American fuel and the checkoff is seeing their investment start to come to fruition," says Robert Stobaugh, soybean farmer from Atkins, Ark., and United Soybean Board farmer-director. "The checkoff marketing efforts at the state and national level helped soy become the primary source and we still have room for growth."

The industry expects biodiesel production to grow even larger in 2012. And the Environmental Protection Agency's Renewable Fuel Standard requires it to meet 1 billion gallons again next year. As production continues to increase, diesel users will be able to find biodiesel more readily than ever before.

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"Biodiesel is now more available and as it expands into metropolitan areas it will be easier for the rural areas to get a hold of it," adds Stobaugh. "As our urban neighbors pick up the torch and carry it, we won't have to ask for it – fuel suppliers will already have it."

USB is made up of 69 farmer-directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. Checkoff funds are invested in the areas of animal utilization, human utilization, industrial utilization, industry relations, market access and supply. As stipulated in the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soybean checkoff.

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