



Sustainability Fact Sheet

April 2008

- U.S. Biodiesel Industry Supports Sustainable Practices
 - The U.S. biodiesel industry takes the sustainable production of biodiesel feedstocks very seriously; it supports sustainable practices and is committed to making biodiesel from feedstocks produced in a sustainable way.
 - U.S. manufacturers are producing a sustainable fuel that is good for the environment, and opposes the use of non-sustainable agriculture practices worldwide.
 - The industry's Sustainability Task Force, comprised of members from the various sectors of the industry and country, is working to ensure that the U.S. biodiesel industry continues to protect the environment, while producing jobs and reducing dependence on foreign oil.

- U.S. Biodiesel Industry is Producing a Sustainable Fuel That is Good for the Environment
 - Sustainability can be defined as doing things efficiently to preserve resources and minimize environmental impacts, which describes biodiesel produced in the U.S.
 - Biodiesel also has a significant positive energy balance. A 2007 update to the USDA/DOE study found that for every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 3.5 units of energy are gained.
 - In the United States, more than 80% of estimated 2007 biodiesel production came from domestic soybean oil. A growing amount of biodiesel produced in the U.S. is also being made from other feedstocks such as recycled cooking oil, fats, and vegetable oils from other oilseed crops.
 - The increased demand for biodiesel is stimulating research and investment in developing new feedstocks such as algae, camelina, jatropha and arid land crops. The result is that we will see additional feedstock volumes coming from marginal lands and utilizing innovative technologies.
 - The USDA reports that U.S. acreage for crop production has not increased since 1959. Major land use changes in the United States that would endanger environmentally sensitive lands are not expected due to biofuels. In fact, there are very solid federal and state laws in place to help ensure these lands remain undisturbed.
 - Crop production in the U.S. is trending significantly toward utilizing more conservation practices. According to the Conservation Technology Information Center, conservation tillage practices—including no-till farming—has increased dramatically both in terms of percentage and actual acreage since 1990.
 - The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has calculated that of the land that could be used for agriculture today, only 3.7 billion acres of the 10.4 billion acres are used, and of that, only 1% of that area is used for biofuels, which includes ethanol.

- There are limited data points; worst-case scenarios are asserted; transparency into the supporting information for claims made is limited; and there are questions relating to the accuracy of calculations used as the basis for determining certain indirect impacts.

- Conclusion:
 - U.S. biodiesel manufacturers are producing a sustainable fuel that is good for the environment. Significant, credible research bears this out.
 - Sustainable production practices for biofuels are important and the U.S. biodiesel industry supports sustainable practices and is proactively engaged in this area.
 - Conclusions are being made against biodiesel that are based on limited data points. As a result, these findings should in no way be characterized as a definitive or conclusive description of biodiesel's carbon footprint. In order to more conclusively claim a negative carbon profile of biofuels because of indirect impacts, considerably more research and work must be done, and agreement reached, involving not only biofuels but also indirect impacts associated with conventional fuels as the basis for comparison.

