



Nat'l Biodiesel Board  
3337A Emerald Ln.  
P O Box 104898  
Jefferson City, MO  
65110-4898  
(573) 635-3893 phone  
(800) 841-5849  
(573) 635-7913 fax  
[www.biodiesel.org](http://www.biodiesel.org)

# NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Jenna Higgins/NBB  
1-800-841-5849

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## **Biodiesel Production Soars**

*2005 production expected to triple last year's figures*

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – John Plaza can't seem to make biodiesel fast enough. The president and founder of Seattle Biodiesel says the plant is producing biodiesel at full capacity – and his customers snap it up as soon as it is made.

Located in downtown Seattle, Plaza's experience with his 5 million gallon per year plant illustrates the national picture. The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) anticipates 75 million gallons of biodiesel production in 2005. That's three times the 25 million gallons produced just one year earlier.

A federal tax incentive, state legislation and a diesel shortage all contribute to the rise in demand. But Plaza says he thinks Americans are finally waking up to alternative fuels.

"A lot of Americans like the patriotic aspect of biodiesel," he said. "The environmental benefits add value, but creating a stronger America through energy security is many people's true motivation – including my own."

Plaza left a career as a commercial airline pilot to pursue his interest in alternative energy.

"I was flying a 747 from Anchorage to Tokyo, and I started thinking about how much fuel that flight used," he said. "I figured out that in one 6 ½ hour flight, we used enough fuel to power my personal vehicle for 42 years. I had to make a change."

The biodiesel industry will meet growing demand with increased production. There are currently 45 active biodiesel plants. The average size is about 6.5 million gallons per year, but some larger plants in the 30 million gallon range have also opened. In all, 45 plants produce biodiesel, with another 54 planned.

"The recent energy crunch causes us to think about energy in a way that we haven't in decades," said Joe Jobe, CEO of NBB. "Americans are recognizing that conservation and alternative energy are a big part of the answer to our energy questions. Many alternative energy sources are theoretical. But with biodiesel, we can supplement our energy supply immediately."

Biodiesel works in any diesel engine with few or no modifications. It offers similar horsepower and torque compared to petroleum diesel. It has enhanced lubricity and cetane.

Although made from any fat or vegetable oil, soybean oil is the most common source of biodiesel in the U.S. Seattle Biodiesel uses soy, but is looking at the viability of canola oil, too.

“We made a small batch of biodiesel from canola oil, making us the first to turn a Washington-grown crop into biodiesel for the marketplace,” Plaza said. “We’re quite enamored with driving around on it.”

More than 600 major fleets use biodiesel nationwide. Those include the National Park Service, state departments of transportation and the military. Nationally, more than 600 retail filling stations make biodiesel blends available to the public. The use of biodiesel yields significant environmental benefits, such as reducing emissions. Biodiesel has the highest energy balance of any transportation fuel.

*Readers can learn more about biodiesel and the NBB by visiting [www.biodiesel.org](http://www.biodiesel.org). Visit [www.biodiesel.org/buyingbiodiesel/producers\\_marketers/ProducersMap-existingandpotential.pdf](http://www.biodiesel.org/buyingbiodiesel/producers_marketers/ProducersMap-existingandpotential.pdf) for a map of current and proposed biodiesel plants. This material sponsored by the USDA Biodiesel Education Program.*

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