



BIOFUEL



With increasing pressures on the world's oil reserves and rising fuel prices, a better alternative to fossil fuels being used for energy has frantically been sought and now is the time for action. Biodiesel has proven to be non-carcinogenic, non-allergenic and biodegradable and exhaust emissions are greatly reduced.

Biodiesel is made from fresh rapeseed oil or recovered cooking oil and can fuel many cars without any engine modifications. In addition to the significant environmental benefits, biodiesel also attracts a reduction in fuel tax, making it increasingly more popular than its traditional counterpart.

“500,000 ha could produce, in an environmentally and agricultural sustainable way, up to 1 million tonnes of biodiesel.”
(British Association for Bio Fuels and Oils)

Biodiesel has the potential to create jobs in the Northern Ireland agricultural sector. It is a niche area that few have taken advantage of and current opportunities exist for interested individuals and groups.

Two powerful reasons for developing liquid biofuel production, as identified by the British Association for Bio Fuels and Oils

- ▶ ***Insurance against catastrophic interruption of imported or even home produced fossil derived oil supplies;***
- ▶ ***The wisdom of developing a large-scale farming land use to buffer changes in the economically justified size of the food sector .***

At the moment it is not economically viable for farmers to try to produce their own rape seed oil. The tax paid on the fuel is high, resulting in low profits for farmers. However, it is quite certain that the government will soon introduce an increased tax rebate to be in line with other European countries.

In addition to this, there is the opportunity for farmers to refine used oil, e.g. from chip shops, in order to produce biodiesel. This is cheaper than producing the rape seed oil, but is a more difficult process than refining oil seed rapel.

Diversitec Limited's Managing Director, Robert Poots, visited Germany in June 2004 on a renewable energy study tour and has first hand experience of the opportunities available to those interested in renewable energy, including biodiesel.

The UK and Ireland have much to learn from other European countries, where many farmers are taking advantage of their assets and diversifying into renewable energy production. For more information on biodiesel and other diversification opportunities, please **contact us**.