Biodiesel and Its Producing Alternatives by Hiteshbhoi

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In a world where people rely heavily on diesel-powered engines to perform many functions for both agriculture and other known industries, it no longer comes as a surprise if there is a limited supply of derivatives of diesel fuels with traces of petroleum.

Besides the (over)exhaustion of reserves of petroleum fuels, improbability in petroleum sources and supply because of certain economic and political reasons inspired many to look for alternative resources for petroleum-based fuel sources like diesel.

Youâ€™ve heard of vegetable oil, animal fat, and recycled cooking oil being used as fuel nowadays. These are what you call Biodiesel.

From the word itself, biodiesel is an alternative to diesel fuel made from renewable or organic sources such as the ones already mentioned above. Biodiesel is produced by means of a reaction between an animal fat or vegetable oil and ethanol or methanol with a certain catalyst. Biodiesel appears as and used as either in its pure form or can be mixed with diesel to be utilized by diesel engines - a petroleum-based biodiesel. Both have yields of glycerin and biodiesel, which are chemically known as asters of methanol and ethanol.

The following presents the major advantages of using biodiesel:

1. It is non-hazardous and biodegradable.

2. It can readily be used in modern types of diesel engines.

3. It is a much more efficient as compared to fuel cells.

4. Thus, it can eliminate the huge allocation of reconstructing major fuel distribution factories and companies.

On the note of producing biodiesel extracts on a macro scale basis, two steps are usually considered:

1. Growing of alternative feed stocks.

Oilseed crops (and animal lipids) are well known sources of biodiesel because of their oil content.

Interestingly, recent programs have been funded to research on the feasibility of using algal species as feedstocks for biodiesel extracts. In fact, there are noted species of algae from which you can extract larger amounts of oil. The same species also grow at very fast rates so production would definitely be efficient. Moreover, most of these species use less water for cultivation, unlike oilseed crops.

Another advantage of using algae as a source of biodiesel is that the species also grow best in salty water, so farms could be built near the ocean without desalinating seawater.

With recent development regarding algae research, that concern is completely obliterated since it was noted that algae could survive in either a hot desert or within areas near waste streams.

Processing the feedstock into biodiesel. This step would be best accomplished by present oil refineries around the world, which are being converted to biodiesel refineries and by new companies building state-of-the-art plants.

Environmentally speaking, the use of biodiesel is basically not alarming. However, further researches regarding on biodiesel producing alternatives should be ventured upon to facilitate a more feasible large-scale biodiesel production.

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