

Life cycle analysis study: biodiesel from animal fat produces 85% fewer greenhouse gas emissions

Brussels, 15 January 2015. Biodiesel made from animal fat reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 85% compared to fossil fuels. This exceptional figure has been confirmed by the findings of a recent study by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IFEU) in Heidelberg.

The EU institutions have long recognised that biodiesel made from animal fat is highly sustainable and offers significant potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, the Renewable Energy Directive rates this type of biodiesel as particularly worthy of support. Up to now, the actual saving on greenhouse gas emissions achieved by biofuels was only relevant with regard to the legal minimum saving requirement. In view of the greenhouse gas quota set out in the Fuel Quality Directive, it is now no longer just a case of complying with minimum requirements – the actual achievable level is also becoming increasingly important.

The latest calculations carried out in the context of the ISCC sustainability certification process reveal that producing biodiesel from animal fat achieves a remarkable 85% saving in greenhouse gas emissions compared to fossil diesel fuel.

The methodology underlying this calculation was examined by the IFEU as part of a study commissioned by the European Fat Processors and Renderers Association (EFPRA). It specifically looked at how the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the processing of animal by-products should be allocated.

The study confirms the accuracy of the calculation methods used. Public health restrictions mean that animal by-products are subject to special disposal regulations and as a consequence have a negative market value. Therefore, according to the IFEU, all emissions relating to treatment necessary for compliance with public health

requirements in sterilised preliminary products should not count towards the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions generated during production of the associated biofuel.

Niels Leth Nielsen, EFPRA president, commented: “Biodiesel made from animal fat not only conserves resources, it also achieves very high savings in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. That means we already have access to an advanced biofuel.”

Notes to editors:

EFPRA is Europe’s leading authority on the use, value and bio-security of edible animal fats and meat industry by-products. Its members work closely with regulators, livestock producers, meat processors and retailers across the EU to make best use of the 17 million metric tonnes of animal by-products produced every year. The industry EFPRA represents recovers edible animal fats, valuable proteins and renewable energy at 450 sites, producing quality products for use in human food, animal feeds, petfood and for the oleochemical, pharmaceutical, energy and construction industries.

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