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Production, infrastructure, usage grow worldwide

by Ryan C. Christiansen

Throughout the world, biodiesel projects and policies are simultaneously being crafted. Biodiesel Magazine recently discovered such activities underway in China, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Brazil and Argentina.

Gushan Environmental Energy Ltd., a biodiesel plant in Beijing, resumed operations Sept. 22 after travel regulations during the 2008 Summer Olympic Games forced it to halt production Aug. 1. Traffic control measures restricted the ability of the plant's suppliers to deliver raw materials. The company estimates it lost 3 million gallons in production during the Games.

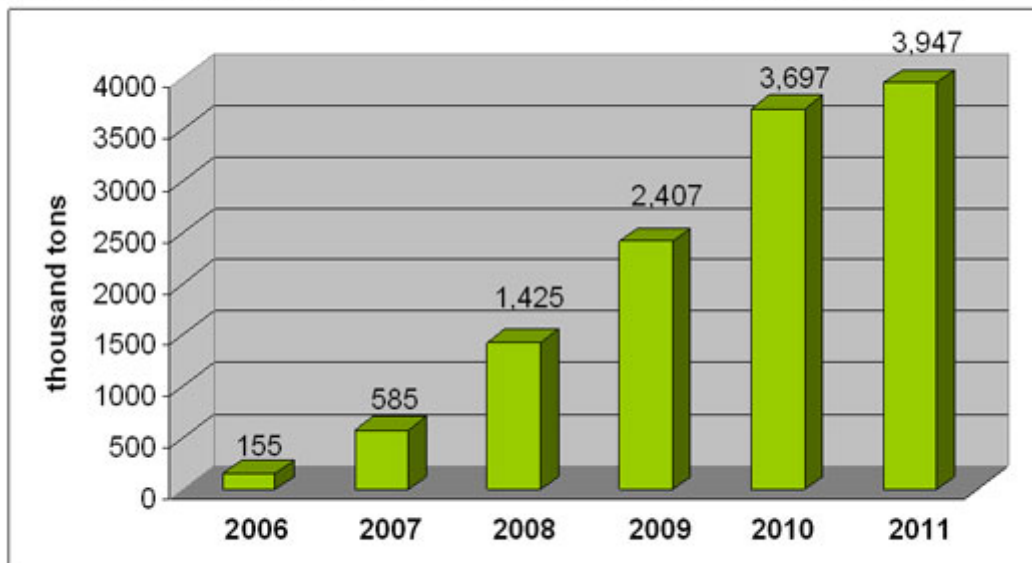
Meanwhile, the Republic of China has granted 110 acres near an industrial site in Wahan, China, to BioCentric Energy Algae LLC. The company aims to build an algae farm that captures carbon dioxide to grow 80 tons of algae per day for biodiesel production. The algae would contain 47 percent oil, according to Dennis Fisher, president and chief executive officer of BioCentric.

In other algae developments, Alternative Energy Resources Ltd. in Dublin, Ireland, and a team of researchers at the National University of Ireland in Galway have successfully produced biodiesel from local species of algae, according to John Travers, chief executive for Alternative Energy Resources. The project reached the milestone after 18 months of work.

Just east of Ireland, Flex Fuels Energy Ltd. is moving forward with plans to build an oilseed-crushing and biodiesel plant in Cardiff, South Wales, according to Chief Executive Officer Brian Barrows. The company intends to build a 60 MMgy biodiesel plant using rapeseed blended with 20 percent soybean oil. At press time, it was considering three proposals from prospective engineering, procurement and construction companies, and expected to make a decision by the end of October.

Scotland intends to increase its biodiesel usage from less than 1 percent to 10 percent by 2020, and the federal government may act on such a proposal in February. To do so, more investment is needed in production and transport infrastructure. The biodiesel will mainly be produced using European sunflower and imported palm oil.

Evolution of Argentina's Biodiesel Production Capacity



Source: Argentine Renewable Energies Chamber

Brazilian oil company Petrobras and Portuguese oil company Galp Energia agreed Oct. 10 to jointly produce, market and distribute 150 MMgy of biodiesel. Half of the biodiesel will be produced in Portugal, and the origin of the other half is to be determined. The biodiesel will be marketed primarily in Portugal and Spain.

According to Carlos St. James, president of the Argentine Renewable Energies Chamber, Argentina will become the third-largest biodiesel producer by the end of 2008. The chamber recently completed a study of the country's biodiesel market, which concluded that Argentina will produce more than 10 percent of the world's biodiesel in 2008. Only Germany and the United States will produce more, it said. The 27-page study can be found at www.argentinarenovables.org under the Info, Studies & Essays tab.

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