

# PetroAlgae

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## [Algae-based Biodiesel Makers Getting Closer to Marketable](#)

Posted by John Davis (May 5th, 2008)

For a while, we've been telling you about one of the hottest trends in the biodiesel business: turning algae into biodiesel.

This entry from C|Net.com's Green Tech Blog says that at least three companies are close to making the green pond scum into green fuel with even more close on their heels. Florida-based PetroAlgae wants to test a commercial algae-biodiesel system next year, while GreenFuel Technologies and Solazyme (both previously featured on this blog... GreenFuel on October 3, 2007 and Solazyme as recently as last April 17th) say they're close to commercial applications as well. In addition California-based LiveFuels has a target of 100 million gallons of biodiesel from algae in the next two years. All of this is very good news for the very green fuel source:

*These companies are pursuing algae because its potential as a fuel is so promising: it's a non-food crop, removes large amounts of carbon dioxide from the air, and grows fast.*

*Algae has a relatively high energy density compared to soybeans, which means more soy on more land needs to be planted for the same amount of fuel yield.*

*"What's happening is there has been more focus recently on the food-versus-fuel debate, more focus on the price of feedstock, and more understanding that using an agricultural-based crop as a fuel is not sustainable," said Michael Weaver, the CEO and co-founder of Seattle-area algae start-up Bionavitas. "We're seeing that reflected in the marketplace."*

Experts admit that algae is not a panacea for all the issues facing biodiesel. It's still an experimental process, and just like any new venture, the article points out there have been some growing pains. But many agree that it will be just a matter of time before the non-food algae becomes a major player in the biodiesel market

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