



## **Bio-diesel – green fuel we can use today**

- Bio-diesel is the name for fuel made from vegetable oils. It is made either directly from crops such as rapeseed, sunflower and soya, or by recycling cooking oil.
- Bio-diesel is non-toxic, biodegradable and can be used in normal diesel engines.
- Bio-diesel is not zero emission, but the environmental impact of bio-diesel is much lower than that of petroleum-based diesel. The impact on global climate change of bio-diesel is half that of petro-diesel. Bio-diesel produces virtually no emissions of sulphur or hydrocarbons. Emissions of air pollutants such as carbon monoxide and particulates are also significantly reduced.
- Bio-diesel is the only alternative fuel to pass the strict standards of the US Clean Air Act. The US Government approved the fuel after it was shown to pose no health threat and to reduce air toxin emissions by 90% when compared with petro-diesel. Bio-diesel is used for bus and truck fleets across the USA.
- The US Government has allocated \$150 million a year in capital grants for farmers wanting to produce bio-diesel. There is no assistance to farmers wanting to produce bio-diesel in the UK.
- In Germany, about 150,000 vehicles run on bio-diesel and the fuel is available in thousands of filling stations. One UK haulier, who supplies ASDA supermarkets, is using bio-diesel on a trial basis. No filling stations supply bio-diesel in the UK despite the fact that Britain is a major producer of rapeseed oil. A significant portion of the UK crop is exported to make bio-diesel in France.
- In most European countries bio-diesel is zero-rated for tax purposes. In Germany and France it costs about 45p a litre. In the UK bio-diesel is taxed at the same rate as petro-diesel.
- There are about 85 bio-diesel refineries in the world with significant production in France, Germany, Italy and the USA.
- Bio-diesel can start to replace petro-diesel immediately, with significant environmental and health benefits. Greenpeace therefore calls for the UK Government to set up a Green Fuel Fund to support the production and use of bio-diesel.