



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Biofuels quality, labeling standards aim to protect consumer confidence

Motor fuel hearing scheduled for Feb. 15 in Olympia

OLYMPIA – When consumers put biofuels in their gas tanks, they need to know they are getting the high-quality product advertised at the pump.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is responding to increased consumer demand for biodiesel and ethanol by adopting labeling and quality standards to allow buyers to make informed choices at the filling station. A WSDA fuel-quality monitoring program will help ensure that wholesalers and retailers are in fact marketing a product that meets those labeling standards.

“These proposed rules will help clearly show the consumer what they are buying and build confidence in this growing line of alternative fuels,” said Kirk Robinson, manager of WSDA’s Weights and Measures Program. “Common sense labeling will make it easier for the consumer to support biofuels production. And by adopting these standards, biofuels producers, distributors and retailers will know what content and quality standards they must meet as they market their products.”

Under state law, by Nov. 30, 2008, two-percent of the fuel sold in Washington must be from renewable sources.

Biofuels are generally sold as blends with conventional petroleum fuel. The proposed standards for both labeling and quality of biofuels are based on nationally recognized standards developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

At retail fuel pumps, if the fuel contains not less than 2 percent biodiesel and not more than 5 percent biodiesel, it must be labeled “contains up to 5% Biodiesel.” If the fuel blend is more than 5 percent biodiesel, it must be labeled with the actual percentage of biodiesel content, for example, “B20 Biodiesel blend” or “B100 Biodiesel.”

Similarly, ethanol blends with more than 1 percent ethanol but less than 10 percent must be labeled “contains up to 10% Ethanol.” Higher percentage blends must note the actual percentage of ethanol content, for example, “E85 Ethanol.”

WSDA consulted with more than 50 industry stakeholders and subject matter experts before unveiling this quality and labeling standards proposal. WSDA’s Biofuels Technical Work Group includes biofuels producers, consumer advocates, fuel retailers and wholesalers, petroleum and auto industry representatives, and federal, state and local agency officials.

The proposed rules can be found at <http://agr.wa.gov/LawsRules/Rulemaking/PP/MotorFuelStandards091906.htm>.

MORE

Biofuels standards hearing Feb. 15
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WSDA will hold a public hearing on the proposed rules at 10 a.m. on Feb. 15 at the Natural Resources Building, Room 259, 1111 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA. Persons may present material in writing or orally at the hearing. Written material must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Feb. 15. Material may be sent by e-mail to hgonzales@agr.wa.gov or by mail to Henri Gonzales, WSDA, PO Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504-2560.

WSDA Director Valoria Loveland will determine whether to adopt the proposed standards after reviewing all public comments.

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