

When it comes to filling up a fuel tank, Nebraskans are offered choices. Consumers have the option to fill up with regular petroleum or domestically produced biofuels such as ethanol or biodiesel.

Biofuels come in many different blends and can be found all over the country. Common ethanol blends are E10, E20 or E85. Biodiesel blends are at levels of B5, B10 or B20.

Blend rates are identified by the number following the letter, so B20 is comprised of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent regular diesel fuel.

Besides energy independence, biodiesel offers many benefits, such as added engine lubricity and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Another benefit is that you do not need to modify your engine to run biodiesel. Whether it is cars, trucks, semis, or farm equipment, biodiesel is made to work in any diesel engine.

Over the last few years, diesel fuel composition has changed in order to meet the reduction for sulfur and aromatic levels, which has also reduced lubricity compounds in the fuel. Biodiesel blends naturally fill the lubricity void left by Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel.

Different biofuel blends offer different benefits. Simply filling up a vehicle or tractor with B2 (2 percent biodiesel), increases lubricity in that engine by roughly 65 percent. Good lubricity will help an engine operate cleaner, reduce wear and tear, and increase engine longevity.

“Biodiesel has been around a long time, in fact, Rudolf Diesel invented the first diesel engine and that actually ran on peanut oil,” said Victor Bohuslavsky, executive director for the Nebraska Soybean Board. “Until recent years, regular petroleum was cheap and abundant but Americans are starting to realize that we need renewable fuels to help reduce our dependence on foreign fuels and diversify our transportation energy portfolio, which helps stabilize the market.

“With recent engine advancements, biodiesel now has a place in cars, trucks and tractors and it provides similar fuel economy, horsepower, and torque as regular diesel fuel,” states Bohuslavsky. “Whether it be in town, on the interstate, or steering down the rows of a field, renewable fuels are home-grown and here to stay.”