

Biodiesel fuels the future



BioWorks Australia project manager Daniel Evans.

Paul Mole

Crowds at Dowerin GWN Machinery Field Days 2007 will gain an invaluable insight into the emerging renewable fuels industry.

Against the backdrop of escalating fuel costs, BioWorks Australia's business unit manager, Deanne Lovelady, said while biodiesel was not the magic bullet, it was part of the global solution to wean us off our dependence on oil.

Ms Lovelady said the alternative fuels industry was an exciting arena of research and development and an important alternative for diversifying the economic base of rural communities.

"We went to Dowerin last year for the first time, but we were just talking to people and handing out pamphlets," Ms Lovelady said.

"We were blown away with the response we got and decided this year to go one step further and conduct a live demonstration.

To reverse farmers' dependence on oil biodiesel, BioWorks will take visitors to Dowerin through a visual

demonstration, which recycles cooking oil into fuel. "We thought it was very important to show farmers where they fit into the renewable fuels process," Ms Lovelady said.

"A farmer can look at what we're doing and say 'that's where I fit in'."

BioWorks WA project manager, Daniel Evans, said biofuels were part of a wider environmental solution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, of which WA was well poised to take advantage.

He said biodiesel was the only accepted alternative fuel that could be used directly in any existing, unmodified diesel engine.

Biodiesel is made in a process called transesterification, whereby glycerine is separated from the vegetable oil.

The process leaves behind two products, biodiesel, and glycerine, which is used in soaps and other products.

Ms Lovelady said WA had the space to grow seed oil coupled with the research which was already there. She said BioWorks was keen to see rural WA manufacture its own fuel, adding there was an environmental necessity to step up renewable fuel use.



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