

# Biofuels International expo and conference

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From European legislation to jatropha, from risk analysis to storage and handling, this years Biofuels International conference has it all. The simultaneous biofuels expo will consist of equipment and service suppliers to producers of bioethanol, biodiesel and biomass. As you can read in the highlight below, some of those producers could make do with extra service.

who	Biofuels International magazine
what	Biofuels International expo and conference
when	Thursday 28 – Friday 29 May 2009
where	Beurs van Berlage, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
costs	conference: €495 for 1 day, €950 for 2 days (excluding VAT) expo: free of charge
URL	<a href="http://www.biofuelsinternationalexpo.com/index.html">http://www.biofuelsinternationalexpo.com/index.html</a>

## Conference

### [E031 Image 1](#)

The list of people “who should attend” is endless, as is the number of presentations scheduled for the conference. Day one gives an extensive overview of European biofuels policy in the morning and second generation technology and feedstocks in the afternoon. Day two starts with an overload of presentations on key issues and trends in Europe, followed by a session on the future of the biofuels market.

Key speakers from Shell Global Solutions, the Port of Amsterdam, Bentley Motors and many other companies and organisations will bring you completely up to date. Check the website for the complete [programme](#).

## Expo

Conference attendants can visit the expo, free of charge, to expand their network visiting the stands of, amongst others, [Biofuels Cities](#), BioDiesel International or Emerging Markets Online.

## Highlight: biodiesel gateway to Europe

**As the Rhine and Meuse rivers grant access to a large part of Europe, extending as far as central Europe, the combined ports of Dutch cities Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and Belgium Antwerp, form the gateway to Europe for all kinds of products. Unfortunately for the European industries, the gate is wide open to subsidised American biodiesel as well.**

The Netherlands Biodiesel Industry Association (VNBI) is convinced that within two years the Netherlands, because of their gateway function, will be able to play an important part on the European biofuels market as one of its largest biodiesel manufacturers.

Dutch petrochemical industry has already partially shifted towards biofuels, since from 2007 onwards, two per cent of all petrol and diesel on the Dutch market has to contain biofuels. Recently, one after the other plant was built. By 2010, the biofuels share must be 5.75 per cent. According to the VNBI that is hardly a challenge. Its eight members together, they announce, will be able to replace at least ten per cent of Dutch mineral diesel with biodiesel as early as 2009.

[E031 image 2](#)

### **Dumping**

But as of a year, the biodiesel industry has a serious problem and the global financial crisis is not the explanation for it. "The most important problem this last year," says the spokesperson for VNBI, "has been the import of highly subsidised American 'B99'."

The naming system for biodiesel blends is Bx, in which x is the percentage of biodiesel mixed into the blend. Pure biodiesel is called B100. The market for B100 has collapsed almost entirely due to B99 import.

To promote biodiesel within the US, a federal tax credit of one USD per gallon is awarded for blending petroleum diesel with pure biodiesel. (Therefore B99, or even B99.9 is produced rather than B100.) "Consequently," the VNBI spokesperson continues, "B99 is cheaper than European biodiesel even including transport costs. Anti-dumping measures recently taken by the European Union haven't sorted much effect yet. However, it is expected that the USA will, in time, retract the tax credit, so there will be fair competition and European plants will be able to produce their biofuels in a profitable manner."

### **Abominable**

On the website of one of the VNBI partners, Biopetrol, there is an alarming press release (in German). Biopetrol underwrites what the VNBI says, but states that the US are not the only country to blame. Political instigation of chaos in European and especially German energy policy, Biopetrol says, has caused an abominable economic situation in the entire biodiesel branch. For months, German politics went back and forth in the matter of biofuels quota legislation, thus

delaying introduction of B7. Because conditions for the mixing of biodiesel into normal diesel are unclear, the market is full of short-term contracts and adjustment clauses, which makes raw material planning impossible. Furthermore, Biopetrol claims, internationally unlawful exclusion of certain raw materials, plus higher fuel taxes, have made customers uncertain. And together with the loathed B99 import, a drop in diesel price further complicated things.

So much so, actually, that the company is forced to carry out financial reforms. Various biodiesel enterprises have already become insolvent. Biopetrol was forced to introduce short-time working in its German Schwarzheide plant, and is considering to do so in Rotterdam as well.

### **Undiminished**

Is the VNBI's optimism undiminished? "Yes, we've asked various producers, and those who are still doing business are all confident," says their spokesperson.