

Plant's Aim: Intercept That Veggie Oil

by Thomas MacMillan | Nov 7, 2011 11:39 am



Thomas MacMillan Photo

With a new \$6 million biodiesel production facility in the New Haven Harbor, Greenleaf Biofuels plans to capture New England's used cooking oil—before it's sent off to biodiesel plants overseas.

Greenleaf President and founder Gus Kellogg announced that goal on Friday afternoon after a groundbreaking ceremony on Waterfront Street in the city's port district.

The event celebrated the creation of [a 8,500 square-foot plant for making biodiesel fuel](#). The project will cost about \$6 million and be complete in the next six to nine months, Kellogg said. The facility will employ 20 people with another 10 to 20 jobs to be created in the next three to five years, he said.

Biofuel refers to fuel derived from plant sources, rather than material mined from the earth, like oil. Biodiesel is made from renewable resources and has the potential to reduced dependence on fossil fuels. Biodiesel may also create lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to traditional fuel.



Thomas MacMillan Photo

Kellogg said his new plant will produce fuel for one client, which he declined to name. The client, which will distribute the finished product, is also providing all the raw material—vegetable oil, animal fat, and used cooking oil.

The cooking oil will come from a variety of sources around New England, including restaurants, potato chip factories, and cafeterias, Kellogg said. Most cooking oil gathered in the Northeast for biodiesel production is currently shipped off to Europe, where the biodiesel industry is more developed, he said.

“We’re going to try to grab it before it gets on the ship,” Kellogg said.



Thomas MacMillan Photo

The 42-year-old Guilford native started his company “on paper” in 2004, he said. In 2006 he started distributing biodiesel, purchasing it from suppliers in the Midwest. “The endgame was always production,” he said.

With the help of state legislation creating a biofuels production grant program, that endgame is about to be realized.

Before the ceremonial tossing of the dirt, Kellogg stood on a loading-dock stage with about 20 city and state officials, financiers and supporters in hard hats. He thanked them all one by one, speaking to a group of about the same number of people, including his proud parents and Annex Alderman Al Paolillo. A gleaming silver tanker and a Kellogg’s green biodiesel-fueled Volkswagen beetle flanked the stage.

State Sens. Martin Looney and Ed Meyer, along with Mayor John DeStefano, offered their congratulations and praise for the project.

“Biotech and advanced energy development will be our future,” said Looney.

Kellogg choked up with emotion when he thanked his mom and dad. “It’s been a long road,” he said.

