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For further information please contact:
Truck Marketing, DaimlerChrysler United Kingdom Ltd., Tongwell, Milton Keynes, MK15 8BA
Telephone: 01908 245000 Fax: 01908 245093

BioDiesel

Mercedes-Benz

▲ *BioDiesel now offers an alternative to conventional diesel fuel in chassis such as Econic*

▲ *All current Mercedes-Benz truck engines can run on 100% BioDiesel*

A new fuel, a new opportunity

Today, the environment matters as never before. As a result, Mercedes-Benz research staff, technicians and engineers are placing ever higher importance on developing new engine technologies that will take us into a cleaner, greener and less polluting future.

Over and above our own engine technologies that are based on vehicles using conventional diesel fuel, we are actively exploring the use of alternative fuels. Of particular significance at the moment is BioDiesel, and in particular its suitability for use with our range of Econic RCV chassis.

Given that Econic is already the most environmentally responsible truck of its type, the logic of exploring the use of BioDiesel in these vehicles is inescapable.

The aim of this leaflet is to present the BioDiesel issue to Econic users in the most objective manner possible. By clearly identifying the key areas of the BioDiesel argument in terms of both operational and environmental factors, clearer judgements on this highly topical subject can be made.

The decision of whether BioDiesel will work for your own individual vehicle operation, of course, is yours!

What is BioDiesel?

BioDiesel is a liquid fuel made from a variety of renewable energy sources, collectively called Biomass.

These products come from many areas, especially agriculture, with forestry, straw, nut shells and oil seed rape being the most common.

Other Biomass sources may include waste products, such as sawmill waste, manure and even used chip pan oil!

With such a new fuel all around us, everyone is now interested in exploring the potential of BioDiesel.

Advantage BioDiesel

Operational

- BioDiesel can integrate with current engine technology and fuelling infrastructure - it's the first clean fuel that fleet operators can use without necessarily having to purchase new vehicles or construct additional facilities.
- BioDiesel can be blended with low sulphur diesel to act as a lubrication improver. BioDiesel also improves ignition in BioEthanol engines.
- BioDiesel can be used without difficulty in standard diesel engines in blends of up to 5% with conventional diesel fuel.
- Of particular note, all current Mercedes-Benz trucks including Econic can run on 100% BioDiesel. However, such fuel must meet EN14214 standard, and any 5% BioDiesel blend must meet EN590.

Environmental

- Using BioDiesel fuel is almost CO_2 neutral. This is because the CO_2 released was already contained in the vegetable matter as it grew.
- BioDiesel produces zero sulphur and aromatic emissions, and lower particulate emissions.
- BioDiesel is biodegradable and non-toxic, so better for humans, animals and plants.

Is BioDiesel the answer?

With almost any new technology, benefits gained on one hand are compromised by drawbacks on the other. Truck operators will have to balance the plus and minus factors for themselves, given their own individual set of priorities.

The disadvantages of using BioDiesel currently are:

- BioDiesel has a lower energy content than mineral diesel, so a reduction in engine power of around 10% might be typical. Also, fuel consumption could be expected to rise by 5-7%.
- Service intervals will be reduced, with higher maintenance costs too.
- BioDiesel cannot currently be used with EGR engine technology (Econic is SCR).
- BioDiesel is corrosive to rubber, which may cause some operational problems.
- Limited availability, so generally suited to short distance/daily truck operations only.

Of course the decision will be yours, but whether running on BioDiesel or not, Econic is the answer!