

Oregon Company Converts Plastic to Crude Oil

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Agri-Plas, an Oregon-based plastics recycler, is using a process to convert unwanted and typically unrecyclable agricultural plastics into crude oil, which can then be refined for commercial processing.

The company is testing technology developed by Plas2Fuel, a Kelso, Washington alternative energy company, that created the unique process of converting plastic into synthetic crude oil.

Agri-Plas is gearing up to deliver its second shipment of crude oil this month and is planning to expand its operations in Brooks, Oregon over the next year.

“The fact that Agri-Plas has been able to take plastic that would otherwise go directly into the waste stream and convert it into a commercial product that can eventually be pumped into a gas tank is truly groundbreaking,” said Tim McCabe, director of the Oregon Economic & Community Development Department.

Agri-Plas is now taking discarded and unwanted plastic that chokes landfills or is abandoned, burned or buried on Northwest farms and nurseries, and is converting it back into synthetic crude oil. Plastic products include dirty agricultural film, greenhouse cover, mixed nursery and jug material, prepackaged food containers and lids, and other low- or zero-value plastics too dirty to economically bring to a higher value through normal recycling efforts. The company recently delivered its first full tanker (8,200 gallons) of oil to a refinery in Tacoma, Wash., which translates to a final delivery of 196 barrels of oil.

The oil can be refined and used in literally thousands of high-end products ranging from makeup to food items, as well as gasoline, diesel, lubricants and other petroleum-based products.

Today, Agri-Plas is operating one plastic-to-oil converting unit. The company soon expects to add three more units and will operate this venture under the name of Agri-Plas2Crude.

In April of 2009, Agri-Plas2Crude plans to break ground on a new facility, which will eventually house a total of five, four-unit Plas2Fuel reclamation systems. In total, the 20 units will create enough reclaimed crude oil to deliver a full tanker for refining every single day, the company said.

Website: <http://www.agriplasinc.com/>