

# SDSU students earn EPA grant for effort to improve biodiesel production technology

*Project among promising sustainable technologies supported by EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet program*

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(Denver, Colo. – October 14, 2009) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded South Dakota State University students with a \$10,000 grant to help develop a recyclable catalyst for biodiesel production using waste grease, recycled oil and potentially algae. The grant is one of 43 awarded nationwide under EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet (P3) program.

The SDSU project offers an opportunity to improve both the environmental and the economic viability of biodiesel production. Biodiesel is part of a movement toward sustainable alternatives to traditional fossil fuels that can help diversify the nation's energy resources and improve the environment. Biodiesel's similarities to petro-diesel allow for distribution by available infrastructure and direct use in existing diesel engines. Current biodiesel production processes can include multiple washing and separation steps and can create wastes and by-products.

EPA has awarded 43 grants to teams of college and university students across the country who will design creative technologies to sustainability challenges in the developed and developing world. The People, Prosperity, and the Planet (P3) Phase I awards for the 2009-2010 competition challenge students, working together on interdisciplinary teams, to design and build sustainable technologies that improve quality of life, promote economic development, and protect the environment.

The competition begins in Phase I with the award of \$10,000 grants to student teams who submit applications that focus on a wide range of categories, including water, energy, agriculture, built environment, materials and chemicals, and information technology.

After working on the project for eight months, the teams will bring their designs to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual National Sustainable Design Expo on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Projects will be judged by a panel of experts and a select few will be awarded P3 Awards and Phase II grants up to \$75,000 for students to further their designs, implement them in the field, or move them to the marketplace.

More information on EPA's P3 program: <http://www.epa.gov/ncer/p3/>