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Work begins on biodiesel plant in Arkansas County, near DeWitt

Memphis Business Journal - by [Andy Ashby](#)

[Arkansas SoyEnergy Group LLC](#) has begun building a biodiesel plant in Arkansas County.

The new facility will take up 3-4 acres of the company's 22 acres on U.S. Highway 165, just south of DeWitt.

The plant, which will produce biodiesel made entirely from soybean oil, is expected to be completed by late 2007.

It is projected to produce 3 million gallons the first year of operation and could be expanded to produce 6.5 million gallons.

Arkansas SoyEnergy Group was founded by brothers Jeff, Troy and Jon Hornbeck, who also manage a family farm and the [Hornbeck Seed Co.](#)

Arkansas farmers produce approximately 124 million bushels of soybeans each year.

A bushel will yield 1.3 gallons of B100, which is pure, unblended biodiesel that can be used in any diesel engine. Blended fuels are labeled to show the percentage of their biofuel content, with B20 being a blend of 20% biodiesel with 80% petroleum diesel.

Biodiesel burns cleaner than regular diesel and provides better lubrication for engines, according to Troy Hornbeck.

"Also, anytime we can use something produced from our locally produced renewable crop, it reduces our dependence on foreign oil," he says.

There are economic benefits as well, both for the company and for local farmers.

"We're trying to do something to help the farmers stay in business," Troy Hornbeck says. "We've got to have more on farm revenue and this is a good way to do that. Our goal is to create new markets and produce cost-effective fuel for farmers, right here in Arkansas County."