

News Release

Soybeans could help extend the life of asphalt roads

Soy-based asphalt sealant being road-tested near Owen Sound

For immediate release

Owen Sound, October 1, 2010 – An environmentally-friendly, soy-based asphalt sealant is being tested on a one kilometre stretch of road near Owen Sound in hopes that it may help municipalities realize savings in their road repair budgets. The product, currently used in various U.S. jurisdictions, will be evaluated by the Grey County Department of Transportation and Public Safety to determine its effectiveness in the Canadian climate.

“We’re really looking forward to testing this product and seeing its results in Grey County,” says Gary Shaw, Director of Transportation and Public Safety. “It currently costs us approximately \$80,000 per kilometre to pave a road so we would realize significant savings if we were able to extend the lifespan of our asphalt roads. And with soy as a principal ingredient, it’s also environmentally friendly.”

The average life span of asphalt-paved surfaces is 15 to 17 years, which can potentially be stretched to as much as 20 years by using this sealant. It is a soy-based pavement preservation agent that extends the life of existing asphalt surfaces, like roads and parking lots, by protecting them from the freezing and thawing cycles of Canadian winters. Without the use of a sealant, asphalt oxidizes and wears out due to the oxygen in the air. The small cracks that form in the asphalt fill with water, which freezes in the winter, causing larger cracks and potholes.

The petroleum-based ingredients found in traditional road preservation products are replaced with soybean oils, making it a potential new market opportunity for Ontario grain farmers. Although the product is currently produced in the United States and distributed here by Surface Green Solutions, it is the goal of Soy 20/20, an organization charged with developing market opportunities for the Ontario soybean industry, to eventually have it manufactured in Canada using Canadian soybeans.

“Soybeans are versatile and have tremendous potential in numerous “green” industrial applications like this asphalt sealant,” says Jeff Schmalz, President of Soy 20/20. “This trial is an important first step in growing demand and eventually establishing a new market for our soybean farmers for an environmentally friendly, made-in-Canada product.”

It is estimated that the one kilometre application of the sealant will use just over 36 bushels of soybeans. One acre of land in Ontario produces approximately 40 bushels of soybeans, and there are approximately 16,000 kilometres of road in Ontario. The one kilometre trial strip is located on County Road 3 west of Owen Sound near the village of Jackson. Informational signs are located at either end of the testing zone.

For more information:

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