

Brazil Has US\$ 42 Million for Farmers Growing Crops for Biodiesel

Contributed by Rosamélia de Abreu
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Over 50 thousand family farmers and their families will be able to make more money by growing crops intended for use in biodiesel production.

According to the coordinator of the Ministry of Agrarian Development's Biodiesel Program, Arnaldo de Campos, 17 thousand families are currently planting dendê palms, sunflowers, castor-oil plants, and soybeans for biodiesel production.

According to Campos, the National Family Farming Program (Pronaf) has US\$ 41.9 million (100 million reais) to distribute in loans to these producers.

"Farmers will have access to a new line of credit to begin cultivating oil-seed crops, without interfering with the crops they already cultivate, such as corn, rice, or beans. The new loan will not prejudice the resources they have already requested for their traditional crops. It is an additional line of credit."

Brazil's investment in biodiesel production is expected to reach US\$ 515 million in 2008, when production of this fuel is expected to amount to around 800 million liters.

The figure should grow to US\$ 1.5 billion in 2013, when domestic production will be 2 billion liters.

This estimate was given by the deputy head of Analysis and Accompaniment of Government Policies of the Presidential Civilian Advisory Office, José Honório Accarini, who participated in the seminar, "Biodiesel - Strategies for Production and Use in Brazil," earlier this year, in São Paulo.

Accarini points out that everybody can gain from biodiesel. "The businessman and the family farmer can make money, and poor regions can get jobs and energy in remote communities," he said.

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