

# BiofuelsDigest

## Runway cleared for aviation biofuels surge in 2012

*ASTM gives preliminary OK to Bio-SPK fuel spec; path to 58B gallon aviation biofuels market comes clearer, closer*

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In Washington, Bloomberg is reporting that ASTM has given preliminary approval to the blending of biofuels produced from algal, jatropha, municipal waste and other cellulosic feedstocks in aviation fuels. Final approval is expected no earlier than July 1st, according to ASTM, of the new BIO SPK fuel standard, which will limit such fuels to 50 percent by weight.

Following final approval of the standard, Lufthansa and Airbus are expected to begin a six-month commercial trial of a 50 percent biofuel blend, on four flights per day operating between Frankfurt and London.

Other airlines are expected to follow rapidly with flight trials, and on the sidelines of the Advanced Biofuels Leadership Conference this past April, aviation experts predicted a number of new offtake agreements between producers and airlines, following approval of the standard.

The Bio SPK standard relates to hydrotreated oils produced from waste, non-food oilseeds such as jatropha or camelina, oil recovered from organisms such as microalgae or cyanobacteria, or oil produced from animal wastes in the rendering process.

Many companies can or have trialled the UOP hydrotreating process, including Sapphire Energy, Solazyme, Terasol and Sustainable Oils. In the process, excess oxygen content is removed from the oil feedstocks to produce bio-based synthetic paraffinic kerosene, which is used as jet fuel under one of a variety of fuel specs, including Jet A, JP-4, JP-5, JP-7 or JP-8.

Other companies that could enter the aviation fuel space include Neste Oil and Dynamic Fuels, which use hydrotreating to produce renewable diesel. In addition, the fuel spec would make it possible for almost any producer of virgin or used oils, such as waste cooking oil, to potentially enter into what is expected to be a fast-growing market for renewable jet fuels. ■