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## The Vegetable Oil Car

As of 2006 there is no one company manufacturing anything known as a vegetable oil car. A vegetable oil car, also known as a 'grease car' or 'SVO car' (SVO stands for straight vegetable oil), is usually a vehicle with a diesel engine that has been converted to process vegetable oil into biodiesel.

Pouring straight vegetable oil into your gas tank would be a serious mistake. If you burned straight unprocessed oils in the diesel engine it would simply congeal and then clot your fuel injectors and engine. It will also eat away at your rubber hose fuel lines and seals.

In order to be useful, vegetable oil must be converted into biodiesel before it will run effectively in an engine. Biodiesel fuel will react very similarly to diesel fuel in a diesel engine. Like diesel fuel, biodiesel ignites when compressed causing air in the engine cylinders to expand. This is the energy that pushes the engine pistons into motion.

However don't think that you can mix just a bit of raw vegetable oil with some diesel fuel and create a vegetable oil car. Raw vegetable oil cannot meet biodiesel fuel specifications, it is not registered with the EPA, and it is not a legal motor fuel. It is bad for the diesel engine or diesel car. Fuel grade biodiesel goes through quite a bit of processing before it acceptable to be sold commercially.

Biodiesel works best in today's diesel engines in blends of petroleum fuel and biodiesel that are 20% biodiesel or less. Most manufacturers don't recommend the use of biodiesel in higher blends although it seems to be common knowledge among home brewers of biodiesel that diesel engines can run on blends as high as 100%.

However before you try to save money on fuel prices by filling your diesel car with 100% (neat) biodiesel make sure you consult your OEM. Most OEM's detail in full the kind of damage that can be done to your particular model of car should you decide to fill it with neat biodiesel.

Biodiesel blends perform almost identically to conventional diesel fuel. The National Biodiesel Board claims that there is only 1.73% difference in economy, torque and horsepower between B20 blend biodiesel and Diesel No. 2 fuel. The fact is that biodiesel fuel blends perform very similar to low sulphur diesel fuel in terms of power, torque, haulage and fuel consumption without major modification to diesel engines!

However the use of pure vegetable oil in the same engine will simply send it to the scrap heap. If you want to convert your vehicle into a vegetable oil car then you need to buy an SVO conversion kit. This heats and processes straight vegetable oil into useable fuel right inside your car engine.

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