

Have we got news for you...

Ohio is a national leader in soybean bioproducts

By KEITH KEMP

THE time has come — and in fact is long overdue — to replace petroleum-based products with non-toxic, agriculturally derived alternatives. Ohio stands to benefit from this transition, as our state is a nationally recognized leader of the bioproducts movement.

Bioproducts are household or industrial products made with farm-based sources, such as soybeans and corn that give consumers environmentally friendly, safe options.



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counterparts.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture identifies more than 15,000 "biopreferred" products. Soybeans are used to make cushion foam, furniture, biodegradable and disposable paper cups and packaging, paints, pet shampoo, and laundry detergent.

These products replace chemically derived sources, protect the environment, and boost the economy. They are increasingly available at Ohio hardware, grocery, and retail stores.

Federal law requires all federal agencies to purchase bioproducts whenever feasible. Ohio is doing even more: Beginning this October, all state agencies and public colleges and universities will be required to buy agriculturally derived bioproducts instead of

those that use traditional materials, whenever such products are available.

Ohio is the first state to enact such a program. Many Ohio cities, including Bowling Green, have taken the lead in committing their cities to buying bioproducts.

To help local governments get started, the Ohio Soybean Council has established a bioproducts buying group called the American Green Products Consortium. The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, the Ohio Corn Growers Association, NuTek, and the Ohio Bioproducts Innovation Center support the consortium.

To urge Ohioans to buy bioproducts, the soybean council has created a Web site, soyinside.org.

It offers a virtual tour of a model home, showing consumers the range of common household items for which soy-based products can substitute.

Soybeans and other agricultural products help the environment. According to the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency, the 3.34 billion bushels of soybeans produced last year filtered carbon dioxide and other gases to the same extent as if 21 million cars had been removed from U.S. highways.

A growing number of Ohio companies make bioproducts. Ashland, in Dublin, makes Envirez, a soy-based plastic resin used in shower and tub units and tractors. International Paper, in Kenton, produces cups and food containers using corn starch.

NuTek, in Chagrin Falls, makes several lines of lubricants, degreasers, and cleaners from soybean oil. Cleveland based Sherwin Williams sells soy-based paint.

A broad range of research and development initiatives in the state of Ohio has helped to create products and solutions.

Soybean farmers play a vital role in the state's economy, making things better for consumers and businesses alike.

Keith Kemp is chairman of the Ohio Soybean Council.