

Air France to power planes with cooking oil

4 July 2011, By Michael d'Estries

In a giant nod to the growing recycled fuel industry, Air France-KLM has announced that it will start flying planes in September using a blend of kerosene and used cooking oil. More than 200 flights between Paris and Amsterdam will be the first to embrace the alternative fuel.

"In November 2009 we demonstrated that it was technically possible to fly on biokerosene," said KLM's managing director Camiel Eurlings. "Now, a year and a half after our first [demonstration flight](#) on Camelina, a new phase has been entered around the world, that of certification. Authorisation will soon be granted to operate commercial flights on biofuel."

It's important to note, that the use of used cooking oil in no way compromises the safety of an aircraft. Dynamic Fuels, which produces the renewable diesel, refines the used cooking oil so that it meets precisely the same technical specifications as traditional kerosene. One of the cost-saving benefits to the airline is that its planes require absolutely no modification to embrace the new fuel.

Dynamic Fuels says that it can create its biofuel from a variety of additional sources, including animal fat, vegetable oil, tall oil (a byproduct from the treatment of pine wood for production of pulp or paper), and grease.

Air France-KLM's biofuel initiative is part of a comprehensive effort by airlines to reduce their [carbon emissions](#) and overall footprint. The [International Air Transport Association](#) set a [target](#) in 2007 to eliminate [carbon dioxide emissions](#) from air travel by 2050.

It's unclear what percent of biofuel will be used for the flights, but during the 2009 test, a 50/50 mix was successfully tested in one of the four Boeing 747's engines. Nevertheless, Eurlings says that price is still an enormous barrier to 100 percent sustainable energy.

"The costs of biofuels need to come down substantially and permanently. This can be achieved through innovation, collaboration and the right legislation that stimulates biofuel in the airline industry, but with an eye on honest competition," he said. "We really need to move forward together to attain continuous access to sustainable fuel."

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