



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## University of San Diego Recycles Trans-Fat Free Oils into Biodiesel

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In November 2005, University of San Diego Dining Services voluntarily switched to 'Fry-On ZT High Performance Zero Trans Liquid Frying Oil' in all dining areas, including the main residential dining hall, the 'Torero Grille' food court and the banquets and catering department. The unique zero-trans fat, canola-corn oil blend is low in saturated fat, has no greasy aftertaste and contains zero grams of trans-fat per serving. Dining Services has also switched to using 'Phase,' a trans-fat free butter substitute, for cooking.

The first venture into recycling the oil into biodiesel began when the coach of USD's men's crew team called Rudy Spano, Director of Dining Services. The eco-blazer wanted to use the department's trans-fat free oil to fuel his truck. "I was very interested in this collaboration and soon found that our staff who would recycle the oil and store it for pick up were equally supportive of the idea. This has definitely been a win-win program," Rudy Spano said. Through a combined effort of purchasing the appropriate equipment needed to clean and convert the oil to fuel, a partnership was forged. 15 months later, the coach has honed the process down to a science and continues to use approximately 70% of the department's used oil. Every two to three weeks, the coach picks up 40 gallons of oil. The remaining 30% is picked up and recycled into useful commercial goods every six weeks by Darling International Inc.

It is hoped that one day the program may be expanded to fuel a university vehicle, such as one of the busses that transports student athletes, or a campus tram. Such a pioneering effort, between Dining Services and other key university staff, can potentially save thousands of dollars annually in both rising diesel fuel costs and fryer oil disposal costs.

In conjunction with the recycling efforts, for the spring semester Dining Services will begin an educational campaign for customers. The campaign's goal is to inform students of the new healthier cooking method utilizing trans-fat free oils, and why it is important to consume a minimal amount of processed trans-fats in one's diet. The eco-friendly aspect of turning the used oil into biodiesel will be prominently featured.

Dining Services Manager of Marketing & Development, Loryn Johnson, will publicize the information via departmental and university web sites, and fliers in all campus dining areas. According to Johnson, "The biggest challenge will be to get the word out in such a way that will not only interest the students, but will hopefully make them think about what their diets consist of, and whether or not they are eating the best foods for their lifestyles and overall health."

### *Additional information on Trans Fats and Bio-diesel:*

- The use of trans-fat free oil has not yet been made a law in California.
- According to the Food and Drug Administration, trans-fat is made when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil—a process called hydrogenation. Hydrogenation increases the shelf life and flavor stability of foods containing these fats. Unlike other fats, the majority of trans-fat is formed when food manufacturers turn liquid oils into solid fats like shortening and hard margarine. A small amount of trans-fat is found naturally, primarily in dairy products, some meat, and other animal-based foods.
- Trans-fats lower the levels of HDL (good cholesterol) and increase the levels of LDL (bad cholesterol). This can make the arteries more rigid, cause major clogging of arteries, cause insulin resistance, and cause or contribute to type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems.
- Biodiesel is a renewable and clean-burning fuel that is manufactured from vegetable oil (or animal fats) and alcohol and can be used in any engine or heater that runs on diesel fuel or heating oil. Biodiesel pollutes far less than pure petroleum-based diesel and according to a 1998 study from the U.S. Department of Energy and Department of Agriculture, can substantially reduce emissions of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter (soot), as well as reduce carbon dioxide emissions by up to 78%.