

This article first released by: Ford

In: Jul. 2005

*Due to this article's content, it appears within the Transport section in the following areas:
Bioethanol, Manufacturers.*

FORD ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP TO OPERATE FIRST 'GREEN' FOCUS FLEXI-FUEL CARS IN BRITAIN



BRENTWOOD, Essex, 7 July, 2005 - The European launch of the new Ford Focus Flexi-Fuel Vehicle heralds an important landmark in Ford of Britain's plan to introduce cars capable of running on bioethanol into this country.

As British media drive the latest Focus Flexi-Fuel Vehicle (FFV) in Sweden this week, Ford is announcing a partnership with the Somerset Biofuel Project.

Ford, which was the first manufacturer to market a bioethanol-powered car in Europe with the prior model Focus FFV in 2001, is sole vehicle provider to the project. Somerset County Council is leading the scheme which, subject to European Union approval, would initially bring around 40 all-new Focus FFVs to the county early next year.

Ford is negotiating with the council, Wessex Water, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Wessex Grain to introduce Focus FFVs on their fleets. All organisations are partners in the Somerset project, which has been set up to produce bioethanol in the county, make the low carbon fuel available at five refuelling stations in the county and operate bioethanol-powered Fords to stimulate wider interest.

Andy Taylor, Ford's corporate citizenship director, said: "The Ford Focus has been Britain's favourite car every year since launch in 1998. Ford has moved fast to launch a bioethanol version of the all-new Focus which went on sale this year. All this would be for nothing without the simultaneous installation of a fuel supply infrastructure alongside the availability of bioethanol vehicles from Ford. The Somerset Biofuel Project is proving what can be accomplished when major players work towards a common goal."

In Sweden 80 per cent of Focus models sold since 2001 have been Flexi-Fuel Vehicles. The Somerset project draws on the Swedes' experience of establishing regional bioethanol distribution networks and the introduction of bioethanol cars.



In Somerset, Wessex Grain is planning a bioethanol production plant on an existing grain storage site in Henstridge. The new facility would be able to convert 340,000 tonnes of wheat into 131,000,000 litres of ethanol a year at full capacity. Bioethanol for the first Focus FFVs on the road in Somerset next year will be supplied by Wessex Grain from crops grown locally and processed elsewhere.

The 1.8-litre Focus FFV offers an overall 70 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions compared to the same petrol-only model. This is achieved by factoring in the CO₂ absorbed by the crop when grown prior to harvest for bioethanol production. The South West region, including Somerset, has a target to cut CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent in the area by 2010.

Ian Bright, sustainable development officer for Somerset County Council, said: "In addition to reducing greenhouse gases, the bioethanol project presents significant opportunities for the county's rural economy. Ford is a welcome and vital member of the Somerset Biofuel Project, which is working to realise important environmental and economic benefits."

In June this year Ford and 13 other major organisations signed a bioethanol declaration calling on the UK Government to support investment in renewable fuels, ensuring that at least 5.75 per cent of transport fuels sold in this country are renewable by 2010.

UK prices for the Ford Focus FFV will be announced later this year.