

February 24, 2003

Beans (Yes, Beans) Help Environment and
Promote Longer Track Life on Norfolk Southern

NORFOLK, VA - An unlikely new and environmentally friendly track lubricant - made from soybeans - is now in use on Norfolk Southern Railway.

SoyTrak(TM) biodegradable soybean oil-based grease is being used as an alternative to petroleum-based grease for lubricating rails to reduce rail side wear and wheel flange wear in curves.

"Soybean grease is better for the environment, competitively priced and very effective," said John M. Samuels, senior vice president operations planning and support. "It can increase the life of rail on curves substantially."

Norfolk Southern's Research and Test Department in Roanoke, Va., and the University of Northern Iowa's Ag-Based Industrial Lubricants Research Program, in partnership with exclusive distributor Portec Rail Products Inc., invested three years of laboratory and rail environment site research to ensure that the grease's performance met the demanding requirements of freight railroads. Formulated from U.S.-grown soybean oils and additives, SoyTrak is produced by Environmental Lubricants Manufacturing in Waverly, Iowa.

"Norfolk Southern's approval, after extensive research, including tests at the Association of American Railroads' Transportation Technology Center, gives new credibility to bio-based products," said Lou Honary, UNI professor and director of the university's lubricants research program.

Summer- and winter-grade blends are in use, and an all-season blend is being developed. "SoyTrak decomposes through natural processes in a matter of weeks after application, so it's beneficial for the environment," said Don Cregger, NS manager project engineering. "It's more efficient than petroleum grease in reducing wear through its greater durability and capacity for reducing friction."

In a letter to Norfolk Southern, U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa said, "Your company's decision to use bio-based lubricants is indicative of your appreciation for the initiatives of the Farm Bill and recent strategic emphasis on the use of bio-based products."

U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa added that, "Bio-based alternatives open new markets for Iowa agricultural products."

Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) is one of the nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway subsidiary operates 21,500 route miles in 22 states, the District of Columbia and Ontario, serving every major container port in the eastern United States and providing superior connections to western rail carriers. NS operates the East's most extensive intermodal network and is the nation's largest rail carrier of automotive parts and finished vehicles.

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