

6. Converting Used Cooking Oil to Biodiesel

Prelims: Governance- Schemes, Policies; Pollution & Waste Management

Mains: GS-II- Government Policies and Interventions for development in Various Sectors and Issues arising out of their design and Implementation

Why in News?

- ▶▶ The Secretary of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas flagged off publicity vans in Delhi, to generate awareness about the initiative of converting used cooking oil to biodiesel.

Highlights:

- ▶▶ Wide publicity is being given to the RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil) initiative by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to make India more environmentally sustainable by the conversion of used cooking oil, which otherwise would be disposed of in drains, cause spillages/ environmental damage and pose health hazards.
- ▶▶ More such initiatives are being planned in other cities of the country.
- ▶▶ The publicity involves wide social media campaigns to spread awareness and educate people about the ill effects of used cooking oil and ways to dispose it off for converting it to biodiesel.
- ▶▶ Oil Marketing Companies, under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, have floated Expression of Interest (EOI) across 100 cities of India for the supply of Biodiesel produced from Used Cooking Oil (UCO).
- ▶▶ The EOI was floated on 10th August 2019 on the occasion of World Bio-fuel Day.
- ▶▶ Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO), launched by FSSAI, provides an ecosystem that will enable the collection and conversion of UCO to biodiesel.
- ▶▶ Consumers can give their used cooking oil to authorised aggregators of used cooking oil who will in turn give it to the biodiesel manufactures for production of biodiesel which will be used for blending with diesel. The details of the RUCO oil aggregators are available at FSSAI's official website.

Ill-effects of Consuming Used Cooking Oil:

- ▶▶ During frying, several properties of cooking oil are altered. Total Polar Compounds (TPC) are formed on repeated frying. The toxicity of these compounds is associated with several diseases such as hypertension, atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, liver diseases, etc.

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- ▶▶ Additionally, the disposal of UCO in drains causes ecological damage and is an environment concern. In order to safeguard consumer health, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has fixed a limit for Total Polar Compounds at 25 percent beyond which the vegetable oil shall not be used for cooking.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):

- ▶▶ It is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GOI.
- ▶▶ It is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety.
- ▶▶ It is headquartered in New Delhi with regional offices and laboratories across the country.
- ▶▶ It was established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

