



## *Thumb BioEnergy LLC*

### **Bio Fuel for the Entrepreneurial Fire**

February 2012

While most people who have had a full and successful career are making plans for retirement, Leon Jackson broke the usual norms by starting a brand new bio diesel refining plant in 2008.

Jackson's company, Thumb BioEnergy LLC, takes used cooking oil from food establishments and refines and processes it into bio diesel fuel to be used in all diesel fuel burning equipment as an alternative fuel source. Surprisingly, the refining and production of the bio diesel produces various by products, one of which is windshield washer solvent that Thumb Bio Energy also sells as an additional revenue source. Over the past eighteen months, the company obtained 150 business contracts/customers where it drops off and picks up the collection containers with company trucks.

Jackson grew the plant successfully over the past three years, however, he wanted to expand the business, but needed financing for the expansion. Jackson was interested in applying for a loan from one of the MEDC loan funding programs. Earlier this year, Sandusky City Manager Dave Faber, MEDC's Tom Young, and MISBTDC's Tom Thompson, met with Jackson for the purpose of expanding the processing facilities of the already thriving Thumb BioEnergy LLC.

Although the initial MEDC loan fund Thumb Bio Energy was applying for did not work out due to various loan program requirements, Jackson, with subsequent meetings with the MISBTDC, completed his business plan, financial analysis and business projections and offered them to Exchange State Bank as a proposal for expansion financing.

By December 2011, he obtained financing from the bank to purchase a large commercial building with office and warehouse capabilities and funds to cover additional equipment costs.

With its current facilities, the company has produced 60,000 gallons of bio diesel fuel this year, with the majority of it being used and sold at the local co-op for their diesel burning equipment. Next year, with the new expansion, the company is on track to produce over 100,000 gallons.

With this new acquisition and growth, Jackson's business will reach the next level to produce and sell even more bio diesel for its current customers. The co-op has already expressed interest in purchasing the additional fuel stock.

Thumb Bio Energy is EPA and Renewable Fuel Standard compliant which, in itself, is a very difficult and drawn out process, but a standard that shows the level of commitment Jackson strives



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for in ensuring that his company has a reputation for quality products and service.

The company is always looking for additional used cooking oil raw materials, and besides providing the containers, Jackson also pays immediately with debit cards to the used oil vendor. Jackson currently pays \$1.25-\$1.75 per gallon for the used cooking oil with pickup and delivery container service. Please feel free to offer the company's services to your restaurant, deli, and banquet facility clients as an additional profit source for their waste products.

Find out more information about Thumb Bio Energy LLC: [www.thumbbioenergy.com](http://www.thumbbioenergy.com)

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