



## Database Makes Connections for Soy Ingredients



Soy is gaining popularity from many companies interested in providing the public with "green" products, but many companies may not know where to find suppliers of soy products. A new database is matching manufacturers of cleaning products with suppliers of soy products to provide greener results. The United Soybean Board (USB) and the soybean checkoff invest in research and commercialization of new industrial uses for soybeans.

"The CleanGredients database evolved from an attempt to answer the question 'How do I know what ingredients I can use if I'm trying to have a green program?'" says Topher Buck of the GreenBlue Institute.

CleanGredients is an online database of institutional and industrial cleaning ingredients. The database is available to the general public for a subscription fee set on a sliding scale based on the gross revenue of the companies that wish to subscribe. A project of GreenBlue Institute, a nonprofit institute that focuses on practical solutions for sustainability in industry, the database aligns broad environmental and human health goals with the cleaning product industry's business objectives. It also supports the formulation of products with human and environmental health benefits.

"The point of CleanGredients is to function as a resource," says Buck. "Formulators looking for green ingredients will have a central resource. This will reduce some research and development costs, as the database can do some of the legwork and provide information from the manufacturer."

CleanGredients focuses on hazard-based information and is not a ranking system.

The database reduces time for formulators that would be spent researching available alternatives, and toxicological and safety data related to human and environmental health. In addition, it allows formulators to avoid retesting, verifying or soliciting information from suppliers for the product recognition or certification process.

Currently, the database comprises only surfactants for cleaning hard surfaces and carpets; and laundry, hand and dish soap. There are currently 65 to 70 surfactants in the database. Modules for solvents and chelators are now being developed, and additional ingredient classes, such as fragrances and colorants, will be added as the attributes and criteria are established.

All surfactants listed in CleanGredients are biodegradable. The database includes data reviewed by a third party for:

- Aquatic toxicity,
- Biodegradability and the
- Ingredient formulations.
- Environmental purchasing,
- Eco-labeling
- Sustainability
- Needed risk assessment

The formulations use the Design for the Environment (DfE) Screen for Surfactants, a set of criteria defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The program designates surfactants with especially positive environmental characteristics. The reviews are carried out confidentially by an unbiased, third party, providing verification of claims for the key ingredient attributes for surfactants without compromising proprietary formulations.

To learn more about the CleanGredients database, go to <http://www.cleangredients.org/home> to learn more about soy products visit <http://www.unitedsoybean.org/newuses>.

USB is made up of 64 farmer-directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all U.S. soybean farmers. Checkoff funds are invested in the areas of animal utilization, human utilization, industrial utilization, industry relations, market access and supply. As stipulated in the Soybean Promotion, Research and Consumer Information Act, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service has oversight responsibilities for USB and the soybean checkoff.