

Glycerine in Spotlight: Innovation Award for Solvay

It's relatively easy to make orange juice from oranges. But imagine making an orange from orange juice. That analogy is an apt description for the work done by Solvay SA representatives who are the recipients of the 2007 Glycerine Innovation Award from the Soap and Detergent Association and the National Biodiesel Board. The honor was presented during the annual meeting and expo of the American Oil Chemists' Society in Quebec. "NBB is proud to team with SDA to encourage new, high value uses for glycerine," said Steve Howell, technical director of the National Biodiesel Board. "Glycerine is an important by-product of making biodiesel. Also, the use of glycerine as a chemical building block can help supplement petroleum-derived products." Business managers and researchers working together helped develop Solvay's Epicerol technology, which company officials say offers major environmental improvements in the production of Epichlorohydrin, whose main applications include the production of epoxy resins, paper reinforcement, and water purification products. Solvay researchers offer the analogy of making an orange from orange juice as a reference to the reverse technology that allowed the company to produce Epichlorohydrin from glycerine. Previously, the company produced synthetic glycerine from Epichlorohydrin. Currently, Solvay has 22 patent applications covering the Epicerol technology.

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