

EBB: fraudulent imports still a problem

April 21, 2010

Biodiesel Magazine

Action against fraudulent biodiesel imports is gaining momentum, as Italian judicial authorities just confirmed the seizure of a large quantity of biodiesel illegally imported in Venice last month.

Today, the provisional seizure of the cargo blocked in Venice has been extended as a definitive one by an Italian judge (GIP – Giudice per le Indagini Preliminari).

EBB highly welcomes this crucial decision, which legally confirms the fraudulent nature of a number of existing illegal traffics of biodiesel, directly or indirectly imported from the U.S.

The official customs inquiry is set to carry on and to be extended, both spatially and temporally, paving the way for definitive penal sentences.

As announced by EBB on March 31, Italian customs authorities provisionally seized a large quantity of biodiesel in the port of Venice out of an import of 10,000 metric tons of biodiesel entered in the ports of Venice and Trieste.

The product was declared as Canadian origin, but strong evidences indicate that it instead originated from the U.S. where it benefited from the \$1/gallon U.S. subsidy.

The product was namely offered with a \$150-180/ton discount compared to EU biodiesel of comparable quality, and at a lower price than the most common biodiesel raw materials (soybean oil and rapeseed oil).

A number of material evidences converge to indicate that the cargo is part of wider trans-shipment traffic aimed at evading existing EU antidumping and anti-subsidy measures on U.S. biodiesel.

Customs duties can be claimed back and collected with a retroactive effect of 3 years and, if infractions are established, are then to be paid within few days.

“Market players need to be aware that fraudulent practices will not remain unpunished and that EBB will do its utmost in assisting EU and national authorities to track and oppose these practices,” said EBB President Bernard Nicol. “Retroactive, financial penalties as well as penal terms will be involved.”

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