

 **BIO-DIESEL PLANTATIONS IN ANDHRA PRADESH**

Andhra Pradesh will raise Bio-diesel Plantations over 8,800 hectares spreading over 16 districts of state. The plants which are being raised are pongamia. The total cost for this plantation has been estimated at Rs.2341.49 lakh. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) XIII Bio-diesel project for Andhra Pradesh.

Out of the total outlay of bio-diesel project of Rs.2341.49 lakh, Rs.2224.46 lakh is loan component from NABARD and Rs.117.03 lakh is Government share. The Government of Andhra Pradesh is yet to grant Administrative Approval. However, Rs.20.00 crore has been released during the year 2007-08 under the previous RIDF bio-diesel project and an expenditure of Rs.13.28 crores has been incurred for raising bio-diesel plantations.

The tree borne oilseeds have promising potential to supplement vegetables oil supply in the country. These oilseeds grow in poor soils under low rainfall conditions without competing with annual food crops thus filling gaps in ecological niche. Promotion and development of such crops also help societal needs of eco-conservation, expansion of rural industries, rural employment generation and also supplement the supply of alternate fuel to petro-diesel thus conserving the forex reserves.