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Left and below: Soy-based firefighting foam offers a PFAS-free, biodegradable alternative that protects first responders, communities, and the environment.
Bottom: Goodyear tires use soybean oil to improve all-weather performance, helping replace petroleum while keeping treads flexible in hot and cold conditions. Skechers has licensed Goodyear's product for their shoes.

you're trying to heal."

This product, which is in the final stages of U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval, is personal for Connell, who suffered severe burns in his youth that required 360 deep circles of skin from his thigh to rebuild his leg. "That caused 360 new wounds that resulted in 360 new scars," he said. "My mission in bringing this soy skin is to prevent as many people as possible from enduring painful skin grafting. That's my pay-it-forward mission."

From the Field to the Firehouse

The USB, farmers, researchers, and private companies are teaming up to create sustainable alternatives for a variety of products such as Cross Plains Solutions' SoyFoam TF 1122. The company says this soy-based firefighting foam is entirely free of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), known as "forever chemicals," and is 100% biodegradable. The product allows departments flexibility to use it for training as well as active firefighting, said Steve Reinhard, a farmer from Bucyrus, Ohio, the past USB chair and a volunteer firefighter. "I like to call this a triple win," he said. "It's good for our first responders, it's good for the environment, and we sell soybeans in the process."

SoyFoam is approved for Class A (ordinary combustible) and Class B (flammable liquid) fires, with further certifications underway for broader use, including wildfires. "I think this is going to be a great product to fight wildfires with the way it coats and extinguishes the flame," Reinhard said.

Across the nation, about 50 fire departments have switched to SoyFoam. Many more have taken samples to begin their own evaluation. The first rollout has the potential to utilize more than 12 million bushels of soybeans, Reinhard said.

Powering Performance

Goodyear began incorporating soybean oil into tires about six years ago, starting with the tire tread, Pierce said, adding the company's goal is to eliminate petroleum use in tires by 2040. Today, 11 lines of Goodyear tires feature soybean oil, including those for police cruisers, fire trucks, trash trucks, and buses. Soy offers a unique advantage over petroleum by helping tire treads stay flexible in cold weather and stable in heat, enabling all-weather performance and earning the prestigious "Three-Peak Mountain Snowflake" rating, Pierce said.



SKECHERS

"I just took a 15-hour road trip with my family, all on Goodyear's soy-based tires," he said. "They performed great, and I trusted my family's safety to them."

USB continues to work with Goodyear to expand soy use in other tire components, highlighting the functionality and sustainability soy offers over petroleum, Pierce said.

Also, Skechers has licensed this technology from Goodyear for use in their shoe soles.

Another product making waves is DeWalt's soy-based bar and chain oil, developed in partnership with Dynamic Green Products. The ➔

Photography: Courtesy of manufacturers

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Congratulations!

Matt Strelecki
People, Inc.

