

Frequently Asked Questions About Solenis' Corn Oil Extraction Patent

What is the background regarding Solenis' corn oil extraction patent?

Solenis' corn oil extraction aids, which are marketed as Dimension™ corn oil extraction aids, were developed by the company in 2009 when the company operated as Ashland Water Technologies. Since that time, Solenis' invention has enabled numerous ethanol producers in North America to increase their corn oil yields, and as a result, improve their profit potential. Solenis has invested significant time and money in developing and commercializing its corn oil extraction technology.

A provisional U.S. patent for the technology was first filed in March 2011. The patent (US Patent No. US 8,841,469 B2) was subsequently awarded to Solenis on September 23, 2014.

Solenis' patent covers the use of chemical additives to improve the separation of corn oil in the ethanol production process, including the use of variations of the chemical additives described in the patent.

What rights does the patent bestow to Solenis?

The awarding of the patent means that with respect to Solenis' patented corn oil extraction method, Solenis has the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale or selling the invention throughout the United States.

How do I know if my ethanol plant is affected by Solenis' patent?

Solenis' patent only affects ethanol plants located in the United States. If your plant is located in the United States and you are using the chemical additives described in the patent to improve the separation of corn oil in your ethanol production process, you are likely affected by the patent.

What changes can I expect in the coming months?

If you wish to use a chemical extraction aid described in the patent, you will need to source your extraction aid from Solenis. At your request, we will perform a detailed survey of your system and will then recommend the optimal corn oil extraction aid for your process. We also offer other patented technologies that provide the opportunity to increase your profitability, including scale inhibitors, fermentation aids, fermentation antimicrobials, boiler water treatments and cooling water treatments.

Has Solenis notified other extraction aid suppliers about its patent?

Yes. We have notified other extraction aid suppliers about our patent and have requested that they immediately cease and desist selling the chemical additives described in the patent to ethanol producers for the use described in the patent. Even if you are not contacted by your current supplier, the patent still excludes you from using a chemical extraction aid as defined in the patent without Solenis' permission. A local Solenis field representative will contact you in the next few weeks to discuss your transition to Solenis' patented technology.

Will there be a price increase?

Although we have invested significantly in developing and commercializing our corn oil extraction technology, we do not intend to increase prices simply because we have a patent. Our policy always has been, and always will be, to price our programs based on the value we generate for each of our customers. And this is no different than with our corn oil extraction aids, which are competitively priced.

Do I need to stop using my current corn oil extraction aid product right away?

No. We will work with you on a transition plan that takes into account your current supply and then switch you to our technology at an appropriate time.

Is Solenis' product offering comparable to the offerings of other suppliers, particularly in regard to custom-formulated products?

Yes. Our product offering includes standard product formulations as well as custom-formulated products. Your Solenis field representative will talk with you about your specific needs and will recommend a product that performs the same or better than the product you are currently using.

How will Solenis confirm that its recommended extraction aid performs as well as or better than the product I am currently using?

Solenis will perform a detailed survey of your system and then recommend the optimal corn oil extraction aid for your process. With your permission, and at a time convenient to you, we will conduct a trial to validate the performance of our product in your system. During the trial, we will monitor the performance of our program compared to your prior program to ensure your satisfaction.

What if Solenis' recommended extraction aid does not initially produce satisfactory results?

We are not aware of any competing product that will deliver a better yield than our Dimension™ corn oil extraction aids. However, in the unlikely event that our recommended product does not meet your expectations, we will be more than glad to have one of our applications specialists evaluate your program for additional optimization opportunities.

Does Solenis offer Kosher-certified products?

Yes. We offer Kosher-certified products.

Is Solenis considering licensing its technology to other chemical suppliers?

We do not intend to offer licensing options to other suppliers.

Does Solenis plan to take legal action against ethanol producers that practiced the corn oil extraction method in the past?

We do not intend to take legal action against ethanol producers that practiced the corn oil extraction method in the past. However, moving forward, we will defend our intellectual property, including patent rights, in any manner we deem appropriate to protect any actual or potential violation of those rights.

Will Solenis charge ethanol producers retroactive licensing fees for past practice of the corn oil extraction method?

We do not intend to charge ethanol producers retroactive licensing fees for past practice of the corn oil extraction method.

Will Solenis allow other suppliers to distribute Dimension™ corn oil extraction aids?

While it is our intention to be the primary supplier of our Dimension™ corn oil extraction aids, we may consider allowing a limited number of other suppliers to distribute our extraction aids.

What is Solenis' typical turnaround time for corn oil extraction aid product orders?

Historically we have operated on a 10-business-day lead time for the majority of the products we offer. Our goal is to continue our 10-day lead time for our corn oil extraction aids.

What are benefits of working with Solenis?

Solenis a leading supplier to the ethanol industry and offers a variety of innovative technologies that address a wide range of customer needs. Our state-of-the-art product portfolio for ethanol producers includes process aids, water treatment chemistries, and monitoring and control systems. Working with Solenis comes with the opportunity to improve your profit potential by increasing production, improving product quality and reducing operating costs.

We are fully committed to the ethanol industry and have invested heavily in our people, R&D initiatives and supply chain to help ensure we meet or exceed your expectations. Moving forward, all of our actions are focused on growing our relationship with you and delivering trusted solutions to your company.

If I want to speak with someone at Solenis now, who should I contact?

If you have a question or concern and would like to speak with someone now, please feel free to contact Jennifer Bailey, global strategic product director at Solenis. Jennifer may be reached by phone at (514) 884-4876 or by email at jabailey@solenis.com

Revised 10-20-15