**Soy-based adhesive readied for market**

Deland Myers pops out of his chair in his Food Sciences Building office. He dives into boxes, finding fiberboard samples for visitors.

They're made with soy-based adhesives that Myers, a food science and human nutrition associate professor, has spent years researching. Now he believes they're ready for commercialization.

Several factors favor Myers' assertion. Prices are rising and supplies are falling for petroleum, the source of most wood adhesives. Most also contain a type of formaldehyde – a possible cancer-causing chemical.

Soy protein, the part left when soybeans are crushed for the oil used in biodiesel fuel, usually goes in animal feed and foods. As biodiesel production increases, however, more soy meal and flour will be for sale.

Adhesives are a potential market for those products, said Myers, an affiliate of the centers for Designing Foods to Improve Nutrition and Crops Utilization Research.

West Central Cooperative of Ralston, the country's largest biodiesel marketer, is working with Myers. "I don't know that we're in danger of having excess soy meal," research and development manager Larry Breeding said. "However, you want to always take a look at different uses for a product."

Myers believes soy adhesives can supplement existing adhesives. "We think by adding soy, we can make a product that's more appealing...and may have some performance aspects others lack," he said. Myers is seeking companies interested in using soy protein in their adhesive formulations and in making wood and fiber composite boards with soy adhesives for testing.

Years ago, he told his research group, "We're on the side of right. If we can keep going, the time will come when companies seek alternatives."

"Now," he said, "I think we're at that point."