

# Grease Up The Truck!

**R**ay Hudson, truck #A5912, is the kind of owner-operator that you really like to have on your dispatch board. Not only has Ray garnered 'O/O of the Month' honors three separate times in the past three years (April '01, April '02, and January '03) and received the 2001 Kingsport/Decatur O/O of the Year, but Ray has another honor as well. His truck smells like a french fry.

Yes, Ray is the proud owner of the 'Veggie Mack', a '99 Mack spec'd out just the way he likes it. It runs on a 460 HP engine and is Mack-built, through and through, as he likes to say. Except, of course, that it runs on vegetable oil instead of diesel.

No, that is not a typo. Back in May of 2003, Ray got together



Ray and Mary Hudson

with Charles Anderson of Greasel Conversions and had his Mack's engine redesigned to allow it to run on bio-fuel, french fry grease to put it simply. Technically, it can run on catfish grease, chicken grease, or any other used grease Ray can get his hands on. As a matter of fact, it will even run on regular unused vegetable oil, but at more than \$3 a gallon, it's hardly worth it. Used grease, on the other hand, is readily available and



Ray Hudson 'greasing' up his truck.

restaurants are more than happy to have him take it off their hands. Ray takes advantage of this golden opportunity by placing 55 gallon collection barrels at restaurants and eateries all over his town and nearby communities, including one that fries up some fantastic catfish and supplies him with about 200 gallons of used oil every 3 weeks. He

collects his grease weekly, brings it home and lets it settle before taking the good stuff at the top that he will eventually use to fuel his tractor.

The conversion process for the 'Veggie Mack' was pretty involved, so if you're looking for some good technical reading on the subject, as well as the story on the actual conversion of the 'Veggie Mack', check out <http://www.greasel.com> and see what it took to create this amazing rolling french fry. According to Ray, the changeover has been a great success with the toughest thing actually being able to keep a steady flow of grease into his tanks. As it is, Ray has put about 86,000 miles on his truck since May of 2003, with better than 60% of those miles being powered by around 8,000 gallons of used grease, since the engine can actually run on either fuel source at the flip of a switch. To cover that dual fuel ability, the 'Veggie Mack' sports a pair of 135 gallon fuel tanks, one dedicated to diesel and the other to grease, with two more grease tanks added on, one at 100 gallons and the other at 60 gallons. The engine uses diesel to start, but Ray can then switch over to grease and average over 6 miles to the gallon, very comparable or even slightly better than what he would get with diesel. And with a free price-tag on used oil, that equates to some serious fuel-cost savings.

Ray's fleet manager, Corey Coulson (IC-Ops), has nothing but good things to say about Ray. "He's a great driver, an excellent go-to guy, and always has a great attitude." Come on, Corey, there has to be something that gets to him. "Nope, he never gets upset about anything other than where to get his next tank of veggie oil."

Ray, Heartland Express thanks you for the ongoing excellent job you do for us. If any of you see the 'Veggie Mack' cruising down the road, give a holler to Ray and ask him about his incredible truck.

By Michael Koogler (IC-Rec)

## Letters of Thanks

Todd Trimble (CH-TM) was proud to report that Tammy from Dupont in Moncks Corner, SC had just called him to report how nice our drivers are and how great it is that we always come in with clean equipment! Way to go everyone, keep up the good work!!

Hello,

My name is Susan Coleman and I would like to comment on a driver I met when I flew off the road due to ice and snow. This driver works for Heartland Express and although I did not get his name, I do know he is from Minnesota and has a wife, Emily, and a five year old son.

This driver was very nice and offered me his personal phone to call for help and reassured me as I was quite shaken.

This driver was a great representative of your company and I just wanted to acknowledge him.

I hope whoever receives this will find him and tell him thank you again for me and my husband. He was in Nebraska close to Lincoln. Please compliment him on his citizenship and I will always think positively when I see a Heartland Express traveling our interstate and remember him. Thanks. You have a good driver who I hope will have a safe and long career with you all.

Sincerely,

Susan Coleman

What a wonderful representative of Heartland Express! Great job Viktor Gavrilyuk, #4977!

## Dispatcher Terry

There once was a dispatcher whose name was Terry.

He'd get us all loads that we could carry.  
North and South and East and West.  
We'd do all the driving and he'd do the rest.

He'd send us dispatch messages via satellite,  
And keep us on the highway running day  
and night.

He'd send us crawling through heavy rains,  
And driving 'cross the rolling plains.

He'd send us sliding through thick, white  
snow.

We'd say, "Can do!" and off we'd go.  
We'd creep up mountains; fly down the other  
side.

Just keep us moving; we'll go far and wide.

Terry works really hard to keep us happy,  
But we better close quick before we get too  
sappy.

Don't know where he'd send you, or where  
he'd take ya,  
But we're still hopin' for a load goin' to  
Jamaica!

Written by a driver, February 11, 2003  
For Terry Loveless (IC-Ops)