

For Immediate Release

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Firestone Race Tires Made with Natural Rubber from Desert Shrubs to Make INDYCAR Competition Debut in Nashville

- **Bridgestone is using racing to demonstrate the performance of natural rubber by developing an all-new race tire with a sidewall made of guayule.**
- **Guayule holds promise as an alternative crop for America's drought-stricken desert southwest and a domestic source of natural rubber.**
- **Bridgestone has invested \$100M in guayule research as part of its effort to achieve carbon neutrality and 100% renewable tires by 2050, aligning with the "Emotion", "Ecology", and "Energy" values of the Bridgestone E8 Commitment.**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (August 4, 2022) – As part of its commitment to accelerating the use of sustainable technologies in the NTT INDYCAR SERIES, [Bridgestone Americas](#) (Bridgestone) has developed an all-new race tire with a sidewall made with natural rubber derived from the guayule desert shrub. Bridgestone will make the competition debut of these Firestone Firehawk alternate race tires made with guayule at the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix in Nashville Aug. 5-7.

"The introduction of guayule natural rubber to America's preeminent open-wheel racing series speaks to the confidence we have in the technology and its potential as a scalable, sustainable and domestic source of natural rubber—a vital raw material," said Nizar Trigui, Chief Technology Officer and Group President, Solutions Businesses, Bridgestone Americas, Inc. "This milestone represents our commitment to realizing a more sustainable future for tires, racing and mobility."

From farm to track

Bridgestone is using racing as a proving ground to demonstrate the performance of this rubber material, which it has been heavily researching for more than a decade. Guayule is grown and processed at the company's R&D facilities in Arizona and made into the Firestone Firehawk alternate race tires at its Akron, Ohio, race tire production facility. Firestone Firehawk race tires with sidewalls made with guayule-derived natural rubber were introduced at the Indy 500 Pit Stop Challenge in May 2022 as a first look before debuting in competition as the alternate race tire at the Big Machine Music

City Grand Prix. Bridgestone plans to incorporate guayule natural rubber into more of its race tires in 2023.

Benefits of guayule

- Guayule is a heat tolerant, woody shrub that thrives in America's desert southwest.
- The shrub can be farmed with existing row-crop equipment, helping to save costs for farmers.
- Bridgestone believes guayule rubber has the potential to have a positive economic effect while aiding in reducing the energy and other environmental impacts associated with the transportation of rubber sourced overseas.

Bridgestone launched its guayule research initiative in 2012 when it broke ground on a guayule processing and research center in Mesa, Ariz. Today, the company operates the research center in Mesa, as well as a 287-acre guayule farm in Eloy, Ariz. To date, Bridgestone has invested more than \$100 million in its efforts to commercialize guayule, achieving major milestones such as producing the first tire containing guayule-derived natural rubber in 2015 and continued expansion of its guayule molecular breeding program. Bridgestone aims to commercialize use of guayule rubber in tires by 2030.

Guayule is part of the Bridgestone plan to achieve carbon neutrality and make tires from 100% renewable materials by 2050. The company is actively researching a range of solutions to support the recycling of materials from end-of-life tires and promote the replacement of non-renewable materials such as oil, silica and virgin carbon black in new tires.

The Firestone Firehawk guayule race tire initiative aligns with the [Bridgestone E8 Commitment](#) that consists of 8 Bridgestone-like values starting with the letter "E" (Energy, Ecology, Efficiency, Extension, Economy, Emotion, Ease and Empowerment) to realize a sustainable society. The guayule race tire debut aligns with the company's "Emotion," "Ecology" and "Energy" commitments.

About Bridgestone Americas, Inc.:

Bridgestone Americas, Inc. is the U.S.-based subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation, a global leader in tires and rubber, building on its expertise to provide solutions for safe and sustainable mobility. Headquartered in Nashville, Tenn., Bridgestone Americas employs more than 45,000 people across its worldwide operations. Bridgestone offers a diverse product portfolio of premium tires and advanced solutions backed by innovative technologies, improving the way people around the world move, live, work and play.

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