

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Grant Proposals for Renewable Energy and Efficiency Projects** ***Workshop series on financial incentives for farms and small businesses.***

**Holden, MA** – The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program (MFEP), the Massachusetts Woodlands Institute, and USDA Rural Development are sponsoring two, two-part Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency workshops. The workshops will include information about the funding and technical assistance available to farms and small businesses through the USDA's Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP). Eligibility requirements and sample project proposals will also be discussed.

REAP funding (authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill) supports a diverse range of clean energy technologies; not only bio-fuels but also wind, solar, biomass electricity, biogas and energy efficiency. In 2008, 769 projects were awarded a total of \$34 million in grants and \$15.5 million in loan guarantees nationwide. Fifteen Massachusetts rural small businesses and farmers received \$1,039,177.

Choose from one of the following sessions to complete part one of the workshop:

**January 27, 2009, 9 am-12 noon**  
**Rutland Public Library**  
**280 Main Street, Rutland, MA**

**OR**

**January 28, 2009, 9 am-12 Noon**  
**Town Hall Annex**  
**381 Main Street**  
**West Newbury, MA**

Follow-up grant writing workshops will be held on February 19 and March 19, 2009 for those interested in applying for a REAP grant and/or guaranteed loan. USDA Rural Development, MFEP, and Mass Woodlands Institute (MWI) staff will be providing one-on-one assistance. Pre-registration will be required for this session and participants must have attended a prior USDA REAP informational meeting or previously applied for a USDA energy grant. Refreshments will be available at both workshops. Funding for this free workshop series has been provided through a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant, and both Berkshire-Pioneer RC&D, the administrator of the MFEP, and MWI are equal opportunity employers. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Financial assistance is available to eligible participants for grant writing services.

For more information or to register for a workshop, please contact Jim Lavin, USDA Rural Development, at 508-829-4477 or [james.lavin@ma.usda.gov](mailto:james.lavin@ma.usda.gov).

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