



NEWS RELEASE

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**VENEMAN ANNOUNCES \$22.8 MILLION TO SUPPORT
RENEWABLE ENERGY INITIATIVES IN 26 STATES**
167 Recipients Named to Receive Grants: 89 Agricultural Producers /78 Small Businesses
Nebraska Receives Nearly \$182,000 for 14 Projects

SPENCER, Iowa, Sept. 15, 2004—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of 167 recipients from 26 states to receive \$22.8 million in competitive grants to support President Bush's renewable energy efforts. The funds will be used by rural small businesses, farmers and ranchers to develop renewable energy systems and promote energy efficiency improvements.

"The Bush Administration is committed to advancing renewable energy ventures in rural America," said Veneman. "We have the natural resources and the ingenuity to create new forms of energy and to use it more efficiently."

Veneman said the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements program was created as part of the 2002 Farm Bill to assist farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses develop renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements to their operations. In 2003, the Bush Administration invested under this program \$21.7 million to develop or improve wind power, anaerobic digester, solar, ethanol and other bioenergy related systems or energy efficiency improvements in 24 states.

A large percent of the 94 renewable energy applications selected this year will support anaerobic digesters and small and large wind power type ventures. A predominate number of the 73 energy efficiency grants will go to agricultural producers who will use the funds for buildings. Funding of selected applicants will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the grant agreements.

Nebraska grant recipients:

Renewable Energy Systems Grants:

- **Cozad Alfalfa Inc., Cozad-\$37,500** to help develop solid fuel burner system to replace natural gas fire burner used to dehydrate alfalfa feed products. New system will generate over 50000 therms of energy replacing over 90 percent of the energy requirements of the dehydration process. Project will return the cost of investment in slightly over 5 years.
- **The King's Fish Inc., Gibbon-\$3,242** to assist in developing wind and solar aeration and fresh water pumping system for the aquaculture business that will provide 75 to 90 percent, or approximately 6412 KWHs, of the energy demand.

Energy Efficiency Improvement Grants:

- **Braun's IGA & Locker Inc., Atkinson-\$5,000** will assist in replacement of old heating cooling system with new energy efficient HVAC system. New and improved heat reclaim system will also be installed. Project will save over 5700 therms annually, a 68 percent energy savings over old system. Project will return its cost of investment in under 4 years.
- **Cal's Boot & Shoe Service, Ogallala-\$2,500** to help in replacing old heating and cooling system with new energy efficient HVAC system. New system to save over 110 million BTUs of energy and will return cost of investment in slightly over 8 years.
- **Dennis Brown Farms, Waco-\$10,900** to help convert gravity irrigation system and less efficient natural gas power unit to efficient low pressure pivot and new higher efficient diesel engine. Project will save over 260 million BTUs of energy at 31 percent savings rate. Improvements will return cost of investment in just over 8 years.

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- **Foodmart II Inc., Crete-\$11,750** to aid in new lighting, energy efficient refrigerated display cases and doors, walk-in freezers and insulation for the grocery store. Energy saving modifications will save over 195000 KWHs of energy for a savings of 48.5 percent. Energy savings will return cost of investment in less than 5 years.
- **Jurgensen Enterprises, Burwell-\$3,400** will assist in replacement of freezer doors and compressors with new freezer doors and high efficiency air-cooled compressor at Mr. J's grocery store. Project will yield over 62 percent in energy savings and return cost of investment in about 8 years.
- **Klasek Farms, Inc., Western-\$9,150** to help replace inefficient high pressure irrigation system and old inefficient power unit with new low pressure irrigation system and efficient power unit. Project will save over 1500 gallons of fuel annually or 35.7 percent in energy savings.
- **Leifeld Furniture, Albion-\$3,283** will assist with installation of thermal windows, doors and insulation in the furniture business. Average energy savings for improvements will be 67.5 percent, savings will return cost of investment within 9 years.
- **Marvin C Weber Farms, York-\$9,500** will assist in replacing four propane powered irrigation well engines with 4 new diesel engines, providing the needed efficiency for the irrigation system. Project will create a 35 percent energy savings.
- **Orthman Manufacturing, Inc., Lexington-\$24,425** to help purchase and install 633 energy-efficient lighting fixtures and bulbs at Orthman's production facility, replacing existing high-wattage units. Project will reduce annual consumption by 418981 KWHs.
- **Reiss Farms Inc., Wilcox -\$51,900** to assist in replacing the existing flood irrigation system on 27 pivot corners of 10 acres each to Subsurface Drip Irrigation (SDI) system. System will yield a 64 percent energy savings per year or an estimated \$29,439 per year.
- **Shamrock Nursery, Inc., O'Neill-\$6,599** will assist the nursery with reglazing, adding insulation, installing side vents, and replacing old furnace with high efficiency furnace. Improvements will net an energy savings of 45 percent annually and will return cost of investment in just over 8 years.
- **Tiemersma Dairy, Jansen-\$2,800** will help replace old cooling and ventilation fans in free-stall dairy facility with new energy efficient fans. Over 25000 KWHs of electricity will be saved. Total project will yield 27 percent energy savings with those savings returning the cost of investment in about 8 years.
- A complete list of the selected grant recipients and projects can be found at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/news.htm>.

The design and implementation of the grant program was accomplished through consultation with several federal departments and agencies, most notably the U.S. Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency. "The sharing of technical and human resources has greatly enhanced the submission of qualified applications and selection of this year's recipients," said Acting Under Secretary for Rural Development Gilbert Gonzalez. "By combining resources, we are improving the delivery of government services to the American taxpayer and implementing a more effective energy program."

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

For additional information in Nebraska contact Cliff Kumm at USDA Rural Development, (402) 223-3125, (402) 437-5093 (TDY); 201 N. 25 Street Beatrice, Neb. 68310. Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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