



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development  
Federal Bldg. 200 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215

Phone: (614) 255-2394 • Fax: (614) 255-2559 • TDD: (614) 255-2554 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.govohj>

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Contact: Michael Jones 614-255-2394

[michael.jones@oh.usda.gov](mailto:michael.jones@oh.usda.gov)

## **Funding Available for Renewable Energy Systems Program** *Ohio Application Deadline is May 12, 2006*

**COLUMBUS, OHIO, February 21, 2006** - The USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) announces the availability of funds for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements for agriculture producers and rural small businesses in eligible rural areas. The amount available for competitive grants is \$11.385 million. Approximately \$176.5 million in guaranteed loan authority is also available.

“This program represents another strategic tool being employed to help reduce the nation’s energy dependence,” said Rural Development State Director. “We’re focused on increasing Ohio’s participation in this program from last year with the intention of substantially strengthening the economic climates of our rural communities.”

During FY 2005 Ohio secured two grants totaling \$512,415. One grant of \$500,000 was awarded to Bridgewater Dairy, LLC in Williams County to purchase and install an anaerobic digester to improve the dairy’s energy efficiency operations. Snyder’s Grain in Carroll County, Ohio received \$12,415 to replace a grain dryer. The new dryer helps increase the fuel efficiency of their heat reclaimer.

For renewable energy systems, the minimum grant request is \$2,500 and the maximum is \$500,000. For energy efficiency improvements, the minimum acceptable grant request is \$1,500 and the maximum is \$250,000. The maximum amount of a guaranteed loan made to a borrower will be \$10 million. For FY 2006, the guarantee fee amount is 1 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan and the annual renewal fee is 0.125 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

The deadline for Ohio application submissions is May 12, 2006. For further information about this program and funding opportunities, please contact Rural Development Business Program Director Jim Cogan at 614-255-2420 or Business Program Specialist Randy Monhemius at 614-255-2424.

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