



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
San Juan, PR

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Miguel A. Ramírez
Phone: (787) 766-5095 X 232
E-mail: miguel.ramirez@pr.usda.gov

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES \$62.5 MILLION FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOANS AND GRANTS (**PUERTO RICO IS INCLUDED**)

WASHINGTON, September 25, 2009 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that the department is providing \$62.5 million in loans and grants for 705 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in 45 states and Puerto Rico under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), an important initiative to help rebuild and revitalize rural America.

“President Obama and I are committed to helping rural businesses become more energy efficient – it’s good for the economy, good for the environment, and good for the workers and customers who depend on the goods and services these businesses provide,” Vilsack said. “While the REAP grants will continue to provide an important jump start to a clean, renewable energy future, Congress must act to pass comprehensive energy and climate legislation to create the green jobs our economy needs and get our nation on the path to being truly energy independent.”

Renewable energy funding from USDA has helped many rural businesses. For example, Meadowbrook Acres Inc. of Milton, Vt., used a \$4,148 USDA grant to install a reverse osmosis system in fall 2007. The system has been operating well and has already saved Meadowbrook 3,884 gallons of fuel oil while producing 1,011 gallons of maple syrup. A reverse osmosis system takes water out of the maple sap, which reduces boiling time during the syrup production.

For this round of funding, USDA has selected Jimmy Roman Farm, a coffee grower plantation in the municipality of Adjuntas, Puerto Rico. Funds were granted to

654 Plaza, Muñoz Rivera Ave., Hato Rey PR 00918
PO Box 366106 - San Juan, PR 00936-6106
Phone: (787)766-5095 • Fax: (787) 766-5844 • TDD: (787) 766-5332

Committed to the future of rural communities.

“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).

incorporate the use of biomass to reduce the cost of energy required for coffee processing.

José Otero-García, USDA Rural Development State Director for Puerto Rico, indicated that REAP loan guarantees and grants can be used for renewable energy systems, energy efficiency improvements, feasibility studies and energy audits. More information on the REAP program, which was authorized under the 2008 Farm Bill, is at: www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/farbill/index.html. Funding of each recipient is contingent upon the recipient meeting the conditions of the grant agreement.

Additional information on the Rural Development's Programs can be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov> or by calling María de los A. de Jesús at (787) 766-5095 X 251, Luis García, Energy Coordinator at X 239, or Miguel A. Ramírez at X 232. USDA Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities.

USDA RURAL Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Developments fosters growth in homeownership' finances business development and supports the creation of critical community and technology infrastructure.