

Working Together for Change on Spruce Head Island *Maine Oyster Company Goes Green with REAP Grant*

Entrepreneurs must weigh every potential expense carefully. This is certainly true for Krista Tripp, owner of a lobster business and commercial oyster farm on Sprucehead Island, ME. Her company, [Aphrodite Oysters](#), markets its fresh seafood directly to consumers and through area restaurants and beyond.

Despite an often-challenging local economy, Krista wanted to prioritize “going green” for her rural business. With an aquaculture, lobstering, and retail presence on Maine’s working waterfront, Krista says, “We wanted to stand out and make a statement, to be a leader in this area... Combatting climate change must start now, not later. We can all work together to create change and make a difference.”



Her goal from the start has been for Aphrodite Oysters to use green energy exclusively on land and water. But at the helm of a growing small business, how could she begin? Krista applied to the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). REAP reimburses rural businesses for a portion of the cost for renewable energy projects. It covered 40% of the project via a \$7800 grant. Rockland based [Island Institute](#) helped front project costs and provided a \$4000 “Spark!” grant to further offset expenses.



As a result, Krista has now been able to complete the first step in converting Aphrodite Oysters to renewable energy. In summer 2023 [SolarLogix](#) installed a rooftop array on Krista’s Spruce Point retail space, which is now off the grid!

Says Krista, “It has been a company goal to be as ‘clean’ as possible, but going solar wasn’t in our business plan for another 2-3 years because it is costly. We are ecstatic to be able to expedite the process and are so grateful to the USDA, Solar Logix, and the Island Institute for making this dream of ours possible!”

Obligation Amount: \$7800 grant

Date of Obligation: 5/30/23

Congressional District: Representative Chellie Pingree, District 1; Senators Susan Collins and Angus King

Partners: Island Institute

Demographics: REAP serves agricultural producers and small rural businesses.

Impact: This project is expected to generate 3,830 kilowatt hours per year, equivalent to 7,000 miles driven by an average gasoline-powered passenger vehicles or 3,000 pounds of coal burned. The system was installed in September 2023 and saved 559 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions in its first quarter of operation.

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