



Committed to the future of rural communities.

LONE STAR ADVISOR

January 2007



SOUTHWEST GRAIN AND ENERGY

USDA Rural Development State Director, Bryan Daniel, has announced that a \$3.3 million Section 9006 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Improvement Program guaranteed loan and grant has been awarded to Southwest Grain and Energy LLC. The funds will be used to construct a facility that will produce bio-diesel, cottonseed meal, and pellet products in Seminole, Texas. The plant will take advantage of a low value feedstock and produce two high value products from the cotton seed.

“Production of bio-fuels creates jobs, assists agriculture producers to add substantial value to their crops and contributes to the development of our state’s energy resources”, said Daniel.

This venture will increase revenues and provide sustainability while adding value to regional cottonseed production. The bio-diesel plant has the capacity of producing 1.6 million gallons per year. The project will create approximately twelve (12) full-time jobs in the rural community of Seminole, TX.

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Orange County to Build New Fire Station

George Garza
The Vidorian

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Office has awarded a grant for \$100,000 and a low interest loan for \$1,628,000 to Orange County Emergency Services District #1. The Fire District intends to use those funds to build a new Fire Station #1 to replace the fire station destroyed during Hurricane Rita.

The ESD has set aside over \$500,000 in insurance claims payments to add to that building fund. Next Monday, Fire Chief Scott Kerwood will begin making arrangements to finalize the loan and contact the architectural firm and the contractor to start clearing land on Highway 12 that was donated to the district for the new fire station. Construction on the new fire station could begin as early as January 2007.

Sigma Engineers of Beaumont, the architects, have already drawn up a preliminary design that will include four emergency vehicle parking bays long enough for two vehicles each, dormitories, administrative spaces, including an ESD Headquarters space and room for a private ambulance provider.

"We're very excited. We're very pleased that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has worked with us on this. They have been the only federal or state agency to work with us through this whole process, and we're extremely happy that they did it," said Fire Chief Scott Kerwood.



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**ORANGE COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES DISTRICT No. 1
VIDOR, TEXAS**

Harvest Baptist Association



USDA Rural Development recently awarded Harvest Baptist Association a \$47,168 Housing Preservation Grant. Harvest Baptist Association, located in Decatur, Texas, is an association of Southern Baptist Churches who work together to accomplish tasks that individual churches cannot do alone. With this grant, they will provide housing preservation assistance to low and very-low income rural homeowners in Jack, Montague and Wise Counties.

“Being the recipient of the HPG will enable the rehabilitation of

many more homes in Wise, Jack, and Montague Counties. It is an honor to work in conjunction with USDA Rural Development in making homes more livable,” said Mr. Bobby Cox, Director of Missions for Harvest Baptist.

USDA Rural Development Housing Preservation Grants cover part of the cost of providing assistance to eligible homeowners. The assistance will be used to reduce the cost of repair and rehabilitation, remove or correct health or safety hazards, and comply with applicable codes. USDA Rural Development Housing Preservation Grants improve the general living conditions of residents, including improved accessibility by persons with disabilities. Last year volunteers from churches in California, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas participated in the Harvest Baptist Association sponsored project.



USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR RURAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

USDA Rural Development is currently accepting applications for the Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program which provides technical assistance for business development and conducts economic development planning. Applications must be submitted to the Texas State Office by March 30, 2007 to be tentatively scored, with the two highest scoring project applications being considered for funding and submitted to the National Office for final review and selection. For further information, contact Danny Torres at (254) 742-9780 or visit our website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.



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