

# USDA/Rural Development

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## News Release

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### **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES \$499,350 IN RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS GRANT**

**Temple, Texas, September 30, 2003** – Bryan Daniel, State Director, USDA Rural Development today announced that the Keast, DeJong, Zaitz Farms has received a \$499,350 grant thru the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Grant.

“These programs support President Bush’s goal for increasing renewable energy supplies,” said Daniel. “Developing alternative energy sources is an important part of the Administration’s overall energy policy that will in turn reduce pollution and increase energy security.”

Keast, DeJong, Zaitz Farms will use the grant funds to construct a solar-water pumping system as an alternative to the traditional and more popular natural gas-powered diesel motors. The product for this renewable energy project will be consumable electricity. The Keast, DeJong, Zaitz Farms is a new farm operation located in rural Dalhart, Texas. They currently support two operating dairies, along with a heifer raising facility. A third dairy should begin construction this spring. Approximately 100 individuals are directly employed by these dairy farms not to mention the farming operations and other ancillary services.

In Fiscal Year 2003, 24 states received funding totaling a little over \$21 million from the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements program. This program will assist farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses develop renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements to their operations.

“American agriculture is going through a time of enormous transformation,” said Daniel. “We need to be bold in recognizing and capitalizing on new opportunities. Energy is unquestionably one of those areas that present tremendous opportunities for economic gains and ultimately an improved quality of life for rural Texans.”

For more information regarding USDA Rural Development programs, contact USDA Rural Development at: (254) 742-9710.

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*The USDA Rural Development mission area was created in 1994 and includes the Rural Business-Cooperative Service, the Rural Housing Service, and the Rural Utilities Service. Its mission is to use the resources of USDA to provide an improved quality of life for the nation’s 53 million rural people.*