



# NEWS RELEASE

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## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR CLIFTON RAEKE & SONS FARM

**COST, TEXAS, September 18, 2006**—USDA Rural Development State Director, Bryan Daniel, today announced Clifton Raeke & Sons Farm received a \$65,000 Value Added Producer Grant to determine the feasibility of developing a renewable energy company which will convert mesquite, huisache and other trees into wood chips which can supply a biomass energy plant in the city of Gonzales, Texas.

“USDA Rural Development promotes efforts to bring together agricultural producers and rural businesses to spur the development of renewable energy options, part of President Bush’s comprehensive national energy policy” said Daniel. “During Fiscal Year 2005 Texas USDA Rural Development awarded over \$1 million in Value-Added Producer Grants.”

Since 2001 the Bush Administration has committed over \$115 million to support value-added agricultural investments, including over 110 energy-related projects. Value-Added Producer Grants may be used for planning activities, such as feasibility studies or business plans, or to provide working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products and for farm-based renewable energy projects. Eligible applicants are independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.

USDA Rural Development strives to ensure that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy by providing technical assistance, funding, and other programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life. For further information regarding USDA Rural Development programs, call the Seguin Local Office at (830) 372-1043, Extension 4, or visit us on the web at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.

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