

Twenty-five Nebraska recipients have been selected to receive \$318,294 in loans and grants. Funds will be used to install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements that will promote energy conservation.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) remains focused on carrying out its mission, despite a time of significant budget uncertainty. The announcement is one part of the department's efforts to strengthen the rural economy.

"These energy dollars will help make needed energy conservation improvements and install new renewable energy systems," said Nebraska State Director Maxine Moul, USDA Rural Development. "Through these projects, energy consumption will be reduced, thereby making more dollars available to be kept within rural Nebraska there by assisting the state's rural economy."

The funding was made available through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). This program provides opportunities for farmers and rural small business owners to install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements, as well as explore the feasibility of implementing renewable energy projects.

Additional information on the Rural Energy for America Program may be found at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/NEBusinessPrograms_Rural_Energy_for_America_Program.htm

Funding is contingent upon the recipient meeting the conditions of the grant and loan agreements. A few western Nebraska counties are among those selected for funds. They include:

Dundy: Ambrosek, Inc –Haigler- \$6,535 grant- Diesel irrigation engine to electric motor conversion and associated underground wiring.

Garden: Paulsen, Charles dba Budaroo's–Oshkosh- \$8,627 grant and \$17,200 guaranteed loan- Replace roof and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system in a floral shop.

Circle Famo Ranch, LLC-Oshkosh-\$10,654 grant-Diesel irrigation engine to electric motor conversion, variable frequency drive and associated underground wiring.

Hayes: Christensen, Howard –Hayes Center- \$9,426 grant- Convert two diesel irrigation engines to electric motors and associated underground wiring.

Keith: Johnson, John P. (Elite Sports and Elite Cellular)-Ogallala-\$1,550 grant- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) upgrade.

Welsh, Clifford-Brule-\$6,528 grant-Diesel irrigation engine to electric motor conversion with associated underground wiring.

Lincoln: S&J Birdwood Farm Inc.–Hershey- \$4,586 grant- Diesel irrigation engine to electric motor conversion.

Perkins: Smith, Conrad –Kearney- \$12,485 grant- Convert four diesel irrigation engines to electric motors.

Others selected are:

Buffalo,Hauschild, Cedar, Clay, Dawson, Sander, Holt, Village Market-Chambers, Kearney, Knox, Lancaster, Phelps, Lee Janssen Motor Co.-Holdrege, Pierce, Rock, Sandhill Equipment-Bassett, Thurston.