



Massachusetts State Office

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NRCS Is Offering Farmers Individual Energy Audits to Save Energy and Money

Applications will be accepted through June 18, 2010

AMHERST, MA (June 4, 2010) - Massachusetts farmers interested in saving energy and money are encouraged to apply now for financial assistance to conduct on-farm energy audits. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced an initiative which provides funds for individual energy audits designed to conserve energy and lower operating costs on the Bay State's working lands. **Applications must be submitted by June 18, 2010 to be considered for funding in 2010.**

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will help pay for an energy audit and an Agricultural Energy Management Plan. If approved for funding, farmers may select an NRCS-certified Technical Service Provider (TSP) to perform the audit and develop their energy management plan. Once an energy management plan is developed, farmers may apply for additional funds to implement some of their plan's recommendations.

Eligible applications will be funded in the order they are received until funds are exhausted. State-wide, Massachusetts NRCS has \$30,000 to use for energy audits in 2010. Farmers may submit an application at a later time if they are unable to apply before June 18th. NRCS accepts applications year-round, but funds applications once or twice annually.

To sign up, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov. USDA Service Center locations are listed on-line at offices.usda.gov or in the phone book under Federal Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The energy audits will be individually tailored to assess each farm's primary energy uses such as milk cooling, irrigation pumping, heating and cooling of livestock production facilities, manure collection and transfer and other similar on-farm activities.

"Reducing energy use on Massachusetts farms will not only help our farms become more profitable, but will also help the United States become more energy independent," said Christine Clarke, NRCS Massachusetts State Conservationist.

NRCS is celebrating its 75th year of helping people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. NRCS has seven Massachusetts field offices – in Greenfield, Hadley, Holden, Hyannis, Pittsfield, Westford, and West Wareham – that work with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners throughout the commonwealth.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: If you would like to include local contact information, please use the office below that serves your area.

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270 Communications Way, Unit 1G
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HOLDEN FIELD OFFICE
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