



U.S. Department of Agriculture
441 Donelson Pike, Suite 310
Nashville, TN 37214
www.rd.usda.gov/tn

News Release

Contact:
Charron Culp (615) 783-1300
Charron.Culp@usda.gov

USDA Invests in Energy Efficiency Improvements to Help Farmers, Rural Businesses and Ag Producers Lower Energy Costs

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 19, 2019 – Rural Business-Cooperative Service Administrator Bette Brand today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is [awarding grants for projects in all states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to reduce energy costs](#) for farmers, ag producers and rural-based businesses and institutions. Tennessee Rural Development State Director Jim Tracy is pleased to announce that 16 projects in Tennessee will benefit from this grant.

“Lowering energy costs is significant in improving and creating jobs for rural businesses,” Tracy said. “The agency is committed to increasing economic development in Tennessee’s rural communities through strong partnerships.”

Under today’s announcement, USDA is investing \$9.3 million through the [Rural Energy for America Program](#) (REAP) for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across the nation. Congress appropriated \$50 million for REAP grants and loan guarantees in fiscal year 2019. USDA will make additional funding announcements in the REAP program in coming weeks.

Recipients can use REAP funding for a variety of needs, such as conducting energy audits and installing renewable energy systems such as biomass, geothermal, hydropower and solar. Funds also can be used to make energy efficiency improvements to heating, ventilation and cooling systems; insulation; and lighting and refrigeration. Listed below are a few examples of Tennessee farmers, rural business owners and institutions making investments in their operations through REAP.

- William R. Allen dba Sequatchie Valley Eye Care will use a \$11,119.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 16 kW solar array. This project will realize \$2,018 per year in savings and will generate 22,424kWh (101% savings) per year which is enough electricity to power two homes.
- Carlen Motors, Inc. will use a \$19,812.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting throughout the dealership. This project will realize \$12,488 per year in savings and will replace 128,610 kWh of electricity per year (42%) which is enough electricity to power 12 homes.

- Rebecca Wallace-Davidson will use a \$16,949.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting, replacement of HVAC system, and energy efficient roof improvement to a commercial building. This project will realize \$3,080 per year in savings and will replace 67,796 kWh (61.22%) per year, which is enough electricity to power one home.
- John Harrison will use a \$20,000.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 113.9 kW solar array. Sweetwater Valley Farm will realize \$8,796 per year in savings and will replace a 131,285 kWh per year, which is enough electricity to power 12 homes.
- Glenda Huffman will use a \$10,755.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 15.36 kW ground mount Solar Photovoltaic System for the Huffman Poultry Houses. The project projects to generate 24,945 kWh (100%) per year and realize \$2,993.41 of savings per year.
- Gerald B. Kersey dba SAMC Leasing will use a \$4,005.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting. This project will realize \$2,229 per year in savings and will replace 19,321 kWh (37%) per year, which is enough electricity to power two homes.
- KP Paradise, LLC will use a \$19,746.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting. This project will realize \$15,321 per year in savings and will replace 255,353 kWh (70%) per year, which is enough electricity to power 23 homes.
- Miranda Mehaffey will use a \$6,921.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 9.86 kW solar array on Earth Kin Farm. This project will replace 13,056 kWh (100%) per year and realize \$1,175 of saving per year.
- Middle Tennessee Lumber Company, Inc will use a \$12,534.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting. This project will realize \$9,452 per year in savings and will replace 95,041 kWh (44%) per year, which is enough electricity to power eight homes.
- Newton Chevrolet, Buick, GMC, LLC will use a \$12,424.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting throughout the dealership. This project will realize \$14,374 per year in savings and will replace 148,021 kWh (54%) per year, which is enough electricity to power 13 homes.

- Newton Ford, LLC will use a \$13,495.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting throughout the dealership. This project will realize \$15,116 per year in savings and will replace 155,671 kWh (49%) per year, which is enough electricity to power 14 homes.
- Storm Manufacturing Corporation will use a \$17,721.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting throughout the manufacturing facility. This project will realize \$31,836 per year in savings and will replace 397,950 kWh (54%) per year, which is enough electricity to power 37 homes.
- William Logan Swafford will use a \$20,000.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 40 kW solar photovoltaic system. This project will realize \$4,826 per year in savings and will generate 54,152 kWh (103% savings) per year, which is enough electricity to power five homes.
- The Building Barn, LLC will use a \$4,665.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a 6.38 kW roof mount Solar Photovoltaic System. This project projects to generate 8,836 kWh (100%) per year and realize \$795.24 of savings per year.
- Matthew Van Slyke will use a \$6,748.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of LED lighting throughout the Running Springs Quarter Horse and Cattle Company. This project will realize \$2,876 per year in savings and will replace 21,312 kWh (56%) per year, which is enough electricity to power two homes.
- Willow Place Realty, LLC will use a \$20,000.00 REAP grant for the purchase and installation of a roof top 50 kW solar array. This project will realize \$4,817 per year in savings and will replace 64,226 kWh per year, which is enough electricity to power six homes.

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force's findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America. Supporting the rural workforce was a cornerstone recommendation of the task force.

To view the report in its entirety, please view the [Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity](#) (PDF, 5.4 MB). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the [Rural Prosperity infographic](#) (PDF, 190 KB).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/tn.

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