



Committed to the future of rural communities.

OREGON—Rural Business Service

Regional Collaboration

Northwest Food Processors Reducing Energy Use by 25 Percent in Ten Years

Outline Of Need:

Over the course of a decade, scores of Northwest food processing plants closed their doors. Statistics produced by state agencies show that Oregon's food processing industry averaged 12 mass layoffs per year, with nine per year in Idaho and 22 per year in Washington. Closing the doors to these plants has eliminated the major employers for many rural communities, along with thousands of family wage jobs.

According to university studies, reducing operation costs through energy efficiency is a key strategy that offers the potential to help many of the remaining plants ease competitive pressures.

How Rural Development Helped:

In 2009, USDA Rural Development in Oregon awarded a \$150,000 Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) to the Northwest Food Processors Education Research Institute. The purpose of the project is to help members of the Northwest Food Processors Association (NWFPA) voluntarily reduce their energy use by 25 percent in ten years and as much as 50 percent in 20 years.

The Results:

The NWFPA is using RBOG funding to help rural



Photo:

Insert text

food processors access sophisticated energy audits, fund proven efficiency measures, and train staffs to employ energy efficient technology and practices, including enhanced equipment, controls, operations and maintenance for refrigeration, lighting, compressors, pumps and other tools of the trade.

To date, NWFPA has: *(list actions taken)*.

It is estimated that the average Northwest food processing plant will save more than \$9,000 per month, enough to hire and retain two to three additional employees. With over 200 rural processing plants in the three-state region, the project promises to create several hundred full-time jobs in this key industry across the region.

Insert quote from NWFPA or member.

Fast Facts

Program: Rural Business Opportunity Grant

Investment: \$150,000

Partners: Northwest Food Processors Association, Northwest Food Processors Education Research Institute

Impact:

- 216 food processors
- 123 rural communities
- 3 states: Oregon, Washington, Idaho

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