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# News Release

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## **USDA Invests More than \$5.1 Million in New Hampshire, Vermont Businesses to Help Save Costs through Clean Energy Production**

*State Director Waring, Rep. Pappas Visit Local Business to Highlight \$157 Million National REAP Funding as Part of Biden-Harris Administration Investing in America Agenda*

Rollinsford, NH, Jan. 22, 2024 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) State Director for Rural Development in New Hampshire and Vermont, Sarah Waring, today announced **\$5,180,598 in grant awards** for farmers and small businesses through the [Rural Energy for America Program, or REAP](#). To highlight the investments, she met with New Hampshire Congressman Chris Pappas (NH-1) in Rollinsford, NH, at Wentworth Greenhouses, a recent REAP grant recipient.

The funding is part of the **Biden-Harris Administration’s Investing in America Agenda**, which includes **\$207 million** recently obligated in 42 states through REAP and the [Fertilizer Production and Expansion Program \(FPEP\)](#). USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the national investments today at the 105<sup>th</sup> annual American Farm Bureau Federation convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. Many of the projects are being funded by President Biden’s [Inflation Reduction Act](#), the nation’s largest-ever investment in combatting the climate crisis.

“The economic reality for small businesses in rural towns is challenging, and more than ever, businesses need to drive down costs in real time,” said Waring. “With today’s announcement, more small business owners and farmers throughout the Twin States will offset energy bills with efficiency measures and renewable energy projects, and in some cases, generate extra revenue. Vermonters and Granite Staters know all too well the hard economic reality of an unpredictable climate, as evidenced by last year’s May frost and the summer floods that followed. REAP can help businesses stabilize and sustain operations while reducing environmental impacts.”

Today’s REAP awards total **\$157 million for 675 projects in 42 states**, including more than **\$94 million from President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act**. The REAP program delivers on the President’s [Justice40 Initiative](#), which aims to deliver 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. These investments will cut energy costs for farmers and ag producers that can instead be used to create jobs and new revenue streams for people in their communities.

For example:

- **Wentworth Greenhouses**, a family-owned business established in 1967, will install a solar array to generate 168,700 kilowatt hours (kWh) of clean solar electricity every year, replacing an estimated 53 percent of historic usage and saving the business roughly \$34,300 annually.
- In Bellows Falls, Vermont, the **Whitney Blake Company** will construct a large solar array to generate roughly 736,000 kWh of power each year. This investment will offset an estimated 90 percent of the Company's annual energy consumption, saving more than \$107,100.
- At **Blasty Bough Brewing Company** in Epsom, New Hampshire, a ground-mounted solar array will generate more than 117,800 kWh of electricity, completely offsetting and far exceeding the operation's historical usage. The excess power will be sold to provide additional income.

## Background

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides grants and loans to help ag producers and rural small business owners expand their use of wind, solar and other forms of clean energy and make energy efficiency improvements. These innovations help them increase their income, grow their businesses, address climate change and lower energy costs for American families.

USDA continues to accept REAP applications and will hold funding competitions quarterly through Sept. 30, 2024. The funding includes a dedicated portion for underutilized renewable energy technologies. For additional information on application deadlines and submission details, see [page 19239 of the March 31 Federal Register](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

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