



News Release

Contact:
danielle.gray@usda.gov

Biden-Harris Administration Invests \$207 Million in Clean Energy and Domestic Fertilizer Projects to Strengthen American Farms and Businesses as part of Investing in America Agenda

Projects Funded by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act Will Lower Costs and Create Revenue for Rural Business Owners and Farms

LOUISIANA, Jan. 31, 2024 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that USDA is investing \$207 million in [renewable energy and domestic fertilizer projects](#) to lower energy bills, generate new income, create jobs, and strengthen competition for U.S. farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers. 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.

Today's announcement was made by Secretary Vilsack at the 105th annual American Farm Bureau Federation convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. This funding advances President Biden's *Investing in America* and Bidenomics agenda to grow the nation's economy from the middle-out and bottom up, create jobs, and spur economic growth in rural communities by increasing competition in agricultural markets, lowering costs and expanding clean energy.

"President Biden and USDA are ensuring farmers, ranchers and small businesses are not only a part of the clean energy economy, but directly benefitting from it," Secretary Vilsack said. "The investments announced will expand access to renewable energy infrastructure and increase domestic fertilizer production, all while creating good-paying jobs and saving people money on their energy costs that they can then invest back into their businesses and communities."

Today, the Department is awarding \$207 million in 42 states for projects through the [Rural Energy for America Program](#) (REAP) and the [Fertilizer Production Expansion Program](#) (FPEP).

"Planting the roots of progress in Louisiana, the Biden-Harris Administration is investing \$207 million in clean energy and domestic fertilizer projects," reported Louisiana State Director Deidre Robert. "Fueled by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, these initiatives will not only reduce costs but also cultivate jobs, generate revenue, and fortify the foundation of rural communities. Today's announcement at the American Farm Bureau Federation convention in Salt Lake City echoes the commitment to a greener, more competitive, and economically resilient agricultural landscape, aligning with President Biden's Investing in America Agenda, specifically tailored for the vibrant fields of Louisiana."

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:

- 121 Main LLC, a storage company in Grayson, Louisiana., install a 7.11 kilowatt (kW) solar photovoltaic system. This project is expected to save \$22,655 per year. It will replace 10,048 kilowatt hours (kWh) (139 percent of the company's energy use) per year, which is enough energy to power one home.
- Belle Terre, a car dealership in Laplace, Louisiana, upgrade their LED lighting and heating, ventilation, air conditioning; and install reflective membrane. This project is expected to save \$6,274 per year. It will save 59,756 kilowatt hours (kWh) (15 percent of the company's energy use) per year, which is enough energy to power six homes.
- A. Bourque Inc., a grocery store in Port Barre, Louisiana, install a 130.95 kilowatt (kW) DC solar photovoltaic system. This project is expected to save \$17,709 per year. It will save 186,413 kilowatt hours (kWh) (20 percent of the company's energy use) per year, which is enough energy to power 17 homes.

Projects financed through FPEP will help U.S. farmers increase independent, domestic fertilizer production. Today's investments include \$50 million in seven projects in seven states. President Biden committed up to \$900 million through the Commodity Credit Corporation for FPEP. Funding supports long-term investments that will strengthen supply chains, create new economic opportunities for American businesses, and support climate-smart innovation.

Since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA has invested more than \$166 million in 40 projects nationwide to boost domestic fertilizer production through FPEP. USDA has also taken steps to support producers in leveraging these tools through nutrient management assistance and climate-smart management practices. During that same time, USDA has invested more than \$1.6 billion through REAP in 5,457 renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements that will help rural business owners' lower energy costs, generate new income, and strengthen their resiliency of operations.

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](#).

The [Fertilizer Production Expansion Program](#) (FPEP) provides grants to independent business owners to help them modernize equipment, adopt new technologies, build production plants and more. Funding helps boost domestic fertilizer production, strengthen competition and lower costs for U.S. farmers.

The Biden-Harris Administration and USDA created FPEP to combat issues facing American farmers due to rising fertilizer prices, which more than doubled between 2021 and 2022 due to a variety of factors. Factors included the war in Ukraine, a lack of competition in the fertilizer industry, and more.

FPEP is part of a broader effort to help producers boost production and [address global food insecurity](#). It is also one of many ways the Administration is promoting fair competition, innovation and resiliency across food and agriculture while combating the climate crisis.

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.

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