



Opportunities in Agricultural Energy Efficiency

The Challenge and the Mission

America's farms have historically played a leading role in our nation's economy. In many rural areas agriculture remains the economic backbone of the community. Agriculture has always met its challenges with innovative thinking and local leadership. Today, to remain competitive in an ever-changing global market, agriculture is challenged to reduce its energy demand.

The Partnership between the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DC) and EnSave creates a powerful alliance to meet this challenge. Together we can bring energy conservation and energy efficiency to America's farms, thereby reducing dependency on foreign oil and non-renewable resources.

Our energy needs have left our nation vulnerable to international price manipulations and supply disruptions. The mission of the Partnership is to empower farmers to reduce energy consumption and take charge of their energy future. This will help America achieve greater energy security and strengthen the rural economy.

"The RC&Ds are up to the task of moving this partnership forward. This partnership will help the local councils become more sustainable, and adds to their array of services."
~ Gary Freeman, Chairman,
NARC&DC National Energy
Committee ~

"I believe now is the time to help America's agriculture become more energy efficient and competitive. Together EnSave and the RC&Ds can take this opportunity to make a significant difference."
~ Craig Metz, Vice President, EnSave ~

The Partnership

The RC&Ds and EnSave share many of the same core values: a commitment to helping rural residents help themselves; dedication to natural resource conservation; and a belief that working in partnership with others is often the best route to success.

For over 16 years EnSave has designed and implemented energy efficiency and pollution prevention programs to benefit our nation's agriculture sector. EnSave's trained engineers and staff address energy and environmental issues and deliver comprehensive programs to the agricultural community. The RC&Ds are located in all fifty states, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Basin, and understand the specific local nuances of agricultural production. By having a committed local force that is able to affect change, we hope that this Partnership will allow the RC&Ds to bring energy efficiency and pollution prevention programs to their communities.



EnSave

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Examples of RC&D Projects with EnSave

Maryland Farm Energy Audit Program - Eastern Shore RC&D -

Performed energy audits for 25 farms. Identified areas to save electricity and propane, gauged farmers' interest in renewable energy technologies, and identified opportunities for increased production.

"The program is a win-win for Maryland agriculture. When farmers implement the recommendations, we all benefit from greater energy independence. The financial benefit to the farmer is great- some of the recommended equipment can be paid off in a matter of months."

~ Dave Wilson, Coordinator, Eastern Shore RC&D Council

Alabama Farm Energy Audit Program - Alabama Mountains, Rivers, and Valleys RC&D - Conducted energy audits for six farms and identified areas to save electricity and propane. Trained the RC&D staff in data collection for farm energy audits, enabling them to provide this revenue producing service to farms in their community.

"This is a wonderful pilot program for our RC&D. Now that the RC&D staff is trained to conduct on-farm data collection and they have the backing of the engineering staff at EnSave, the RC&D can offer a new level of service to its community through the farm audits. The program also helps support the RC&Ds existence within the agricultural community."

~ Mike Roden, Coordinator, Alabama Mountains, Rivers, and Valleys RC&D Council

Diesel Emission Reduction Program (Washington) - Upper Columbia RC&D and Blue Mountain RC&D - Provides cash incentive to farmers who convert acreage to no-till / direct seeding practices. Rewards farmers for being good stewards and helps them reduce diesel fuel usage.

"Eastern Washington growers are fortunate to be among a few groups nationwide selected to receive this grant money. It really speaks to how our local growers are working hard to be good stewards of the land."

~ Gerald Scheele, President, Upper Columbia RC&D Council

Farm Energy Auditor Training Program

NARC&DC and EnSave have begun a five-year mission to certify RC&D staff in conducting on-farm energy audit data collection throughout the United States. EnSave will analyze the data and develop an audit report to be shared with the farmer. Through this program, opportunities will be identified to enable RC&Ds to grow and make a positive impact on the agricultural community.

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