

## **Minnesota Farm Energy Conservation Improvement Program: Designed and Implemented by EnSave, Inc.**

### **Background**

EnSave has worked with utility companies in Minnesota for several years, working first in the 1990s to perform surveys and pilot programs to gauge the potential for full-scale farm energy efficiency programs in the state.

In 2003, EnSave operated a Farm Energy Conservation Improvement Program for Xcel Energy customers.

In 2005-2006, EnSave expanded the program to include Minnesota Power and Alliant Energy- Interstate Power and Light Co. customers as well as Xcel Energy customers. The program was authorized by Minnesota Department of Commerce.

### **Duration**

Xcel Energy: May 2005- December 2006

Minnesota Power, Alliant Energy: May 2005- April 2006

### **Summary**

- Program offered 150 farm energy audits as well as cash incentives on energy efficient equipment. Also offered free engine block heater timers and compact fluorescent lamps for farm use, to help educate farmers about the Energy Star label.
- The program educated farm customers about energy efficient agricultural measures through direct mail and phone contact, identified opportunities for energy savings on the farm, and also reduced demand and saved kWh for participating farmers by motivating them to install energy efficient equipment.
- Program information was delivered in conjunction with the supporting community of equipment manufacturers, equipment dealers, and agricultural organizations such as the Farm Bureau, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the University of Minnesota Extension Service, and other organizations within Minnesota's agricultural community.

### **Program Results**

- 1,600 farmers in service territory participated
- kWh savings: 4.1 million
- kW reduction: 4,973 kW
- Provided education to farmers on Energy Star label

Emission reductions at power plant level:

Nitrogen Oxides: 17,188 lbs

Sulfur Dioxide: 26,689 lbs

Carbon Dioxide: 8,205,574 lbs

### **Economic Benefits**

- Nearly \$320,000 in first –year energy savings returned to producers (assuming \$0.078 commercial cost per kWh)
- By working with local equipment dealers, the program helped support the rural community by keeping energy efficiency investment within that community
- Local Minnesota equipment dealers increased their sales of energy efficient equipment
- EnSave was paid for its services on a performance basis, meaning that the funding agency (in this case Minnesota ratepayer) only pays for energy savings actually achieved—administrative costs are wrapped into a payment per kilowatt-hour saved. This is a low-risk, high-value investment for the state

### **Program Benefits**

- Focused on farmers as a distinct group with different needs than other businesses
- Program served a hard-to-reach, underserved sector
- Gave farms a tool for managing their energy use into the future, as needs and finances change.
- Helped reach state/ utility goals for energy savings, pollution prevention, and emission reductions
- Engaged existing network of agricultural organizations in learning about energy efficiency and helping promote the program

### **For More Information**

Amelia Gulkis, Program Development Manager

EnSave, Inc.

65 Millet Street, Suite 105

Richmond, Vermont 05477

(802) 434-1826

[ameliag@ensave.com](mailto:ameliag@ensave.com)

[www.ensave.com](http://www.ensave.com)