Massachusetts Farm Energy Program
March, 2015

Tired of snow? Contact the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program and start planning for spring!

Solar panels on a barn roof at Indian Line Farm in Egremont

The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program provides up to $5,000 in technical and financial assistance, as well as information and referrals to help you evaluate and install energy efficient and renewable energy measures that can help you:

- Reduce energy costs
- Find funding to help with improvements
- Replace your old, inefficient heating system
- Install energy efficient lighting, fans, or refrigeration
- Insulate your building
- Use solar energy for your hot water or electricity

CONTACT the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program staff TODAY! We'll walk you through the steps to get EXPERT ASSISTANCE and FUNDING too!

Call 413-727-3090
E-mail us at info@massfarmenergy.com
OR
Visit our website: www.massfarmenergy.com, submit a Request Form and **WE will contact YOU**.

Have You Heard?

Interested cows at Pine Island Farm, Sheffield

Upcoming Deadlines

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Grant and Loan Deadlines

REAP provides financial assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase and/or install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements to non-residential buildings and facilities.

REAP recently announced two deadlines for their annual renewable energy and energy efficiency grant and loan guarantee program. The deadlines are: **April 30, 2015**, for projects requesting $20,000 or less, and **June 30, 2015**, for all project sizes. Guaranteed Loan Only Requests are funded monthly and may be submitted at any time.

Please visit this page for more information and to access application templates.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) applications are accepted continually. However, applicants are encouraged to submit early so that eligibility can be determined and conservation plans developed.

Questions? Contact your local NRCS field office.

Events

WORKSHOP: SOLAR THERMAL ON FARMS

Hosted by the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program

Come learn about solar thermal technologies, applications and benefits for your farm, as well as funding opportunities!

Two locations:
March 27, 9:30am – 12:30pm
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
101 University Drive, Suite C4, Amherst
Or
April 2, 9:30am – 12:30pm
UMass Cranberry Experiment Station
1 State Bog Road, East Wareham

Presenters: Gerry Palano, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources and Peter McPhee, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center

Topics: Solar thermal technologies, applications for your farm and funding opportunities.

To pre-register or receive further information, please contact Megan Denardo at 413-727-3090 or megan.denardo@cetonline.org

Tips for Saving Energy and Money: Solar Thermal

Evacuated tube solar thermal system at Appleton Farms, a property of The Trustees of Reservations in Ipswich, MA

A solar thermal system:

- Can provide 60% or more of hot water needs
- Has a long life if maintained properly
- Requires minimal maintenance

- Operates passively and silently without moving parts
- Can be designed to heat water up to 180°F or higher

Solar thermal systems, often referred to as solar hot water, use solar collectors to capture energy from the sun and transfer it to a fluid. The fluid is typically water, or a combination of water and some type of anti-freeze. A system can either be "open loop", where the solar collectors directly heat the water that is used, or "closed loop", where water is indirectly heated via a heat exchanger. Closed loop systems are more common in cold climates like Massachusetts, since antifreeze is typically needed to prevent freezing in the collector.

Solar thermal systems can be greatly appliable to farm operations that require consistent year-round hot water or heat. Solar thermal can be used for heating domestic water or air for building heating purposes and process needs. It can also be used with an in-floor heating system, and is applicable for offsetting electric, natural gas, and propane heating.

For more information, see our Best Management Practices for Renewable Energy.

Take Steps TODAY to Save Energy and Money!

Here's how:

1. Learn about best practices – and what's most applicable to your operation. Check out our Best Management Practices online.

2. Have an energy audit to determine the best, most cost-effective measures for your operation – based on existing conditions and equipment. An energy audit is especially recommended for older systems and seasonal operations to determine potential savings and worthwhile investments.

3. Install recommended measures. Begin with low and no-cost measures, and don't forget annual maintenance. Install efficient, cost effective equipment to meet your needs.

4. Get funding. Before you install measures, be sure to get information about grants and financial incentives available to help with cost effective improvements, including renewable energy. There is funding available to help pay for an energy audit and energy efficiency improvements!

5. Enjoy your savings!

Visit the Technical Resources section of our website for more details about energy efficient heating. Visit the Energy Efficiency Tips for Farms section for lots of other good information about ways to save energy (and money!)

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