

MFEP January 2016

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Massachusetts Farm Energy Program January 2016



New Year, New Opportunities!

The temperature has fallen, but farm funding is still warm!

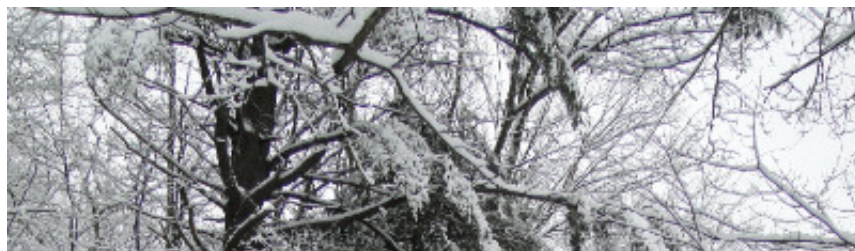
If you're interested in securing grant funds or finding out if you have energy efficiency opportunities on your farm, the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program can help by covering up to 75% of the cost of an energy audit.

Request yours now!

Phone: 413-727-3090 • E-mail: info@massfarmenergy.com

or

Visit our website: www.massfarmenergy.com, submit a Request Form, and we will contact you!





Winter at Paul's Sugar House, Williamsburg

Rural Energy For America Program (REAP) Information

Upcoming Deadlines

The next REAP deadline for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency grants and loan guarantees is **April 30, 2016** for all project sizes. For more information on applying, [click here](#).

REAP Application Assistance

Need help preparing your REAP application? The [Massachusetts Farm Energy Program](#) is able to provide it! Our program recently received a grant to help farms prepare their REAP applications, at no cost. But don't wait until the deadline approaches; REAP applications can be submitted any time, so [contact us now!](#)

Workshop

If you missed our last REAP workshop, or are interested in learning more about REAP, keep watching this space for information about an upcoming March REAP workshop!

News & Events

MDAR Grant Awards

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) recently awarded \$500,000 in grants to improve energy efficiency and install renewable energy equipment on 25 Massachusetts farms. Seven of those farms received technical assistance through the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program!

To be [eligible for an MDAR grant](#), a farm must complete an energy audit. The Massachusetts Farm Energy Program helped fund audits for five of the seven farms it assisted, and also provided assistance with preparation of MDAR grant paperwork, site visits to examine opportunities for improvements, and guidance to additional funding sources.

Projects approved for funding ranged from heating equipment and insulation to refrigeration systems, as well as photovoltaic panel systems, which are being installed in various sizes at several farms.

The next MDAR Grant deadline is **June 30**. Contact MFEP if you would like help with your farm's application!

Grinspoon Charitable Foundation Farm Awards

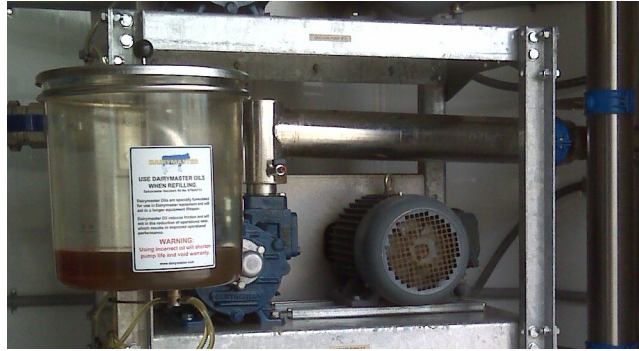
The Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation (HGCF), in partnership with Big Y, announces the second year of the Farm Awards, a program to help local farmers improve their businesses. Awards will be for equipment and physical farm improvements, with a maximum of \$2,500 per award, for a grand total of \$100,000.

Both Berkshire Grown and Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) continue to play a crucial role in the program, and were fundamental to its success in 2015.

The deadline for applying (January 31, 2016) is fast approaching, so interested applicants should visit the [Grinspoon Foundation](#) website ASAP!

Tips for Saving Energy and Money: Variable Speed Pumps





Variable Speed Vacuum Pump

Vacuum pumps are commonly used on dairy farms during milking or washing, and work by continuously removing air from the system to create a negative pressure vacuum that pulls milk or water through the pipeline. Pumps are designed to provide enough vacuum to meet maximum demand, but during normal operations this maximum is rarely required. In a conventional system the pump motor runs at full power at all times of operation, and admits air through the vacuum regulator as necessary to maintain the stable vacuum.

In contrast, a variable speed drive (VSD) can be installed between the vacuum pump and the switch that controls the motor. The VSD controls the speed of the electrical pump motor, often slowing it down, therefore controlling the vacuum level. There is a pressure transducer installed in the vacuum line that is used to monitor the vacuum level, and this sends a signal to the VSD that changes the speed of the motor as necessary. A VSD will increase the speed of the vacuum pump when there is a demand for greater capacity, and slow it when the demand is less. This regulation reduces energy consumption, noise levels, and vacuum pump wear.

A variable speed vacuum pump may only be applicable on farms with long enough milking time and/or if the current vacuum pump is oversized. An energy audit can help evaluate the actual energy savings of installing a VSD and determine the payback period.





Example of a variable speed pump motor.

Take Steps Today to Save Energy and Money! Here's how:

1. Learn about 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 farm. An energy audit helps determine potential savings and worthwhile investments.
3. Install recommended efficient, cost effective measures. Begin with low and no-cost measures, and don't forget annual maintenance.
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.
5. Enjoy your savings!

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