

EnSave



“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, Chair, 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, CEO, EnSave

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 innovating 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 Partnership

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

For over 17 years, EnSave has designed and implemented energy efficiency and pollution prevention programs to benefit our nation's agricultural 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.

“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



“This is a wonder program for our RC&D. Now that the RC&D staff is trained to conduct on-site 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 with the agricultural community.”

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

Examples of RC&D Projects with EnSave

Maryland Farm Energy Audit Program, Eastern Shore RC&D

Phase I of this program was completed in 2006, with energy audits performed on 25 farms. 2008 will see the successful completion of Phase II, with another 50 energy audits performed for Maryland agricultural producers. EnSave identified areas to save electricity and propane, gauged farmers' interest in renewable energy technologies, and identified opportunities for increased production.

Alabama Farm Energy Audit Program, Alabama Mountains, Rivers and Valleys RC&D

Building on the successful pilot program run in 2007, EnSave entered into the second phase of its partnership with Alabama's Mountains, Rivers and Valleys RC&D in 2008. In addition to training RC&D staff as data collectors, EnSave worked with several Alabama farms to provide energy audits for USDA's Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP, formerly Section 9006 of the 2002 Farm Bill).

Renewable Energy and Conservation Pilot Project, Louisiana Acadiana RC&D

In 2007, EnSave began work with the Acadiana RC&D to provide audits to farmers enrolled in the Renewable Energy and Conservation Pilot Project in Louisiana. Farms involved in poultry, rice and crawfish production have received energy audits. Their audits focused on irrigation and grain drying practices, and included suggested upgrades that would improve the energy efficiency of their operation without compromising their productivity.

Diesel Emission Reduction Program, Washington Upper Columbia RC&D and Blue Mountain RC&D

This program educated farmers in Eastern Washington State about no-till direct seeding and provided incentives for every acre switched from conventional tillage to no-till direct seeding. The program was funded with a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This program was successfully completed in late 2007.

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