Information for 2017 On-Farm Energy Initiative

Introduction
It’s no surprise that energy is a major business expense, but now farmers and ranchers in Montana have a great opportunity to become more energy-efficient through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The EQIP Energy Initiative provides technical and financial assistance for improvements to major energy-consuming activities within your farm or ranch enterprises, such as irrigation pumping plants, building envelopes, lighting systems, HVAC, motors/VSD’s, crop/tillage systems.

Energy conservation can make you even more competitive by cutting fuel and electrical energy use, and lowering maintenance costs.

Take the FIRST Step…The Audit
An energy audit is the first step in taking advantage of energy-saving opportunities. EQIP program payments are available to hire a registered Technical Service Provider (TSP) for an energy audit. The TSP will provide an on-site evaluation and develop an Agricultural Energy Management Plan (AgEMP) for your farm or ranch enterprises.

The AgEMP is a detailed inventory of the energy-consuming equipment and practices used in your farm or ranch enterprises. (Residential buildings are excluded.) The plan will document baseline energy use, recommend energy-efficiency improvements, calculate potential energy savings, and show the simple payback period of improvements.

Take the SECOND Step…Implementation
Your AgEMP will present a table of recommendations to make your farm or ranch enterprises more energy-efficient. NRCS can provide program payments for the implementation of AgEMP recommendations which have proven energy-reduction benefits on Montana farms and ranches:

- Lighting Improvements
  - LED Technology
- Building Envelopes
  - Attic and Wall Insulation
  - Sealants
- Milkhouse Upgrades
  - Heat Exchangers (Plate Coolers)
  - Scroll Compressors
  - Automated Control Systems
  - General Motor Upgrades
  - Variable Speed Drives
  - High Efficiency and Radiant Tube Heaters
- Irrigation Improvements
  - Pumps, Variable Speed Drives
  - Turbine Bowls
  - Sprinkler Nozzle Packages
  - Conversion from Pump to Gravity Systems

Technical Service Providers (TSP)
John Heffernan, 3851 Duncan Drive, Missoula, Montana 59802, 406-543-4097
David Ryan, 2910 Floral Blvd, Butte, Montana 59701, 406-490-6233
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Application Deadline
Interested parties must submit and EQIP application by February 24, 2017 to be considered for current year funding.

For more information
Contact Steve Becker, steve.becker@mt.usda.gov, 406-587-6828 or visit mt.nrcs.usda.gov.