

IDAHO POTATO PULSE



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USDA INITIATIVE HELPS PAY FOR ON-FARM ENERGY AUDITS

BOISE, Idaho, January 28, 2011 – Producers interested in finding ways to save on energy costs can get an on-farm energy audit through the Agricultural On-Farm Energy Audit Initiative. The initiative from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service offers financial assistance for individual on-farm energy audits. Applications for fiscal year 2011 funding must be received by **February 25, 2011**.

“The Agricultural On-Farm Energy Audit Initiative is designed to help agricultural producers convert to more energy efficient operations over time.” said Jeff Burwell, Idaho State Conservationist. “The audit identifies how an operation can become more energy efficient. That information is used to develop an agriculture energy management plan.”

The energy audits are individually tailored to make sure a farm's primary energy uses are covered. For example, things like milk cooling, manure collection and transfer, heating and cooling of livestock production facilities, grain drying, and similar common on-farm activities are considered.

Certified Technical Service Providers conduct the energy audits. NRCS pays a set rate for the cost of the audit and developing an agriculture energy management plan that meets agency standards.

Applications for this initiative will be funded on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants are expected to complete the audit within a year of signing the contract.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis, but must be received no later than February 25, 2011 to be considered for this year's funding.

Information about how to apply for the energy audit and develop an agriculture energy management plan is available at www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ or visit your local NRCS office. To find the office nearest you, look for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the government pages of the phonebook or on the NRCS Web page <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/> under “Find a Service Center.”

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