

USDA Accomplishments Under the Bush Administration 2001-2008

Increased Investment in Renewable Energy

The President's National Energy Plan made a fundamental commitment to renewable fuels and bioenergy. USDA implemented President Bush's Energy Agenda by placing a priority on rural America's participation in USDA's renewable energy programs.

Transformed Rural Economies

- In 8 years, participation in USDA's renewable energy grant and loan programs has increased by 200% through 2700 projects to produce, or save, over 22 billion renewable energy kilowatt equivalencies.
- Over the last eight years, USDA has invested nearly \$173 million for 1,234 planning and working capital grants through the Value-Added Producer Grant program. Approximately \$32.4 million supported 213 renewable energy projects.

Advanced Renewable Energy

- USDA led the effort to create a national renewable energy conference that resulted in bringing together over 1500 private and public sector renewable energy interests to solidify the country's commitment to renewable biomass fuels. The 2008 Washington International Renewable Energy Conference secured pledges from 145 countries and private sector organizations to advance the uptake of renewable energy.
- The USDA Energy Council plays a key role in achieving the Nation's aggressive energy mandate to increase the use of renewable fuels to 36 billion gallons annually by year 2022.

Expanded Research and Development

- Since 2000, bioenergy producers received \$546.5 million for three billion gallons of increased ethanol and biodiesel production.
- During the first three quarters of fiscal year 2006, biodiesel production grew to 136.8 million gallons, compared to total biodiesel production for 1999 of only 2 million gallons.
- In November 2008, USDA made funds available for grants and loan guarantees to develop, construct and retrofit commercial-scale biorefineries.
- USDA researchers have shown that the perennial crop switchgrass, which has great potential for biomass production for cellulosic ethanol, also improves soil fertility. Switchgrass produces five times more renewable energy than nonrenewable energy consumed, and exceeds corn as a valuable substrate for cellulosic ethanol.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation

- Since 2002, six anaerobic digesters that facilitate the conversion of methane to bio-energy have been installed with Environmental Quality Incentives Program or EQIP financial assistance totaling \$570,000.
- USDA has invested \$10.2 million on 27 Conservation Innovation Grant Program grants projects.
- Approximately \$26.4 million of Conservation Security Program or CSP funds will assist producers with renewable fuel use, renewable energy generation, the recycling of on-farm lubricants, and energy audits.