

From: Stacy Luke, Project Manager, NH Farm Energy Initiative

To: Barbara Bernstein, NH PUC

Re: Additional Questions for RGGI Grant from June 16<sup>th</sup> email:

- **Question: What did you find in the process of gathering farm energy info? Is there a wealth of information, or are you starting from scratch? We need a summary of what was found, not just your word that it was done.**
- **Question: What did you learn from the focus groups? Did you find five agricultural technical service providers and up to five farmers to pre-test your materials as stated in your contract (attached)?**

A collection of materials tested is included in this packet.

Our focus groups included more than five agricultural technical service providers with a couple of engineers in the mix. We also had numerous farmers pre-test (look over) the materials and give us their opinions. All participants of the workshops were asked to give their feedback. In follow-up surveys, they will again be asked to assess what materials people referred back to when making decisions.

There is a wealth of information out there. We were able to pick and choose from materials available, but the biggest problem is that much of the information is very technical in nature and not easy to understand. The material of choice came from the Vermont Law School entitled *The Farmer's Handbook for Energy Reliance: A Guide to Using Energy Efficiency, Biomass, and Renewable Energy on the Farm*. This is an easy to read and very comprehensive guide that came free from the Vermont Law School. Another great guide is the *Harvesting Clean Energy Farm Energy Field Guide*, created by the Maine Farm Energy Partners. To introduce the program, Southern NH RC&D released *AgPower*, a newsletter dedicated to the project (included). To fill another gap, Southern NH RC&D created a *Farm Energy Opportunities in NH* booklet to help farmers identify funding sources for farm energy related projects. This was in conjunction with a sub-committee of state and federal agencies, non-profits, and utility companies called the *Ag and Energy Group*, initially created to look at ways to help dairy farms during a recent financial crisis.

As discussed in the focus groups, a need for a publication of local success stories is needed. Besides the Local Foods Plymouth success story in the Vermont Law School publication, few NH success stories are published at this time. This work will be a deliverable at the end of the grant as success stories come in.

- **Question: The contract called for two train the trainer workshops? What I gather from the 1<sup>st</sup> report is that there were three auditors trained – did that supplant the two train the trainer workshops, or am I missing the boat?**

The three auditors trained were a supplement, not a replacement, for the two train the trainer workshops. The ability of these three trainers to go to the EnSave training helped build the farm energy infrastructure in NH. Our train the trainer workshops were the two major workshops we conducted in January 2010 at NH Department of Environmental Services (@100 attendees) and in March 2010 in Littleton at the VFW Hall (@30 attendees). Though these workshops were targeted to ag technical service providers, many farmers attended these workshops as well.

- **Question: How many Farmer Education workshops have been completed? The last report you sent, lists (I think) 5 workshops with about 100 attendees, but I can't tell for sure. Were the other meetings listed considered workshops as well?**

Southern NH RC&D, its partners, and the "Trainers" that we have trained have done a significant amount of workshops. Below is a list of known farmer education outreach events. Southern NH RC&D and partners have also gone to farms and talked to farmers individually to discuss farm energy.

### **Workshops Conducted at Conferences:**

- NH Farm & Forest Conference in Manchester in February- Southern NH RC&D conducted two farm energy workshops geared to farmers at Farm & Forest. One on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the NH Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture. Another stand-alone workshop on Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. In total, there were approximately 35 attendees.
- NOFA-NH conference on March 6<sup>th</sup> in Concord- Southern NH RC&D conducted a farm energy workshop targeting organic farmers at their all-day conference. Approximately 12 farmers attended.
- Information booths were manned at both conferences. NH Farm & Forest reached @2,000 people and NOFA-NH reached @500 people.

### **Other Southern NH RC&D Outreach**

- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service field staff meeting- Hollie Umphrey brought materials and discussed the farm energy project to the field staff, who in turn have talked to their cooperating farmers about the project. Audience- 30 staff.
- Board members have gone to individual farms to discuss farm energy, resulting in applications for farm energy audits. Audience- 12 farms throughout Southern NH.
- Hollie Umphrey had discussed farm energy at the Strafford and Rockingham County Conservation District meetings. Audience- 24 farmers and natural resource professionals.
- Southern NH RC&D presented NH Farm Energy Initiative information at the New England RC&D Association....especially VT and Maine RC&D Coordinators
- Data collector Julie Moran has discussed farm energy at local energy committee meetings in Coos County. Julie also talked directly to the Haynes Homestead (Colebrook), Scott Mason, (Stratford), John Amey (Pittsburg), Santa's Tree Farm (Colebrook), and to the six farmers in her agricultural cooperative.
- Farm energy information has gone out on the small and beginner farmer listserv, the NOFA-NH listserv, and on the NH Sustainable Agriculture email list. Southern NH RC&D has created an email list of over 300 contacts where they send out periodic farm energy updates, deadlines, and workshop announcements.
- Partner Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative has provided outreach and given materials to the farms as part of their Local Food Plymouth network.
- Farm energy has been discussed at the quarterly meetings of the NH Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture in Concord. Audience- 30 farmers and ag TSPs per meeting.

### **Conservation District Efforts:**

The state's conservation districts have conducted numerous outreach efforts. Listed below are some of these efforts.

### **Merrimack County Conservation District**

- Farm Energy has been discussed at these following meetings in 2010:
- Board of Supervisor Meetings in Concord- 2 meetings reaching 8 people
- Alternative Energy Series at the Hopkinton Library in the month of March- 4 workshops featuring biomass, solar, wind, and geothermal. Approximately 12 attendees at each workshop.
- Mailing to each dairy farmer in the county with energy efficiency information and an application for an audit- 22 dairy farms.

### **Cheshire County Conservation District**

- Cheshire County Conservation District conducted a farm energy workshop with Hollie Umphrey as the speaker. Many farmers signed up for an energy audit as a result. Audience- 20 farmers.
- Cheshire CCD wrote and received a Specialty Crop Grant to host five farm energy workshops in 2010-2012. Audience- TBD.

### **Belknap County Conservation District**

- Belknap CCD used energy efficiency as their annual meeting topic. Audience-30.

### **Hillsborough County Conservation District**

- Hillsborough CCD discussed farm energy at their January 2010 Farm Bill Workshop. Audience- 5.

### **NH Association of Conservation Districts**

- Farm energy discussed at their quarterly meetings in Plymouth, Hillsboro, Lancaster, and Concord.
- Farm energy discussed at the New England Leadership Meeting in Portsmouth.

- **Question: How many of the 25 energy audits have been completed? I know from your last report that at least six were done. Any idea on the energy savings?**

This is where we are lagging behind. The audit company we were using has put us on the backburner working on other projects. We are working diligently to get this going as soon as possible, but to date; none of the 25 energy audits has been completed. Over 25 audits have been assigned to the auditors, but we have not seen a completed report yet. The audit company is also weighing how many of the farms By the end of September, we hope to see a large portion of these done.

In terms of energy savings, we have assisted one farm in applying to the USDA REAP funds. They will be replacing inefficient heating and cooling systems and have been awarded both REAP funds and CDFA funds to complete the project. More details on this outcome will be forthcoming. Also, an apple orchard is planning on re-building their highly inefficient storage with a new storage facility. Though they have not received their final audit, projected electricity savings are anticipated to be approximately \$1,600/month by replacing this facility. This farm already has approved financing to complete this project via the Farm Service Agency.