

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS TO ASSIST WITH
RENEWABLE ENERGY CONVERSION PROGRAM AVAILABLE TO ARIZONA'S
RANCHERS AND FARMERS**

Phoenix, AZ – April 22, 2010- Arizona's Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCD) have been assisting landowners since 1942 by providing education and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers while facilitating their participation in conservation programs. NRCD's are excited to announce the availability of a new program of which districts will be helping to administer on the local level.

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and State Energy Program Grant administered by the AZ Dept. of Commerce a proposed \$1.5 million will fund this program over the next two years. In the second funding cycle (2010/2011) up to \$540,000 will be available to Arizona's farmers and ranchers for conversion of fossil fueled agricultural production systems to renewable energy power. It is the intent of the Arizona Dept. of Commerce to offer the Conversion to Renewable Energy Incentive Program (CREIP) to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels for agricultural production in rural Arizona while creating jobs and economic stimulus in rural communities. Conversion of existing systems from gas, oil, diesel, and in some cases electric to the utilization of the abundant renewable energy available in the state will provide benefit in terms of energy savings, cost savings, better air quality and the creation of jobs and businesses related to the renewable energy and agricultural service industries. Commerce will solicit applications from agricultural producers for the following systems: livestock waters, irrigation, and production buildings. This grant is offered as a cost share program reimbursable at 75% of project costs. Maximum reimbursement limits apply.

Local Natural Resource Conservation Districts will assist the AZ Dept. of Commerce with outreach, promotion, education, and serving as a local liaison to ensure project completion.

The deadline for application is May 20th, 2010 by 3 P.M.. It is the intent of Commerce to offer this program via the Request for Grant Application process. To obtain a copy of the grant application you can email the Letter of Intent form to procurement@azcommerce.com, fax the form to (602) 771-1202, or send a written request to the Arizona Department of Commerce, 1700 W. Washington B-32, Phoenix AZ 85007, please include the following number (Solicitation Number G013-10) in your request. The grant application can also be picked up at the AZ Dept. of Commerce at the address listed above. The Letter of Intent form can be found at www.azcommerce.com (follow the ARRA link to the State Energy Program link to the CREIP link) or your local NRCD office.

A pre-offer conference will be held May 6th, 2010 at 1700 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ, Basement Conference Rm. B-56 at 10 A.M.. The intent of this meeting is to review the grant application as written and address any needed amendments.

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For questions contact Larry Gavel, AZ Dept. of Commerce @ (602) 771-1110.