



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development
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USDA State Director Joins Community Fuels in Stockton to Highlight Energy Program, Department Report

STOCKTON, Calif. March 20, 2012— California State Director for Rural Development Glenda Humiston visited Community Fuels in Stockton today to highlight their successful use of USDA's energy program to produce biofuels. Humiston also discussed a new report released today by Agriculture Secretary Vilsack that highlights USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and ways it contributes to U.S. energy independence and helps rural small businesses and farmers become more energy efficient.

"As we celebrate Energy Month at USDA, we are proud to highlight partners such as Community Fuels and their efforts to produce advanced biofuels which are critical to help our nation become more energy efficient and reduce our reliance on foreign oil," Humiston said. "At USDA we understand the important role energy costs play in improving the bottom line, which is why we have partnered with rural businesses, farmers and ranchers to help find energy solutions that will spur economic growth in rural California."

USDA Rural Development administers five energy programs authorized under the Farm Bill including the Advanced Biofuel Payment Program, as well as REAP. The biofuel payment program has helped expand the production of advanced biofuels such as those derived from crop and vegetable waste material, sugar and starch, as well as renewable biomass from vegetable oil and animal fat. Payments are made quarterly to participants such as Community Fuels based on the quantity of advanced biofuel being produced. Nationally, there are 156 local producers and business-owners currently participating in the program and 13 in California.

REAP is Rural Development's most successful and competitive renewable energy and energy efficiency program. REAP funds may be used to purchase renewable energy systems and to make energy efficiency improvements. REAP also provides grants for feasibility studies for renewable systems, energy audits, and renewable energy development assistance for agricultural producers and rural small businesses. Since the first REAP awards were made in 2003, California has assisted 86 farmers, ranchers and rural businesses with energy efficient projects. [Click here](#) to read Secretary Vilsack's report on how REAP is saving energy in California and throughout the nation.

While applications for REAP guaranteed loans for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements are being accepted through June 29, 2012, applications for REAP grants and loan/grant combinations must be submitted no later than March 30th. For additional information on how to apply for REAP funding, see Page 2948 of the January 20 Federal Register, <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/MN-RBS-REAP-AuditNOFA.pdf>, or

contact the California Energy Coordinator Phil Brown at (530) 792-5811 or phil.brown@ca.usda.gov.

USDA, through its Rural Development mission area, administers and manages housing, business and community infrastructure and facility programs through a national network of state and local offices. Rural Development has an active portfolio of more than \$165 billion in affordable loans and loan guarantees. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America.

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