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Colorado Energy Office launches new statewide program to reduce energy use in the agricultural industry

DENVER - July 13, 2015 - The Colorado Energy Office, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Agriculture, has a new statewide dairy and irrigation energy efficiency program that builds on the success of its 2014 pilot program to reduce energy use in Colorado's agricultural sector.

The new statewide program will provide energy services to a minimum of 80 agricultural producers annually for three years. Program participants will receive a free energy audit, renewable energy assessment, technical support and access to financial resources that will help reduce the upfront cost of energy efficiency improvements.

"Dairies and irrigators that participate in the statewide program can benefit from reduced energy use and utility costs, resulting in a more competitive, sustainable business operation," said Jeffrey Ackermann, director of the Colorado Energy Office.

Colorado's agricultural industry faces direct energy expenses of more than \$400 million annually that account for 7% of the industry's overall expenses.

In the spring of 2014, the Colorado Energy Office launched the Colorado Dairy and Irrigation Efficiency Pilot program to address industry expenses. The program was designed to address the barriers that prevent agricultural producers from investing in energy efficiency by bringing existing resources and partners together, leveraging new funding and implementing a turnkey approach.

The pilot program conducted energy audits for 12 farms, and worked with 8 dairies to install measures that will save over 260,000 kWh of electricity, 10,000 ccf of natural gas, and 9,500 gallons of propane annually - the equivalent of more than \$47,000 in annual cost savings. With approximately \$168,000 in incentives, producers will be able to see a return on their investments in less than four years, with many measures paying for themselves in energy savings in less than two years.

For more information about the statewide Colorado Dairy and Irrigation Efficiency Program, contact Michael Turner, Energy Efficiency Programs Manager, at Michael.A.Turner@state.co.us or go to <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/energyoffice/agriculture-energy-efficiency>

