

USDA: Invests in critical infrastructure to combat climate change across Wisconsin

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STEVENS POINT, Wis., August 25, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) State Director for Wisconsin Julie Lassa today announced USDA is investing \$92,462 in critical infrastructure to combat climate change across rural Wisconsin.

“Today’s investments, and those that will be made possible under President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act, will strengthen our energy security, create good paying jobs, and save people money on their energy costs,” said Lassa. “They also reflect the USDA’s commitment to financing rural infrastructure, embracing renewable energy, and supporting our path to energy independence.” [\[Audio: 21 seconds, 500KB\]](#)

The investments will help state and local government entities, nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized Tribes construct, renovate or purchase and install equipment for essential community facilities for public use in rural areas. They also will help agricultural producers and rural small businesses purchase and install renewable energy systems as well as make energy efficiency improvements. The investments will also help with energy audits, renewable energy technical assistance, and renewable energy site assessments. For example:

- Barron Electric Co-Op in Barron, Wisconsin will use a \$19,985 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to install more energy-efficient LED lighting. This project will realize \$11,157 per year in savings and will replace 154,954 kilowatt hours (72 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 14 homes.
- Lapacek’s Orchard, LLC., in Poynette, Wisconsin will use a \$4,483 Rural Energy

for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to purchase and install an 11-kilowatt solar array. This project will realize \$1,906 per year in savings and will replace 16,299 kilowatt hours of electricity (93 percent) per year.

- Jerry Coleman, a family livestock producer in Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin, will use a \$10,722 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to purchase and install a 24-kilowatt solar array. This project will realize \$3,215 per year in savings and will replace 28,451 kilowatt hours of electricity per year.
- Karavan Trailers, LLC., a utility and boat trailer manufacturer in Fox Lake, Wisconsin will use a \$20,000 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to install more energy efficient LED lighting. This project will realize \$27,950 per year in savings and will replace 473,729 kilowatt hours of electricity (43 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 43 homes.
- The Metal Ware Corporation, a rural, small appliance manufacturer in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, will use a \$2,006 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to purchase and install LED lighting throughout its production space, office, and warehouse. The project will realize \$2,294 per year in savings.
- Cynthia Kusilek, a small business owner in River Falls, Wisconsin, will use a \$10,266 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to install a small, electric solar array. This project will realize \$2,883 per year in savings and will replace 23,438 kilowatt hours (91 percent) per year.
- HWI, LLC., a new car dealership in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, will use a \$8,500 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to install more energy efficient LED lighting. This project will realize \$7,214 per year in savings and will replace 125,049 kilowatt hours (70 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 11 homes.
- TSWI, LLC., a new car dealership in Sheboygan, Wisconsin will use a \$16,500 Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Grant to install more energy efficient lighting. This project will realize \$13,571 in savings per year and will replace 242,345 kilowatt hours (70 percent) per year, which is enough electricity to power 22 homes.

These investments reflect the goals of President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, which addresses immediate economic needs and includes the largest ever federal

investment in clean energy for the future. For example, the Act includes \$14 billion in funding for USDA programs that support the expansion of biofuels and help rural businesses and electric cooperatives transition to renewable energy and zero-emission systems.

Background:

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Secretary Dr. Jewel Bronaugh recently highlighted investments that USDA is making through three programs specifically designed to help people and businesses in rural areas. These programs are [Community Facilities Disaster Grants](#), [Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants](#), and [Rural Energy for America Program Energy Audits and Renewable Energy Development Grants](#).

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas.

For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov/wi. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development Wisconsin updates, visit our [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate, smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.