The Energy Efficiency Programs offer Guaranteed Loans, Grants and combination Grant/Guaranteed Loans to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses make energy efficiency improvements in rural areas.

**Eligibility**

1. An agricultural producer (individual or entity) directly engaged in the production of agricultural products and obtains at least 50% of their gross income from their agriculture business.
2. A rural small business – an entity is considered a small business in accordance with the Small Business Administration’s (SBA) small business size standards (by NAICS codes). SBA small size standards can be found at [http://www.sba.gov/size/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/size/index.html).

An electric utility, including a Tribal or governmental electric utility that provides service to rural consumers on a cost-of-service basis without support from public funds or subsidy from the Government authority establishing the district, provided such utilities meet SBA’s definition of small business. These entities must operate independent of direct Government control.

With the exception of the entities described above, all other non-profit organizations and public entities are excluded.

For grant projects with total eligible costs exceeding $200,000, agricultural producers and rural small businesses with a demonstrated financial need.

For grant projects with total eligible costs of $200,000 or less, applicants must provide a statement certifying their financial need.

**Eligible Purpose**

- Project must be to make energy efficiency improvements.
- Project must be for a pre-commercial or commercially available, and replicable technology.
- Project must have technical merit.
- Project must be located in a rural area (outside any 50,000+ population city and its urbanized periphery). To determine if project is in a rural area, go to [http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov](http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov).
- Applicant must be the owner of the project.
- Sites must be controlled by the applicant.
- Satisfactory sources of revenue in an amount sufficient to provide for the operation, management, maintenance, and debt service of the project must be available for the life of the project.

Energy Efficiency projects must be verified by an energy audit or assessment, depending on the total eligible project costs.

- Heating/Cooling system improvements
- Lighting improvements
- Irrigation system improvements
- Refrigeration system improvements

**Application Process**

Two copies of your application are to be submitted to the USDA Rural Development State Office where your project is located. Separate applications are to be submitted for renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement projects. Only one application per each type of project may be submitted per year. Applications are accepted at any time. To qualify for consideration for funding, an applications must meet the application requirements, technical requirements and environmental requirements. For additional information you may go to: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/IA/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/IA/)

Please read the NOSA through and contact the State Office early in the application process for assistance and guidance. Simplified or reduced applications may be accepted for applicants with total eligible project costs under a specified threshold.

Applications are to be submitted to the State Office by US Postal Service or courier delivery service at:

Mr. Joseph M. Mueller,  
B&C Program Director  
USDA, Rural Development  
4440 NW 25th Place  
PO Box 147010  
Gainesville, FL  32614  
Phone: (352) 338-3482

**How much assistance is available?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum grant</th>
<th>Maximum grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum grant</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum grant per applicant per fiscal year</td>
<td>$750,000 (cannot exceed 25% of total eligible project costs)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum guaranteed loan</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$25,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum guaranteed loan</td>
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<td>$1,500</td>
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</table>

**Technical Report required?**  
YES

**Application Guidelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Grant costs required</th>
<th>Loan costs required</th>
<th>Other costs required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Projects with total eligible costs >$200,000

**Services of a Professional Engineer required for technical report?**  
Projects with total eligible costs >$200,000

On the web at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl)