

MU Extension – Developing Rural Missouri’s Energy Independence & Economic Viability

The central objective of the MU Extension Agriculture and Natural Resource Program is *to improve quality of life, enhance the economic viability, and protect the environment for all Missourians* through research-based education and applied research. A major focus of this effort is based on the development of a “new agricultural energy based economy” that will add value to the commodities raised and reduce the input cost for Missouri agricultural producers and agribusinesses and conserve energy consumption.

Comprehensive energy educational programs and demonstrations have been delivered across the State of Missouri by University of Missouri Extension Faculty on topics such as on-farm energy conservation, wood to energy, methane generation, wind energy and solar energy considerations. Other programs include: Low-Cost/No-Cost Energy Saving Options for Home and Farm, Economics of Biomass Fuels, Alternative Fuels on the Farm (covers ethanol, biodiesel and biomass), Feeding Bio-fuel By Products, producing ethanol from various sources and Energy-Efficient Landscape Design.

Examples of some of the impacts of this programmatic effort are:

- development of a *biodiesel facility* with annual sales of nearly \$100 million and a staff of 50 employees
- an *ethanol production facility* now operational with annual sales in excess of \$100 million and about 45 employees
- *Irrigation scheduling* that increased gross profits of irrigators in Missouri by \$10 million a year and at the same time reduces their fuel consumption and costs.

Curriculum and educational resources have been developed and in-service training has been conducted on topics such as on energy conservation, solar, wind, and biofuels. Funding for has been obtained from USDA North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) organization and the Ag and Natural Resources program at the University of Missouri.

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