

Energy Audits Not Just for Industry, Ag Community Says



January 5, 2012

You don't have to run a manufacturing enterprise or own an office complex to benefit from a quality energy audit, the U.S. agriculture community says.

Energy-related costs can make up as much as 60 percent of total operating expenses on the average farm, experts say. That leaves plenty of room for big savings.

"Energy can have a big impact on your bottom line," says Cary Weiner, a Colorado State University clean energy specialist, one of several speakers at a recent agriculture energy expo held in Northeast Colorado, according to the [Bent County Democrat newspaper](#).

An energy audit can identify improvements that could reduce energy use by 10 to 35% — most often in areas such as lighting, milk cooling, ventilation, vacuum pumps and electric water heating, the story said.

"I think an energy audit is an excellent tool and another step in the farm plan," says Ryan Anglin, a dairy producer from Bentonville, Ark., and chairman of the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, in a story at [AgWeb.com](#). Anglin recently completed an audit. "It helps to have the results of the farm energy assessment in black and white. As a business man, seeing the potential for energy savings and payback period is important in making good investment decisions."

Saving energy directly translates to cost savings and improved profitability for dairy operations. On average dairy producers spend \$40 per cow per year on electricity. Improved energy efficiency can mean \$4 to \$14 savings per cow, which can translate into thousands of dollars per year.

Now is the time to act

Financial assistance for energy audits and equipment upgrades may be available. To learn more:

- Contact a Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service field office
- Use the SaveEnergy web tool at [USDairy.com/SaveEnergy](#)

Click [here](#) for online version.

For internal use only. Reprints available for purchase.