

Looking to save money and cut down on your farm's fossil fuel use? Here is how to get started...



1. Learn about your options

Research how to reduce your energy use and plan renewable energy projects. Our **Farm Energy Best Management Practice Guides (BMPs)** walk through energy efficiency and renewable energy considerations for different farm sectors, based on the experiences of Massachusetts farmers. They include a review of practical upgrades with:

- examples of energy savings, typical costs and payback periods
- questions to ask your vendor or installer
- funding resources

2. Assess your energy use

Get a farm energy audit or assessment.

An energy audit or assessment will give you a snapshot of where energy is being used on your farm – essential information for making a plan and getting financial support to make farm systems more efficient or integrate renewable energy technologies.

Contact us to learn more about what type of audit – from simple lighting reviews through your public utility to net-zero energy planning - may work best for you.

There are numerous programs to support reducing energy demand through audits and financial incentives for energy saving improvements.



3. Contact the MA Farm Energy Program

We offer technical resources and referrals, audits and consultations, financial incentives, and funding facilitation to the farming community with the goal of bringing projects from concept to completion.

Contact us at 413-475-3349 or mfep@berkshirepioneerrcd.org.

4. Save money through efficiency

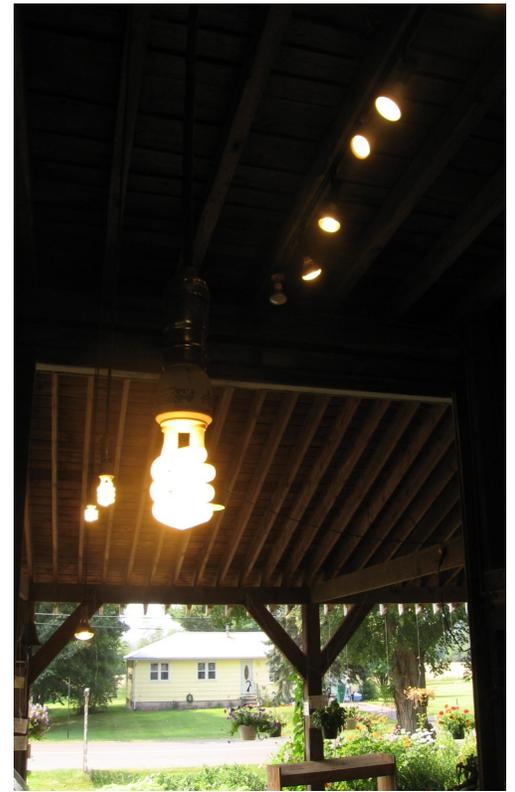
Choose a Project! Prioritize and get started on energy efficiency upgrades.

Energy audits include recommendations for equipment upgrades and operations – including upfront costs, payback periods, and energy savings calculations that will help you determine cost-effective next steps. Your next project might include replacing lighting and refrigeration components, or investing in more efficient pumps, insulation, ventilation, or other equipment or systems.

- **Review your audit to make informed decisions about purchases and installation**
- **Finalize price estimates, and confirm availability and installation timing with vendors and contractors.**
- **Plan with farm season for successful project completion.**
- **Keep funders and public utility partners informed of your progress**

Identify financial incentives for energy efficiency projects.

Whether through your public utility, a grant program, or MFEP financial incentives, there are funds available to help pay for the cost of energy efficiency upgrades.



5. Explore renewable energy

Become energy efficient first.

Reducing your energy demand can help reduce the size and cost of your renewable project. Proving energy efficiency can also be a requirement of renewable energy grant funding.

Research technologies.

Your site, energy needs, local regulations, and the specifics of your operation will all contribute to how feasible a renewable energy project is for you, and which technologies are most suitable.

Contact an installer and request an assessment.

Renewable energy is typically a higher-cost investment. We recommend working with a professional to complete a site assessment and feasibility study.

Fund your project.

There are funding opportunities available for renewable energy projects through grants, income streams, tax reductions, and rebates. Many grants have a single deadline for applications each year. Make a plan early and work with a knowledgeable installer to help make your application more successful.