



## Iowa Farm Energy Working Group

**Abstract:** In continuing work, the funding for Years 3 and 4 of the Farm Energy Working Group served to expand outreach and education about on-farm energy reductions for smaller operators.

*The Farm Energy Working Group's demonstration grants, field days and presentations by Iowa farmers helped show what can be done on the farm to increase energy efficiency and rely on renewable energy.*

### What was done and why?

Since its beginning in 2009, the Farm Energy Working Group (FEWG) has engaged a growing number of Iowa farmers and others interested in helping farmers increase energy efficiency and/or renewable energy use on their farms by using on-farm resources when possible. The outreach list has grown from 35 to more than 190 farmers and others interested in the support FEWG provides through meetings, demonstration grants, field days and educational presentations.

FEWG has increased communication among individuals and organizations interested in on-farm energy, including farmers, utility representatives, policy organizations, Extension Service, higher education institutions, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, farmers' organizations and renewable energy businesses. The networking that occurs through FEWG does not happen anywhere else in the state.

Original objectives for the Farm Energy Working Group were to:

1. Intensify outreach to farmers through the Value Chain Partnership program.
2. Develop webinars for three types of projects that would reduce energy use on the farm to help educate farmers about energy efficiency opportunities, policies and grants.
3. Develop an educational presentation on farm energy conservation/renewable energy for RFSWG leaders (see [www.uni.edu/ceee/farmenergy/onestopshop](http://www.uni.edu/ceee/farmenergy/onestopshop))
4. Educate farmers about renewable energy by offering a micro-scale biogas workshop.

### What did we learn?

FEWG's One-Stop Shop website that provides a variety of useful information in one place fulfills one of the original FEWG goals set by participants. Farmers and others can go to one website to see what other farmers are doing across the state to save energy on their farms, to learn about utility/state/federal incentives, farm energy audits, financial assistance, and much more. One of the best ways for farmers to try something new is to see how their peers are using a particular process or technology. The One-Stop Shop success stories (case studies) and the mini-grant reports provide that information for anyone to access. The FEWG face-to-face meetings also offer a direct way for participants to share their stories, hear what others are doing, and gain more ideas to try.

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