

Energy program reduces power bills for Oregon farmers and nurseries

Trust offers incentives for farm improvements

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**
For the Capital Press

Last year the Oregon En-

ergy Trust assisted agricultural customers with more than 430 irrigation and greenhouse

projects, distributing about \$1.3 million in incentives.

Energy Trust offers rebates

to farmers who acquire more energy-efficient equipment and lighting. Purchases don't usually require pre-approval and may be made directly from vendors. Energy Trust also helps customers find qualified and knowledgeable vendors and contractors.

Similar energy-efficiency programs are available in other Western states through electric or natural gas utilities or state and federal government programs. Farmers and ranchers should check with their local soil and water conservation district, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service or their local utilities.

Energy Trust of Oregon works with Portland General

Electric, Pacific Power, Cascade Natural Gas and Northwest Natural Gas and, as of Jan. 1, will serve Oregon Avista gas customers.

"The two main areas where we offer incentives are irrigation systems and greenhouses," Energy Trust of Oregon Agriculture Program Manager Doug Heredos said. "Irrigation upgrades are primarily electrical; in greenhouses you're saving natural gas."

Irrigation incentives include the repair or replacement of components including worn sprinklers, nozzles, gaskets, mainlines and handlines. Reimbursements include \$4 a sprinkler, \$2.75 per gasket and \$10 for a section of handline.

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