

# Producers can have their energy use audited

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SOUTHERN ALBERTA

One hundred dairy, poultry and swine producers in the SouthGrow region can find out how to reduce the energy demands on their operations through a pilot project.

The Alberta government and SouthGrow have teamed up with other businesses and organizations to offer energy efficiency audits to the three kinds of producers.

The two-year OnFarm Energy Efficiency Program, developed by Climate Change Central and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's Agricultural Technology Centre, has a price tag of \$1 million. Producers who volunteer their operations for an energy audit will be asked to pay a \$200 fee, but the actual cost of such an audit is about \$1,800.

If accepted for an audit, it will take auditors about half a day to review energy bills for a 12-month period

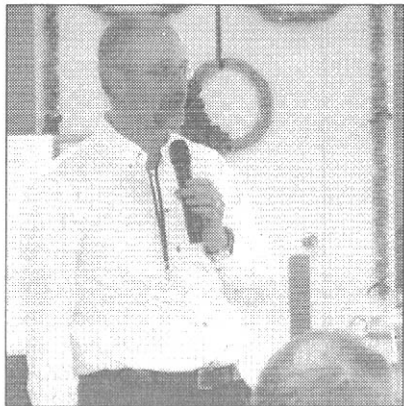


Photo by Rose Sanchez  
**Rick Atkins, manager of the Agriculture Technology centre, speaks with producers about farm energy audits.**

and look at the farm operation. Producers receive a personalized report including recommendations for how to save money on energy use in the future.

Information gathered from the 100 participating producers will be kept confidential but used to form a benchmark of energy use and be used for funding for future projects.

"We're looking at a variety of different things and ways this can be used down the road," says Rick Atkins, manager of the Agriculture Technology Centre in Lethbridge.

So far 10 audits have been completed where utility costs ranged from \$7,000 to \$65,000 per year depending on the operation.

"We'll recommend some things you can change over or recommend some management practises the can be changed to save your operation some dollars," says Atkins.

For more information visit [www.onfarmenergy.ca](http://www.onfarmenergy.ca) or phone 403-329-1212.

## Do you qualify for an energy audit?

- 1. Be within the geographic boundaries of the program: MD of Taber, County of Warner, County of Lethbridge, Vulcan County, Blood Tribe Reserve, MD of Willow Creek, County of Cardston.
- 2. Operate a dairy, poultry or swine facility.
- 3. Not operate the following systems on the same electricity and natural gas meters as your main operation: feedmill operation, irrigation system, grain aeration or grain drying system, heated swimming pool.
- 4. Provide 12 consecutive months of electricity and natural gas bills.
- 5. Not have had any significant changes to your farm operations in the past 12 months that would affect electricity and natural gas consumption. (Ex. new buildings or significant changes in livestock numbers.)
- 6. Not exceed the operational size criteria of: Dairy - 300 milking cows; Swine - Farrow to wean 750 breeding sows, Farrow to finish 250 breeding sows, Grower/finisher 3,000 hogs; Poultry - Layers 30,000, Layers (raising your own pullets) 20,000, Broilers 100,000, Hatcheries 20,000 and Turkeys 20,000.