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**NCAT CONDUCTS FIRST-EVER ENERGY TRAINING FOR AGRICULTURE PROFESSIONALS**

*Extension staff prepared to become energy leaders and educators in their own communities*

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS) have completed an intensive three-day energy training for 26 agriculture professionals from across the South, launching a new effort to build a network of locally based energy advisors and educators in rural America.

The first-ever Energy Training for Agriculture Professionals course, funded by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, took place near Goldsboro, N.C., from Sept. 30 to Oct. 2. Tuition, materials, lodging, meal expenses and travel costs were fully paid for participants, who were mostly Cooperative Extension Service agents and specialists from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

The organizers hope to build support for renewable energy and energy efficiency within the Extension service, finding and connecting agents — often working in isolated rural areas — who have a personal commitment to renewable energy.

Co-chair Mike Morris of NCAT said, "Most renewable energy projects are going to take place in rural areas. With its network of trusted county agents, Extension is in a unique position to work directly with rural people and help them make profitable and sustainable energy choices."

Course instructors included nationally recognized experts on wind, solar, biopower, energy efficiency and other energy topics. Graduates were given an assortment of tools and resources that prepare them to lead training efforts in their own communities. They also had a chance to network with other agriculture professionals from throughout the southern United States.

“This was an outstanding training,” one participant said. “You have given us plenty of motivation, ideas and resources to make a good program back home.”

Other participants also praised the training, saying:

- “I learned more information that I can use than any other in-service training I have attended.”
- “I hope to do you proud as an agent of change, providing a catalyst for the future of energy.”

More information about Energy Training for Agriculture Professionals is available at [www.entap.org](http://www.entap.org).

*Since 1976, the 501(c)(3) nonprofit National Center for Appropriate Technology has been promoting technologies that help people save energy, protect natural resources and live better lives. NCAT offers training, publications, Web sites, personalized technical assistance and telephone helplines to address issues ranging from housing and economics to environmental quality. Headquartered in Butte, Mont., NCAT also has offices in Fayetteville, Ark., Hammond, La., Davis, Calif., Shavertown, Pa., and Des Moines, Iowa.*