

NRECA Joins “25 x 25”

NRECA’s CEO Glenn English has joined the Steering Committee of the Agriculture Energy Work Group to help shape a new energy paradigm to secure America’s future. The Work group is focused on using agriculture and forestry products to produce an increasing share of our nation’s energy.

The Agriculture Energy Work Group is an independent project sponsored by the Energy Future Coalition (EFC), a non-partisan initiative that aims to address America's economic, security and environmental challenges related to the production and use of energy. The EFC asked agricultural leaders to provide strategic leadership in creating and implementing a vision for the agricultural and forestry sectors role in new energy solutions for the Nation.

The Agriculture Energy Work Group consists of leaders from rural America who have come together to explore how agriculture and forestry can contribute to new energy solutions. They have a bold vision of using the vast potential of our farms, ranches, and forests to supply an increasing and substantial percentage of America’s energy needs, 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the U.S. by 2025 (hence the nickname increasingly used by the Working Group, 25 x 25).

Agriculture is rapidly increasing its contribution to America's energy needs, currently producing over 4 billion gallons of corn-based ethanol annually. Production and use of biodiesel from soybeans is increasing as well. With new breakthroughs in the production, transportation fuels produced from biomass (wood and agricultural residues) could displace 25-30 percent of U.S. petroleum imports and move the nation closer to achieving the goal of reducing energy dependence.

Many electric cooperatives are located in areas of the country with abundant renewable resources that can be used to generate electricity. Wind, solar, methane from landfills and manure digesters, as well as hydropower are just some of the fuel sources currently in use by co-ops.

The availability of a diverse set of affordable domestic sources of energy is a primary goal of NRECA, and electric cooperatives support the development of renewable energy that is both beneficial to the environment and can provide income to rural economies. Through this partnership, NRECA will provide leadership in developing America’s renewable energy resources and ensure the continued availability of reliable and affordable power.