



## ENERGY CONSERVATION

The basis of selection of the winner was determined on the following points: Efficient use of energy in farmstead buildings, equipment, and operations; production of energy from renewable sources including but not limited to solar, wind, biomass, bio-fuels such as bio-diesel, methane, ethanol, etc.; utilization of renewable energy sources including those previously mentioned as well as other similar sources; co-generation of energy such as internal combustion engine powered generator with beneficial use of waste engine heat.

The winner of this year's **Energy Conservation Award is Sharp Farms** for their bio-fuel operation. Sharp Farms has started to seek oil seed crops that are a viable and profitable option for Western Kansas. Their bio-fuel operation in Healy uses the oil seed crops that they have experimented with, run them through their crushing system to turn them into vegetable oil and eventually bio-diesel. Their bio-fuel operation in Healy uses the oil seed crops that they have experimented with, run the through their crushing system to turn them into vegetable oil and eventually bio-diesel.

Their production began in late 2009, and was ultimately started to not only better the environment but also boost the local economy. The process is still in the R&D stage and they are constantly testing various crops and mixtures. Currently Sharp Farms are using mostly canola and safflower in their operation. They have tried pennycress and some sunflower as well, but canola still seems to work the best. Currently Sharp Farms are using mostly canola and safflower in their operation. They have tried pennycress and some sunflowers as well, but canola still seems to work the best.

The bio-fuel side of their business is currently employing one full time worker and is roughly producing 200 gallons a day. The fuel that's being produced cannot be sold to the public yet, and is used strictly in their equipment. The biggest challenge they have faced so far is finding a crop that can survive the tough climate of Western Kansas, as canola seems to have problems with winter kill. The ultimate benefits they strive for are to find a crop that can boost the economy of Western Kansas all while seeking independence from foreign oil.