



PROPANE Agricultural Technologies

Almost 80 percent of U.S. farms use propane, largely due to its inherent environmental and economic benefits. As the propane industry's check-off organization, the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) devotes at least five percent of its total budget toward programs and projects that benefit the U.S. agriculture industry. The Agriculture Advisory Committee oversees PERC's efforts and actively seeks innovative propane solutions to help farmers increase productivity and decrease operating costs.

Published in 2002, the Propane Agriculture Roadmap outlined the propane industry's strategic approach for building long-term demand in the agricultural sector. To that end, the industry has instituted programs to offer exceptional value and gain recognition from the agriculture industry as a preferred energy source. To enhance these efforts, PERC led the development of a 2006 Agriculture Roadmap Supplement. Based on prior accomplishments and lessons learned, the supplement serves as a resource for the propane industry as they address agricultural challenges while growing the market for propane.

The propane industry envisions that by 2010, the agriculture industry will recognize propane as a preferred energy source offering exceptional value through product benefits such as cost-effectiveness, efficiency and productivity, reliability, portability, and environmental friendliness.

To achieve this vision, a diverse group of propane and agricultural leaders identified the activities with the brightest future for the agriculture industry:

Top Application-Specific Activities

- **Thermal Agriculture** utilizes heat to support production, such as heating buildings and controlling pests for horticulture, crops, and animals. Priority research includes the development of propane-fueled sanitation systems to control nematodes in soil.
- **Crop/Food Conditioning** protects and/or enhances agriculture products through harvesting, processing, and storage. Priority research includes the development of structure fumigation technologies that use propane-fueled heat as a means of insect/pathogen control.
- **Power** applications in the agriculture industry include the use of engines, fuel cells, and microturbines that are fueled by propane. Priority R&D includes enhanced partnerships with manufacturers to continue the production of efficient, clean-burning power sources.
- **Nutrient Management** uses propane to assist in the disposal or remediation of farm waste and as a reliable supplement or back-up to the production of bio-gas. Priority research includes the development of clean-burning disposal technologies and unique remediation projects requiring a reliable energy source to convert farm waste into value-added applications.



Top Enabling Activities

- **Technology R&D:** Enhance mobile propane refueling mechanisms.
- **Communications:** Improve R&D communications with partners and stakeholders.
- **Data Collection and Benchmarking:** Identify emissions credit trading mechanisms; Analyze research and communicate and archive results.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Encourage incentives for technology replacement.



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