

WAYNE & PHYLLIS UNDERWOOD UNDERWOOD'S GREENHOUSE

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PSC Case 05-M-0090
NYSERDA & SBC III

To Whom It May Concern,

Underwood's Greenhouse would like to voice there support of the SBC program and request the continuation of these programs. Underwood's Greenhouse has had the good fortune to be involved in two NYSERDA funded programs. The first one was in cooperation with Cornell University. We were doing R & D on supplemental lighting and hydroponic tomatoes. Cornell University and our commercial operation were trying to prove the benefits of maximizing off peak usage while still bringing a tomato crop to the fruiting stage during the winter months when natural light is less than adequate for optimal growth. This proved to be a viable study that would not have been possible without the funding of NYSERDA's SBC's program. The risk to prove the viability of this project was far too great for our business to sustain a failed study. This study proved that NY hydroponic tomato growers could successfully and economically grow tomatoes during the winter months and still be competitive in the market place. The programs enabled us to research and successfully prove, we could drastically reduce our peak demand and still grow tomatoes in the winter. It also demonstrated value added benefits. The heat generated from using the lights at night reduced our overall heating costs and decreased our humidity which is a large factor in controlling diseases. Our current funding project from NYSERDA, is funded with SBC funds under the MAPS Peak Shavings Program. We are doing a demonstration on growing herbs hydroponically while utilizing innovative ideas and maximizing the new technology of computer controls and sensors, rolling benches (maximizing space) automated shade cloths (reducing cooling energy costs), maximization of off peak energy and maximizing solar energy to produce herbs economically and efficiently. Again, this opportunity would have not been possible without the support of the SBC program. The SBC funding is a very worthwhile program that should be continued. It provides funds for NYS businesses and colleges to continue R & D as well as demonstration sites that enable NYS businesses to develop and grow while optimizing and reducing or finding alternative uses of energy consumption.

We are a small business that has benefited and grown from this funding opportunity and would like to see the program continue. There is still much R & D that needs to be done and with the continuation of the SBC Program, NYS and it's businesses can continue to grow and develop new opportunities that will be beneficial to all.

One small fact, currently utilities are our largest expense. Therefore, more research is needed to keep NYS businesses competitive while exploring and using alternative energy sources and additional sources of funding are needed to continue these opportunities.

Regards,

Phyllis Underwood