



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Growers Energy Solutions (GES)?

GES is a non-profit program designed to save those in the greenhouse industry money on one of their most expensive expenditures – Natural Gas.

2. Who is eligible for the GES Program?

All greenhouse growers and those in the industry are eligible.

3. How long has the GES Program been operating?

The program started in NW Ohio in summer of 2006. We began offering the program statewide in the fall of 2007.

4. Are there membership or unit fees involved?

There is no membership fee to participate in the program. There is a small per unit fee added to the basis portion of your natural gas bill. Your billing will remain the same. Fees are used to administer the program.

5. Who runs the GES Program?

The program is managed by the Maumee Valley Growers Association (MVGA) and directed by Palmer Energy Company.

6. Who is the Maumee Valley Growers Association (MVGA)?

MVGA is an industry based not-for-profit association of regional growers in NW Ohio who are committed to sustaining and growing the local economy. Through a collaborative process of sharing resources and knowledge, programs have been created to identify solutions to challenges ranging from increased local awareness, branding, marketing, research, quality control, energy efficiency and purchasing etc.

7. Who is Palmer Energy Company?

Palmer Energy Company is a Toledo based firm with 25+ year's experience. Palmer is a fully independent energy consulting firm with no interest in suppliers or utilities.

8. Why do we need Palmer Energy Company?

MVGA selected Palmer Energy Company to facilitate the procurement of natural gas and implement hedging strategies to maximize grower savings. Having Palmer on board allows growers to concentrate on their business and lets the experts deal with the challenges of the energy business.

9. Is this similar to the program run by the Ohio Farm Bureau?

The pooling concept is similar but GES employs hedging strategies as opposed to buying gas supply in the summer months. We feel this program model promotes greater communication between the MVGA, Palmer Energy, grower regional advisory board leadership and the general membership. As a result, more program management is required throughout the year to strategically trigger purchases; however, greater savings potential for the growers has been demonstrated.

10. Can I be an Advisory Board member and what is the time commitment?

Yes, as the program expands, leadership positions become available. Representatives are asked to participate in a 1-hour conference call the first Friday of every month at 10:00 am. We found this to be the best use of everyone's time. The grower's commitment becomes very efficient with no wasted travel time and greater communication opportunities. Conclusion? The Energy Committee representative commits to at least 1, one-hour phone call per month and 1 in-person meeting per year. If you are interested in representing your region contact Joe Perlaky, MVGA at 419- 356-4847.

11. What is your price? How much will I save?

These are difficult questions to answer without knowing the details of your operations.

Are you transport or choice? What is your usage? Where is your greenhouse located?

Historically, the average savings for the 100+ growers currently in the program is 8% to 15% annually off the commodity portion of their natural gas bills. Palmer Energy would be happy to evaluate your specific situation. Simply provide your latest natural gas bill detailing your annual usage. This can be sent to Anne Schenk @ 241 N. Superior Street, Toledo, OH 43604 or by fax to 419-539-9185.

12. Why should I join the GES Program?

Historically, we have saved 8 to 15% on your natural gas costs you should join the program.

13. What if I am in contract with a supplier, can I still join?

As soon as your contract has expired you can start saving with the GES Program. Send a copy of your current gas bill and your contract to Palmer Energy Company and we will make arrangements to include you in the program. Don't hesitate – many contracts require 60 or 90 days notice of termination. It is much better to have the paper work done early.

14. Can I opt out at any time?

Yes, but you are required to stay with the program through those months that gas has been purchased on your behalf.

15. Which growers are currently involved in the GES Program?

Currently there are 100+ growers involved in the program from across Ohio and in SE Michigan. Our advisory board is made up of growers from each region and their names are listed on the MVGA website at www.maumeevalleygrowers.com or www.ges.palmerenergy.com . Just ask around. I am sure you know many growers currently taking advantage of the savings available through this program.

16. What do I need to do to be part of GES?

Contact Anne Schenk at Palmer Energy 419-539-9180 ext. 205. Anne will be able to assist you with the details and answer any questions you may have regarding the program.

17. Is there more information on GES available?

There is additional information and a brochure available at www.maumeevalleygrowers.com or www.ges.palmerenergy.com. You can also call Anne Schenk 419-539-8190ext. 205 or Joe Perlaky of MVGA 419-356-4847 with any questions regarding this program.