Wind Turbine at Erickson Farms

Funk, NE 68940 | Bergey Windpower Excel 15 | 15 kW on 100 ft tower | Installed by American Windpower

Photo Credit: American Windpower

Erickson Farms, a grain operation located near Funk, Nebraska, took a bold step toward sustainable energy and cost control in April 2024 when owner Erick Erickson commissioned a Bergey Excel 15 wind turbine. Installed on a 100-foot tilt-up tower, the 15 kW turbine is a visible symbol of the farm's commitment to energy independence and financial resiliency.

Facing electricity costs on the rise, Erickson leveraged federal and USDA incentives to make distributed wind a reality for his business. The turbine's expected output of 30,000 kWh annually covers most of the farm's essential power use, but the system has already exceeded projections—generating 38,000 kWh in its first 15 months. With retail net metering available through Southern Public Power District and the local electricity rate near 12 cents per kWh, Erickson's realized energy savings have topped $4,000 per year, putting the project far ahead of its payback schedule.

Erickson Farms Wind Turbine
Economic Viability: With and Without REAP/ITC

Scenario	Out-of-Pocket Cost	Est. Payback Time
Without REAP & ITC	$109,500	27 Years
With REAP & ITC	**<$11,000**	**~1 Year**

The financial pathway for the installation is notable: Erickson paid $109,500 upfront but was able to access a 50% USDA REAP grant and a 40% federal tax credit. Accelerated depreciation under Section 179 further reduced the net out-of-pocket cost to well under $11,000—transforming an ambitious investment into a remarkably fast return.

Annual maintenance costs are average $400 each year. The turbine's strong results offer more than just a financial win. The project demonstrates that wind energy can be a practical, replicable solution for agricultural businesses grappling with volatile energy markets, and sets an example for

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neighboring agricultural producers in rural Nebraska. Erickson's experience highlights the transformative impact of well-structured incentive programs and showcases how distributed wind can empower farmers to control their future energy costs.

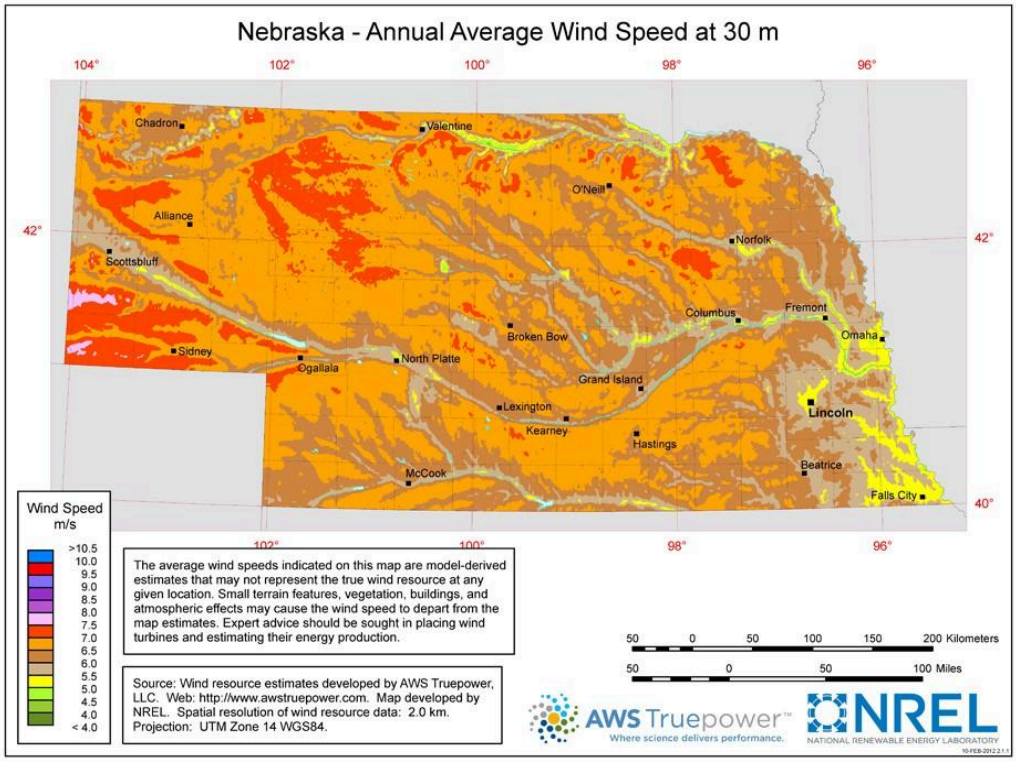
Annual Operational Expenditures	
Electricity Cost Savings	$3,654
Insurance	-$400
Monitoring/5yr Warranty	$0
Net Annual Cash Flow	**$3,254**

"With the USDA grant and the Tax Credits, investing in the turbine just made a lot of sense,"
-Erick Erickson, Owner

Quick Facts	
Annual Energy Cost Savings	$3,654
Annual Production	30,450 kWh
On-Site Energy Offset	~90%

Incentives Applied	
REAP (50%)	$54,750
ITC (40%)	$43,800
Depreciation	$17,325

More than 25,000 Nebraska properties have wind resources suitable for distributed wind, with a combined technical potential of 156 MW, per NREL



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