

Xinhua. 2011. "Chile opens up to renewable energy investment in agriculture".
Xinhua, April 27

SANTIAGO, April 26 (Xinhua) -- Chile will develop non-conventional renewable energy (NCRE) for agriculture to sharpen the competitiveness of its forest-agriculture-livestock products, the Chilean vice agriculture minister said Tuesday.

The initiative will be promoted with clear rules to facilitate investment in those sectors and increase the competitiveness of Chilean products abroad, Vice Agriculture Minister Alvaro Cruzat said.

"The ministry is working on different projects in a parallel way, counting on the participation of the private sector as a fundamental actor in the development of the investment projects," he said.

Moreover, "20 percent of our energy demand is to be generated from non-conventional renewable energy by 2020," Cruzat said.

Chile has a budget of 80 million U.S. dollars for the new NCRE projects in agriculture, which will help cut up to 30 percent of energy costs, which have risen sharply in recent years.

The country has already approved an initial investment of 12 million dollars, and pledged another 85 million dollars for 2012, Cruzat said.

Energy demand in agriculture may vary in different seasons, as some parts of the year may see the energy need triple over that in seasons of lower demand.

That makes it even more important for Chile to explore alternative energy sources, Cruzat said.

"Considering the particularities of our sector, the development of associated NCRE projects has a great value, because on the one hand it allows the reduction of costs, while at the same time it adds a distinguished element to the final consumers by reducing the carbon footprint," he said. Enditem