

SUBCHAPTER IV—NATURAL GAS
CURTAILMENT POLICIES

§ 3391. Natural gas for essential agricultural uses

(a) General rule

Not later than 120 days after November 9, 1978, the Secretary of Energy shall prescribe and make effective a rule, which may be amended from time to time, which provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law (other than subsection (b)) and to the maximum extent practicable, no curtailment plan of an interstate pipeline may provide for curtailment of deliveries of natural gas for any essential agricultural use, unless such curtailment—

(1) does not reduce the quantity of natural gas delivered for such use below the use requirement specified in subsection (c); or

(2) is necessary in order to meet the requirements of high-priority users.

(b) Curtailment priority not applicable if alternative fuel available

If the Commission, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, determines, by rule or order, that use of a fuel (other than natural gas) is economically practicable and that the fuel is reasonably available as an alternative for any agricultural use of natural gas, the provisions of subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to any curtailment of deliveries for such use.

(c) Determination of essential agricultural use requirements

The Secretary of Agriculture shall certify to the Secretary of Energy and the Commission the natural gas requirements (expressed either as volumes or percentages of use) of persons (or classes thereof) for essential agricultural uses in order to meet the requirements of full food and fiber production.

(d) Authority of Secretary of Agriculture to intervene

The Secretary of Agriculture may intervene as a matter of right in any proceeding before the Commission which is conducted in connection with implementing the requirements of the rule prescribed under subsection (a).

(e) Limitation

The Secretary of Agriculture may not exercise any authority under this section for the purpose of restricting the production of any crop.

(f) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) Essential agricultural use

The term “essential agricultural use”, when used with respect to natural gas, means any use of natural gas—

(A) for agricultural production, natural fiber production, natural fiber processing, food processing, food quality maintenance, irrigation pumping, crop drying, or

(B) as a process fuel or feedstock in the production of fertilizer, agricultural chemicals, animal feed, or food,

which the Secretary of Agriculture determines is necessary for full food and fiber production.

(2) High-priority user

The term “high-priority user” means any person who—

(A) uses natural gas in a residence;

(B) uses natural gas in a commercial establishment in amounts of less than 50 Mcf on a peak day;

(C) uses natural gas in any school, hospital, or similar institution; or

(D) uses natural gas in any other use the curtailment of which the Secretary of Energy determines would endanger life, health, or maintenance of physical property.

(Pub. L. 95-621, title IV, §401, Nov. 9, 1978, 92 Stat. 3394.)

§ 3391a. “Essential agricultural use” defined

For the purposes of section 3391 of this title, the term “essential agricultural use” shall—

(1) include use of natural gas in sugar refining for production of alcohol;

(2) include use of natural gas for agricultural production on set-aside acreage or acreage diverted from the production of a commodity (as provided under the Agricultural Act of 1949 [7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.]) to be devoted to the production of any commodity for conversion into alcohol or hydrocarbons for use as motor fuel or other fuels; and

(3) for the 5-year period beginning on June 30, 1980, include use of natural gas in the distillation of fuel-grade alcohol from food grains or other biomass by facilities in existence on June 30, 1980, which do not have the installed capability to burn coal lawfully.

(Pub. L. 96-294, title II, §273, June 30, 1980, 94 Stat. 711.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Agricultural Act of 1949, referred to in par. (2), is act Oct. 31, 1949, ch. 792, 63 Stat. 1051, as amended, which is classified principally to chapter 35A (§1421 et seq.) of Title 7, Agriculture. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1421 of Title 7 and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was enacted as part of the Biomass Energy and Alcohol Fuels Act of 1980 which is title II of the Energy Security Act, and not as part of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 which comprises this chapter.

§ 3392. Natural gas for essential industrial process and feedstock uses

(a) General rule

The Secretary of Energy shall prescribe and make effective a rule which provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law (other than subsection (b)) and to the maximum extent practicable, no interstate pipeline may curtail deliveries of natural gas for any essential industrial process or feedstock use, unless such curtailment—

(1) does not reduce the quantity of natural gas delivered for such use below the use requirement specified in subsection (c);

(2) is necessary in order to meet the requirements of high-priority users; or

(3) is necessary in order to meet the requirements for essential agricultural uses of natural gas for which curtailment priority is established under section 3391 of this title.