

Biodigester ribbon cutting at WI's largest dairy

by AgAnnex Administrator | Jan 2014

Manure Manager



Jan. 6, 2014 - Around 100 people from around the globe braved Wisconsin's freezing temperatures to attend the ribbon cutting of Rosendale Dairy's new 1.4-megawatt biodigester.

The facility – which generates farm-produced energy, tackles environmental concerns, provides unique learning experiences, and creates profitable end-products – was launched December 11.

The project included installing two of BIOFerm Energy System's complete mix anaerobic digestion tanks — COCCUS — as well as the construction of a hands-on learning laboratory.

Once fully operational, the biodigester will process approximately 240 tons of manure per day from the dairy's 8,500 cows. The digested manure is capable of producing up to 1.4 megawatts of renewable electricity. The site will also provide University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh students the unique opportunity to work with real life facts and figures.

Carbon credits generated from the biodigester's sale of electricity to the grid are expected to dramatically aid in the university's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2025, and will provide enough energy to power 1,200 homes per year.

Although the biodigester's primary purpose is generating renewable heat and electricity from manure, additional farm benefits include decreased phosphorus and nitrogen run-off, minimized farm odors, and digestate with a high nutrient content that can be used on-farm or sold.

"When you add in the ability to use the manure to gather green energy even before it is returned to the soil, it is another major benefit to a farm's pre-existing sustainability," said Rosendale Dairy co-owner, Jim Ostrom.

"It is a great privilege to work with such forward-thinking partners on a project of this scale. This is more than just a problem-solution-type project," said Joachim Janssen, CFO and head of the Viessmann biogas sector. "This is a step toward solving waste removal issues and launching a major sustainability project to benefit a farm in the state of Wisconsin; a state we have grown to love through our partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh over the past few years, while also having a chance to again work with innovative partners that are the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Foundation, University of Oshkosh, Milk Source and Rosendale Dairy."