

Cohocton, NY Facility in Cohocton Generates Biogas from Dairy Manure and Food Waste

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COHOCTON, NY - State and local leaders cut the ribbon on a new renewable energy facility at Lent Hill Dairy Farm in Steuben County. The new plant will make clean power from cow manure and discarded food waste from nearby cheese and yogurt-making plants. The manure and food scraps will be anaerobically digested to create biogas, then converted to electricity in a high-efficiency generator at the Lent Hill farm and added to the NYSEG grid.

More than 35,000 gallons of food waste and about 90,000 gallons of manure will be recycled per day at the facility and converted to about eight million kilowatt hours of renewable electricity annually. The electricity will be used by the Chobani yogurt company and Winsor Acres, a dairy farm, who have partnered to off-take the renewable energy via NYSEG.

Leaders on hand to celebrate the new facility included New York Senator Tom O'Mara; state Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes; Brian Murray, USDA's Director of Rural Development for New York; Kelly Fitzpatrick, Chair of the Steuben County Legislature; Judy Hall, Cohocton Supervisor; James C. Johnson, Executive Director Steuben County Industrial Development Agency; Sally Rowland, of the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Materials Management; Brett Green of Martin

Construction Resource; and Patrick Serfass, Executive Director of the American Biogas Council, among others.

Martin Construction Resource (MCR) provided the project's engineering, procurement and construction, hiring local contractors such as Dickson Environmental and Bouille Electric.

New York Senator Tom O'Mara said, "This is an exciting milestone for Lent Hill Farm and Ag-Grid Energy and the partnership they have been building and working hard to develop over the past few years. Their onsite bio-digester will showcase cutting-edge technology that promises a bright future of producing clean renewable energy while reducing emissions and cutting landfill waste. It's a great project and I'm happy to be able to welcome its arrival in Steuben County."

New York Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes said, "I am thrilled to be a part of the grand opening of Lent Hill Ag-Grid, a groundbreaking project that highlights the innovative spirit of our community. Lent Hill Farm's commitment to sustainability and clean energy is a shining example of how technology and local resources can work together for a greener future."

Paul Wolcott, owner of Lent Hill Dairy, said, "Our family farm is committed to providing top-quality milk while remaining a sustainable operation. This project, combined with our windmills, means our farm will have a negative carbon footprint. The anaerobic digesters reduce odors and allow us to cut use of chemical fertilizers to help ensure water quality. And they provide pathogen-free solid fiber bedding to keep our cows happy."

Rashi Akki, Founder and CEO at Ag-Grid Energy, which developed the project said, "Facilities like this provide benefits for farmers, for local businesses and for the environment. This project is mitigating methane emissions from cow manure, it's keeping food waste out of landfills where the waste would create greenhouse gas emissions, it's providing renewable electricity for businesses that want to decarbonize, and it's providing an added income stream to the Lent Hill family farm."

Patrick Serfass, Executive Director of the American Biogas Council, said, "Biogas systems like Lent Hill Dairy's not only provide clean electricity for businesses, they also capture methane emissions to displace fossil fuels, displace synthetic fertilizers with natural nutrients already on the farm, and provide economic investment in rural communities. Today, only one in 10 New York dairy farms have increased their sustainability this way, so a lot more opportunity to help the environment and economy remains."