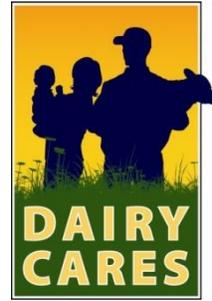


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Dairy Cares Newsletter

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Five new Central Valley dairy digesters to capture methane, generate renewable energy

Five California dairies have been awarded grants to build biogas digesters – projects that will convert greenhouse gases into renewable, green energy, enough to power about 4,800 households.

In July, the California Department of Food Agriculture (CDFA) announced that the five new digester projects, all located in disadvantaged communities in California’s Central Valley, would receive grant funding totaling \$11.1 million. The projects selected are estimated to produce a combined 32.4 million kilowatt hours (kWh) per year, while improving local air quality, creating jobs and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

CDFA’s Dairy Digester Research and Development Program provides up to 50 percent of the total cost of each project, not to exceed \$3 million for a single project. The effort is designed to incentivize and expand the number of operating dairy digesters in California. Recipients of this year’s grants have pledged an estimated \$18.9 million in matching funds.

“These projects demonstrate a commitment by California to support efforts by dairy farmers to fight climate change by reducing greenhouse gases from the agriculture sector,” CDFA Secretary Karen Ross said. “This is definitely a win-win for agriculture: Cutting methane emissions and improving the environment while also generating revenue from renewable bioenergy.”

Active public discussion and effort toward building more dairy digesters is fueled by the hope of both environmental and economic returns, reducing environmental impacts while creating renewable energy and a new, sustainable source of revenue for family farmers.

Digesters capture biogas, which comes from manure as it decomposes. By storing dairy manure in special containment ponds or tanks, manure biogas, much like natural gas, can be captured and used to generate electricity, or as a clean vehicle fuel replacing diesel.

The potential for dairies to be part of California’s green energy future is largely untapped, with more than a dozen biogas digester projects on dairies throughout California – about 1 percent of the state’s total dairies. With the addition of the five new digester projects set to receive CDFA

funding, the amount of clean, green, renewable energy generated on California dairies will increase significantly.

The California dairy community remains optimistic about the potential to develop more cost-effective, environmentally friendly dairy digesters in our state. With continued effort and the right economics, more California dairy families will be adding green energy to the list of dairy products they already produce for millions of families in our state, nation and world.

Applicants awarded funding through the Dairy Digester Research and Development Program

Applicant	Project Title	Location	Grant Amount	Description
Philip Verwey Farms	Verwey-Hanford Dairy Digester	Hanford, Kings County	\$3,000,000	The Verwey-Hanford Dairy Digester project is a new covered lagoon digester proposed at Philip Verwey Farms #2 Dairy. The biogas from the digester will be used to produce approximately 7.6 million kWh of renewable electricity per year.
Open Sky Ranch, Inc.	Open Sky Ranch Dairy Digester	Riverdale, Fresno County	\$973,430	The Open Sky Ranch Dairy Digester project will recommission a covered lagoon digester at Open Sky Ranch. The biogas from the digester will be used to produce approximately 6.4 million kWh of renewable electricity per year.
AgPower Visalia, LLC	Moonlight Dairy Digester	Visalia, Tulare County	\$3,000,000	The Moonlight Dairy Digester is a DVO™ mixed-plug flow digester. The biogas from the digester will be used to produce approximately 6 million kWh of renewable electricity per year.
ABEC #2 LLC dba West-Star North Dairy Biogas	West-Star North Dairy Biogas Project	Buttonwillow, Kern County	\$3,000,000	The West-Star North Dairy digester is a covered lagoon digester project. This project will capture biogas from two covered lagoons at the dairy. Biogas from the digester will produce 7.6 million kWh of renewable electricity per year.
Philip Verwey Farms	Verwey-Madera Dairy Digester	Madera, Madera County	\$2,281,091	The Verwey-Madera Dairy Digester project is a new covered lagoon digester to be installed at Philip Verwey Farms #1. The biogas from the digester will be used to produce approximately 4.8 million kWh of renewable electricity per year.

Dairy Cares is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability and responsible animal care. Our members include Bar 20 Dairy Farms, California Cattlemen’s Association, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, California Farm Bureau Federation, Conestoga-Rovers and Associates, Dairy Farmers of America-Western Area Council, Dairy Institute of California, Harris Construction, Hilmar Cheese Co., HP Hood, Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O’Lakes, Milk Producers Council, Ruan Transport Corp., Western United Dairymen, Yosemite Farm Credit and others. For information, visit our web site or call 916-441-3318.