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## **Focus on Energy Awards Grants for Renewable Energy Projects**

*- \$500,000 in grants awarded to help dairy farms become more energy independent by using anaerobic digestion -*

**MADISON, Wis. (March 11, 2008)** — Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, has awarded grants totaling \$500,000 to two Wisconsin dairy farms in eastern Wisconsin. Grotegut Dairy Farm in Newton, Wis. and Maple Leaf Dairy in Cleveland, Wis. were awarded the grants to help them complete their anaerobic digester projects.

These two newest grants are in addition to eight farm anaerobic digester grants previously announced in November 2007. Focus on Energy grants for anaerobic digesters on Wisconsin dairy farms now total more than \$2 million. These grants will help each dairy farm install an anaerobic digester — a renewable energy system that produces heat and electricity from organic material.

“When completed, the two most recent anaerobic digesters will generate approximately 900 kilowatts and 6,260,000 kilowatt hours of electricity per year,” said Larry Krom, project manager for Focus. “That is enough energy to power 629 average Wisconsin homes.”

Not only will the anaerobic digesters offset the dairy farms' energy consumption, they'll have a positive effect on the environment. The annual environmental benefits of both projects are equivalent to offsetting 3,100 tons of coal from being burned, the emissions from 1,011 cars and 7,512 tons of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from being released into the atmosphere.

### **Grants Still Available**

The current cycle of grants for dairy farm digesters expires March 31, 2008. Larry Krom noted, “We strongly encourage dairy farms that are considering anaerobic digesters to contact the Focus on Energy Renewable Energy Program to learn more about our grants and other assistance being offered. With Wisconsin being a national leader in farm digesters, we have a high level of hands-on experience and knowledge that farmers can draw on.”

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### **About Anaerobic Digestion**

Anaerobic digestion is the bacterial decomposition of organic matter that occurs in the absence of oxygen. An anaerobic digester system is an enclosed tank that excludes oxygen and through which organic matter is passed and broken down by naturally occurring bacteria, producing biogas. This biogas is composed of approximately 55 percent to 70 percent methane. The methane produced in the process can be used in an engine-generator to produce electricity. Anaerobic digesters can also be used to provide heat.

A digester for a 1,000-cow dairy farm can produce enough electricity to power 150 average Wisconsin homes. In addition to producing electricity, a farm anaerobic digester can help manage animal waste. Also, anaerobic digesters help to control odors, preserve the environment and produce valuable byproducts in the form of organic fertilizers.

“Focus on Energy has a network of experts across the state and offers a variety of programs to help anyone plan, finance and install renewable energy systems,” explained Don Wichert, Focus on Energy Director of Renewable Energy Program. “Because of incentives like our dairy farm anaerobic digestion grant, a growing number of Wisconsin residents are using renewable energy.”

To learn more about Focus on Energy and its Renewable Energy Program, or to find out if you qualify for financial incentives call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

### **About the Focus on Energy Renewable Energy Program**

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus on Energy's Renewable Energy Program seeks to raise awareness, provide training and financing, enhance marketing, promote technical assistance and support the installation of renewable energy technologies across Wisconsin. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

### **About Focus on Energy**

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not get completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).