



## Idaho AD project wins sustainability award

---

By [Anna Austin](#) | March 14, 2012



An Idaho and dairy and food waste AD project has been recognized by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy.  
PHOTO: INNOVATION CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY

A three-partner anaerobic digestion project near Gooding, Idaho, is the recipient of the Sustainability Award for Outstanding Achievement in Energy. The recognition comes from the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, and the Center for Advanced Energy Studies at the Idaho National Laboratory.

Texas-based Dean Foods and AgPower Partners teamed up with Big Sky West Dairy in 2008 to install a private sector-funded anaerobic digester energy system. The project began operating in 2009 and utilizes manure from the dairy farm's 4,700 cows, as well as organic waste supplied by Dean Foods.

The 1.2 MW of electricity produced on site is sold to Idaho Power, and the system also annually produces about 55,000 cubic yards of ammonia-free fiber, which is sold as a landscape fertilizer. A portion of the solids from the digester is also used for all of Big Sky Dairy's animal bedding needs.

The project's model is designed to take the burden off the dairy producer to secure financing, operate the digester and sell the energy to utility companies, according to AgPower Partners. Bon Joblin, AgPower manager, said Dean Foods joined the project to prove that the third-party owner/operator model was feasible and would be good for the dairy industry. "We all believe the model is a success," he said.

To benefit others interested in implementing similar projects, the companies have shared their project results and lessons learned with the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy and EPA AgStar.

Click [here](#) for online version.

**For internal use only. Reprints available for purchase.**