

Anaerobic digestion of dairy manure is becoming increasingly popular from an economic and management perspective. Over the past few years, five digesters have been installed on dairy operations in Whatcom County, WA, each with a unique system of operation and management. This tour will highlight two facilities.

One is a system which co-digests dairy manure with pre-consumer waste products to produce biogas, energy, bedding, and fertilizer products. This system also has an innovative nutrient recovery system developed at Washington State University (WSU) that removes nitrogen and phosphorus from the liquid nutrient stream before it is returned to the farm fields. Representatives from WSU will be on hand to talk about the unique principles and technologies of digester operation and nutrient recovery.

The second facility represents a smaller, upright tank style digester. This facility digests manure only for on-farm energy production and recovers digested solids for bedding by way of a drum-style drier. They are also implementing and testing an innovative manure application strategy to reduce losses to ground and surface waters.

Participate in this tour to get a remarkable inside look at the benefits and challenges of operation of a digester system from the farmer perspective; the potential environmental benefits of digestion; the pros and cons of using co-products in digestion; the addition of new technologies for nutrient recovery; and how the end products of manure solids, liquid, and gas are being used. In addition, the bus ride will include a narrated tour of the Puget Sound with representatives from the Conservation District, regulatory agencies, and dairy industry to lay the groundwork for the day.

For more information regarding one of the dairies we plan on visiting please click on the following:
http://www.usdairy.com/~media/usd/public/vander_haak_casestudy_sust4012_r2.ashx