



George Plaven/Capital Press  
**The remaining dry solids from manure digestion are similar in feel to sawdust, and can be used for animal bedding or as a soil amendment.**

# MONEY FROM MANURE

## Potential for generating fuel from waste grows

By **GEORGE PAVEN**  
Capital Press

**B**OARDMAN, Ore. — A thousand miles separates Threemile Canyon Farms in Eastern Oregon, surrounded by high desert and sagebrush, from the crowded freeways of Los Angeles.

Though they might seem like distant strangers, the mega-dairy and the megalopolis are about to be connected by a most unexpected resource — cow manure.

Threemile Canyon Farms is Oregon's largest dairy with 68,340 cattle, including 33,000 milking cows. In 2012, the farm built an anaerobic digester to cap-

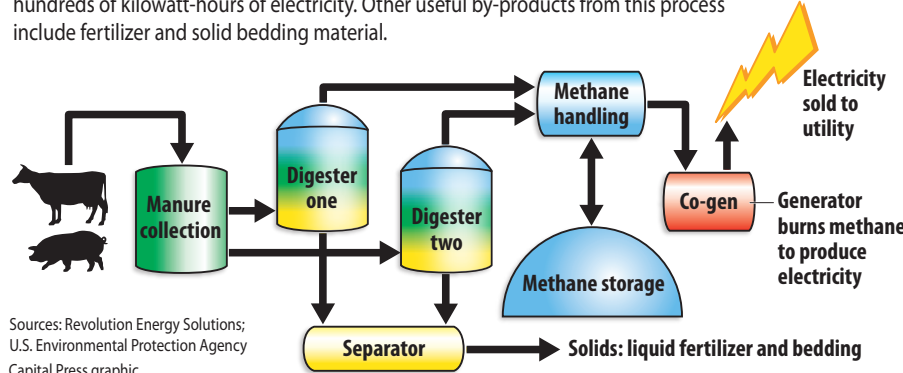
ture methane emissions from all that manure. It has since used the gas to generate electricity, which it sells to the interstate utility PacifiCorp.

In June, state regulators approved an expansion of the facility, and Threemile Canyon installed new equipment to purify the methane. Farm managers now plan to inject it into a nearby natural gas pipeline, which will transport it to Southern California to produce cleaner-burning fuel for trucks.

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### Anaerobic digesters explained

Biogas is generated when microorganisms convert manure into methane in a closed space, absent of oxygen. This process is known as anaerobic digestion and digesters can produce hundreds of kilowatt-hours of electricity. Other useful by-products from this process include fertilizer and solid bedding material.



Sources: Revolution Energy Solutions; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Capital Press graphic



**Marty Myers, left, general manager of Threemile Canyon Farms, with engineer Rick Morck at the dairy's digester facility, where gas is captured from cow manure to generate electricity and make renewable natural gas for transportation fuel.**  
George Plaven/Capital Press

## Judge overturns county's aerial spray ban

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**  
Capital Press

An Oregon judge has invalidated Lincoln County's prohibition against aerial pesticide spraying because the ordinance is preempted by state law.

Voters narrowly approved the aerial spray ban in 2017 but two landowners filed a lawsuit challenging the ordi-

nance for overstepping the county's authority.

Lincoln County Circuit Court Judge Sheryl Bachart has now ruled that Oregon's Pesticide Control Act disallows local government regulation of pesticides, including aerial spraying.

"Since the ordinance seeks by its very terms to regulate pesticide use, the county is completely pre-

empted under state law from adopting any ordinance regarding pesticide use," the judge said.

The judge rejected arguments by supporters of the ban who argued the ordinance's legality was supported by the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Oregon Constitution, calling these claims "misplaced and without

legal precedent."

"There is simply no authority for the proposition that the people of Lincoln County are granted an inalienable right of local self-government which preempts any authority of the state," Baccarat said.

The plaintiffs in the case, Rex Capri and Wakefield Farms, rely on aerially applied herbicides to con-

trol weeds on their land and asked that the prohibition be declared void.

The ordinance amounts to an "attack on the rule of law" because it claims the "right of local community self-government" overrides Oregon's overall system of government, according to the plaintiffs.

It's beyond the county's power to adopt an ordi-

nance that supersedes state and federal laws, and local restrictions on spraying are pre-empted by the state's Pesticide Control Act, Forest Practices Act and "right to farm and forest" law, the plaintiffs said.

Supporters of the ordinance argued that all power is inherent in the people

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## First commercial picking of Cosmic Crisp underway

By **DAN WHEAT**  
Capital Press

**GRANDVIEW, Wash.** — Fresh snow blanketed the Rattlesnake Hills 10 miles to the north, and picking was delayed an hour to let the new Cosmic Crisp apples warm up and lessen the chances of bruising.

One could say what's believed to be the first commercial picking of Washington's signature Cosmic Crisp apple got off to a chilly

start.

It was 8 a.m., Sept. 30, at Lyall Orchards in Grandview.

A few days earlier, Tyler Brandt, vice president of Proprietary Variety Management in Yakima, said as far as he knows Lyall Orchards is the first to pick the new variety, the first developed by Washington State University since 1997. They will be headed to grocery stores in December.

PVM is managing the com-

mercial development of Cosmic Crisp for WSU.

Several weeks of controlled atmosphere storage are needed to lower starch and raise sugar levels to provide the right sweet, tangy taste the industry believes consumers will like better than Honeycrisp and that they hope gives grower good returns.

Industry marketers call it their \$500 million gamble. Millions



Dan Wheat/Capital Press

**From left, JimRay Lyall, 31, his uncle Frank Lyall, 62, and grandmother Donna Lyall, 86, at Lyall Orchards, Grandview, Wash., on Sept. 30.**

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