



Farm Energy News

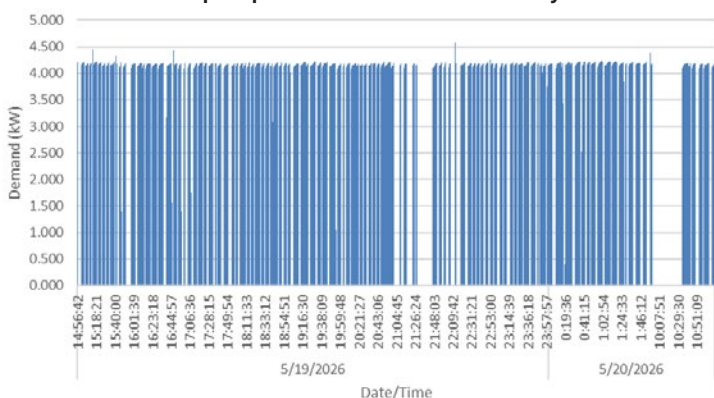
Fall 2026

Data logging services

Quantify your farm's energy use to save

Many farm customers have taken advantage of our Energy Efficiency Services data logging to save energy and money. Data logging can display energy use in greater detail than your monthly bill — highlighting how your farm uses energy and what changes you can make to reduce use. We'll also help you find financial incentives from Focus on Energy to save even more.

Well pump data for one and a half days



One dairy farm recently found substantial savings using our data logging services. A well pump was monitored for one week to determine if a variable frequency drive (VFD) would benefit their farm operations. After the data was collected, it was shown that the well pump was running at full load for approximately 3.5 minutes and was idle for three minutes. This showed that the well pump was running for over half the time at 54%. That was the first clue that a VFD could be beneficial.

After checking the nameplate and pump curve data, there was ample information to estimate that a VFD on this well pump would have enough headroom to modulate down to about 50% of its speed. At that point, it would be using 12.5% of the original power when idled and 66% of full-load

power when operating. There was a great opportunity for savings in that range. From there, we could estimate energy use and savings for the whole year.

For this dairy farm, the savings per year were meaningful. Before a VFD was installed, this well used about 21,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year. After VFD installation, the well pump should use approximately 16,000 kWh per year. **That's a savings of almost 5,000 kWh and \$700 per year.** Considering the cost of a VFD and financial incentives available from Focus on Energy, the estimated payback time would be less than two years.

Contact your local agricultural consultant if you are interested in learning more about data logging for your farm and incentives available from Focus on Energy.





EQIP offers technical and financial assistance

The Natural Resource Conservative Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) provides about \$2 billion annually to help farmers maintain or improve production while conserving natural resources on working landscapes.

EQIP can help you with projects such as:

- Increasing soil health
- Improving irrigation efficiency
- Enhancing crop rotations
- Managing cover crops
- Making energy efficiency upgrades

Some benefits include:

- Reduced contamination
- Efficient use of nutrients, reducing input costs
- Improved soil health
- Mitigation against increased weather volatility
- Improved drought resiliency

The financial cost-share structure can cover up to 75% of the cost of implementation with a boosted rate of up to 90% for beginners (operating 10 years or less) and historically underserved producers. There also is an On-Farm Energy Initiative related to energy efficiency projects available through this same program.

Eligible energy efficiency improvements include:

- Lighting
- Plate coolers
- Ventilation and fans
- Irrigation pumps
- Grain dryers
- Greenhouses
- Heating and refrigeration units
- Insulation and building envelope sealing
- Motor controls and variable speed drives

An energy audit may be required if comparing efficiency savings from new high-efficiency units to older inefficient equipment. An Agricultural Energy Management Plan can be completed by NRCS-certified technical service providers.

Reach out to your local agriculture consultant for more information.





RECIPE CORNER

ALPINE-STYLE *Green Bean Casserole*

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5 tablespoons butter, cubed and divided | 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ cup panko bread crumbs | 2 cups milk |
| 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces | $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon each salt and pepper |
| 1 cup water | $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional |
| | 8 ounces Alpine-style cheese, shredded and divided (2 cups) |

INSTRUCTIONS

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a 12-inch ovenproof or cast-iron skillet over medium heat. Add bread crumbs; cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until toasted. Transfer bread crumbs to a bowl. Wipe out the pan

Bring green beans and water to a boil in the same pan; cook over medium-high heat for 7-8 minutes or until beans are crisp-tender, stirring occasionally. Drain and transfer green beans to a large bowl. Keep warm. Wipe skillet dry.

Melt remaining butter in the same pan over medium-low heat. Whisk in flour until smooth. Gradually whisk in milk, salt, pepper and cayenne pepper, if desired. Bring to a boil, whisking constantly. Cook and whisk for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Reduce heat to low. Gradually whisk in 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups Alpine-style cheese until melted. Stir in green beans.

Remove from the heat. Sprinkle with bread crumbs and remaining cheese. Broil 3-4 inches from the heat for 2-3 minutes or until cheese is melted.





We Energies
1300 Janesville Ave.
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

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CONTACTS

Agriculture department staff

Jason Kollwelter

Manager – Agriculture Services
920-723-9366
jason.kollwelter@we-energies.com

Elizabeth Schwalbach

Senior Agriculture Account Manager – northern Wisconsin
920-450-1912
elizabeth.schwalbach@wecenergygroup.com

Brad Brusveen

Senior Agricultural Account Manager – southern Wisconsin
920-253-1322
bradley.brusveen@we-energies.com

Danny Leonard

Energy Engineer
920-433-2586
danny.leonard@wecenergygroup.com

We Energies emergency contact numbers

Electric power outage hotline
800-662-4797

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800-261-5325

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