

Methane digesters

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Frey has considered heating a greenhouse, drying wood, or drying manure as possible solutions to utilizing the lost energy.

Frey estimates a ten year payback on his investment, "unless we set up a greenhouse to utilize the other half of the 50 percent of heat the digester produces."

Frey also installed an air filter to reduce the amount of dirt that flows into the engine with the methane gas. This filter helps to keep the engine clean. "The digester gas is a very dirty gas," said Frey, "and if you're not careful, you can burn out your engine with it."

Success of such systems has led to the development of the Agricultural Energy Program by the Governor's Energy Council (GEC). The program is meant to encourage the installation of other methane digester systems throughout Pennsylvania.

One aim of the program is to enable farmers with smaller herds to enjoy the benefits of the digester system, of which until now, only

owners of larger herds could take advantage.

The GEC program contains two parts. The first part will be the preparation and publication of a workbook to provide information about various technical, economic, and managerial issues that must be understood in starting a digester project. In addition, several workshops will be offered this spring in Pennsylvania on starting such projects.

The second part of the Agricultural Energy Program will be grants to fund site-specific feasibility studies of proposed projects. These grants from the GEC will pay up to \$10,000 or 80 percent of the cost of such studies, whichever is less. The only requirement is that the proposed digester facility use the manure from more than one farm.

The Agricultural Energy Program is being managed by the renewable energy section of the Governor's Energy Council. For more information, write to the Governor's Energy Council, in care of Roger Clark, P.O. Box 8010, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17105.

Friends of Md. Extension honored



On behalf of Epsilon Sigma Phi, national honorary fraternity of the Cooperative Extension Service, Mardelle K. Amstutz, right, presents "State Friend of Extension" awards to three well-known Maryland residents. The honorees are, from the left: C. Lester Dudrow, Lime Kiln, Frederick county dairy farmer and veteran 4-H dairy project leader; Henry S. Holloway, Darlington, Harford county livestock farmer and president of the Maryland Farm Bureau; George B. Delaplaine, Jr., Mount Pleasant, a Frederick county Polled Hereford breeder and general manager of the News and Post, century-old daily evening and morning newspapers published in Frederick. Amstutz is an Extension home economics specialist at the University of Maryland in College Park. Presentation was made recently during annual statewide Extension conference in Columbia.

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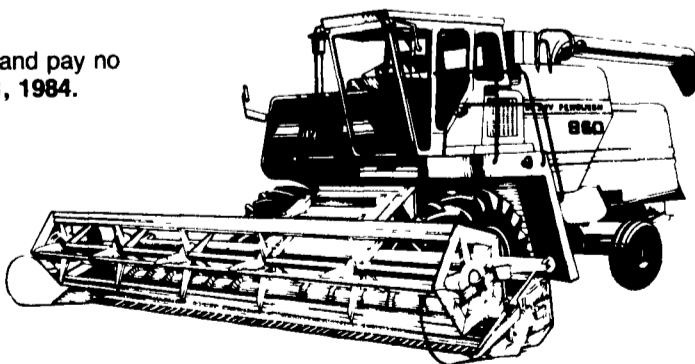
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