

**New York State
Environmental Investment Program
Capital Project Summary
Sheland Farms**

Project Background

Sheland Farms, located in Ellisburg in Jefferson County, is a family-owned dairy farm, which has grown from 50 milking cows in 1963 to over 560 cows and 400 calves today, which produce more than 1.4 million gallons of raw milk annually. All crops grown at Sheland are produced for consumption by the farm's livestock, which generate huge amounts of manure, bedding and crop wastes. Facing increasing costs for waste management and soil amendments, plus increased scrutiny of farming practices and regulation of manure management, Sheland decided to set an example of how a local dairy farm could improve its economic viability by using its waste streams as a resource.

Project Description

Sheland Farms applied to the Environmental Investment Program (EIP) and to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) for assistance implementing the *Sheland Farms Digester/Composting Project*. EIP monies were awarded toward the purchase of a composter system that would compost mixed, organic solids collected on the farm into 5,475 cubic yards of bedding material and

soil amendments. This would not only save \$18,000 annually on manure spreading and management, but it would reduce the farm's bedding and fertilizer purchases by \$53,704 each year and increase revenues from improved crop production by \$66,640. Concurrently to the EIP composting investment, NYSERDA provided funding toward the purchase of an anaerobic digester to convert liquid manure to methane that would be used to make electricity for the farm. Any excess electricity would be sold to the State's power grid.

Project Results

Although the project took longer than anticipated, primarily due to mechanical problems, it was worth the wait. As of June 30, 2008, the farm was generating 16 yards of bedding per day, or 5,840 yards of compost product per year, helping it avoid \$58,400 on cow bedding purchases. In addition, Sheland has saved \$6,050 on soil amendments and \$26,482 on their application. Together with \$68,857 in revenues from increased crop production, the farm has achieved \$159,789 in composting benefits.

Contractor: Jefferson County IDA
County: Jefferson County
ESD Region: North Country
ESD Contact: 518/292-5340

NYS EIP Investment: \$366,810
Contractor Match: \$954,158
Total: \$1,320,968
Completion Date: June, 2008