

## Brown Dairy Equipment Co.

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# April 2018

THE NEWSLETTER FOR DAIRY FARM ESTABLISHMENTS



FROM THE,,,

## *President's Desk*

**Spring is here!** The weather is beginning to warm, alfalfa will begin to grow, and the promise of summer is around the corner. Now is the time to plan for summer weather and consider having your systems checked to be in peak performance before the weather gets too warm. Contact us and we will be happy to schedule an appointment to review your dairy milking and cooling systems.

**Energy efficiency** is something we all need to think about with our dairy equipment. Brown Dairy Equipment has been working with Consumers Energy and other energy companies to help dairy farms to become more energy efficient. Our Service Manager, Mike Whelan, has been our point person to help your dairy operation in replacing equipment that may not be energy efficient and the energy company will also help pay for a cooling check up. Ask us for details. See page 2 for additional information along with an interview with Michael Bosscher, Bosscher Dairy of McBain, who has reaped the benefits of adding a variable speed drive on his milk pump.

**June is Dairy Month** and when you see your Delivery Route Driver, Service Technician, Dairy Solutions Team Member, or visit one of our stores, make sure you receive your dairy treat in June.

— Dennis Brown

# Spring



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# It Pays to Become More Energy Efficient

By: Mike Whelan

For years now we have heard the expressions: going green, leaving less of a footprint, and becoming energy efficient. In fact, not only have energy companies made suggestions on how we can reduce energy consumption, many have put rebates in place to help encourage customers to replace “energy hogs”. In fairness of full disclosure, I always viewed energy rebates as tax write-offs or bill credits for turning in old refrigerators, but boy was I wrong.

In the late spring of 2017, I had the good pleasure of meeting Duane Watson, the Agriculture Program Specialist for Consumers Energy. We discussed a number of issues related to the challenges that our customers were facing in these trying times. During the conversation he enlightened me on their **Energy Efficiency Program**. Consumers Energy started their Business Energy Efficiency Program in 2009, farms and agribusinesses were included in the very beginning, but their specific agriculture program was piloted in 2011 and became a specialty with dedicated Energy Engineers and Advisors in 2013. The information was incredible to me.

With the understanding of our market and the challenges our customers face, Brown Dairy Equipment researched what incentives were available to Dairy Producers in Michigan and were amazed by what we found.

Consumers Energy, along with all of the other major energy companies in the state, have rebates available for everything from: replacing light bulbs, installing variable speed drives on motors, thermostats, heat exchangers, custom energy saving projects and even tune-ups to ensure optimum efficiency. While the cost of the

upgrades were not completely covered, at minimum 50% of the project cost and most of the time 75% of the cost to upgrade to energy efficient equipment was covered\*. 75% was a huge savings especially in a down market; so we hit the streets to share the news with our customers.

In five months time we have upgraded equipment at twelve dairies (not all Consumers Energy customers) that likely would not have done so without these incentives in place. Duane Watson reported that in 2017, Consumers Energy Agriculture program incentives alone totaled over \$1,770,000.00 paid to their customers. Wow! With all of the same incentives in place, some even more lucrative for 2018, Brown Dairy Equipment looks forward to helping not only the environment but, just as important, helping our customers make necessary changes to remain economically viable for years to come.

So, if you're looking to upgrade that old

reciprocating compressor, add a plate-cooler, a fre-heater, a VSD to your vacuum pump or milk pump, or even have your refrigeration system tuned up, but feel the time hasn't been right; the time is right now to make your dairy operation run as efficiently as possible. Simply give us a call, answer a few questions to help determine what Energy Incentive Program works best for you and the amount you would be qualified for, and we will take care of the rest. Please call Brown Dairy Equipment today at 800-373-2153 or email Mike Whelan at [mwhelan@browndairyequipment.com](mailto:mwhelan@browndairyequipment.com) for more information.

*\*Actual rebate amount varies, based on incentives taken. Incentives are determined by energy reduction and/or milk production (pounds shipped a day).*



# Energy Efficiency Program Interview: Michael Bosscher

One of the farms we made energy efficient upgrades on was Bosscher Dairy in McBain, Michigan. The farm has been in business since 1892 and in the Bosscher family the entire time. These days, since his dad retired in 1992, Michael Bosscher is the owner operator and the 4<sup>th</sup> generation dairy farmer. He graduated high school at 17 years old and was a partner in the dairy with his father at 19. He takes pride in maintaining his facilities and also in producing quality milk. Sheer volume is not his main goal, but it is quality over quantity. Given the age of his farm and the passion he has to produce quality milk, it made him a great person to talk to regarding the changes he has seen since upgrading his equipment. Some of his answers were expected, while some were not and I found them quite interesting. Below is our interview:

## What energy efficiency measure did you take part of?

I added a variable speed drive (VSD) and changed the motor on the milk pump.

## What prompted you to perform the upgrade?

I liked the concept of a variable speed drive on our milk pump. We are blessed to have cold water at the dairy that is feeding our plate cooler. We have always been able to cool our milk running it through the plate cooler at full speed, but I liked the idea of having a slow steady speed transferring the milk. This allows the cold water to work even more to our advantage by dropping the milk temperature even more before it reaches the bulk tank. When you couple that with the energy savings from not having a motor run at one constant speed and the rebates being offered it made the upgrade a no brainer.

## Was the application process difficult? Why or why not?

No, not at all, because Brown Dairy Equipment took care of the pre-notification process to get the funds for my project reserved and Duane Watson came out to the farm, at my convenience, to make sure all the i's were dotted and t's were crossed.

## Have you noticed a difference in your energy bill, if so how much?

It really is tough to say how much, because of the amount of different variables when it comes to energy usage; outside temperature, employees, etc., but there has been a reduction in my energy usage by 10-12% a month on average since I have added the variable speed drive.

## What other benefits have you found since having the energy upgrade?

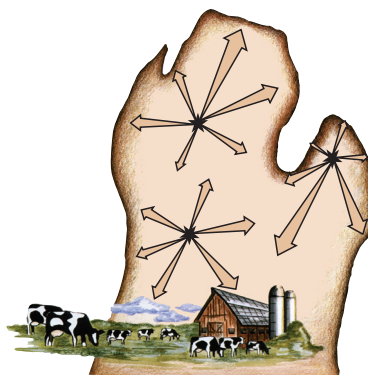
The milk is cooling better due to traveling through the plate cooler at the slower speed, which results in my compressors running less. Like everyone knows the less hours on a piece of equipment is a plus and that goes for the milk pump, as well. Having variable speed controls lessens the wear on the pump's motor as it is being allowed to run at the speed it needs to, not one constant speed.

## Would you recommend energy efficient equipment upgrades to other Dairy Producers?

I would. I know times are trying right now, but if you can afford to invest a little money upfront it's well worth it. The rebates help bring the cost down which is good, but these upgrades aren't a short term solution or money maker. You invest a little now and over the course of time, the money you spent is saved not only on the energy bill, but also on maintenance and service on the equipment. If you can afford to play the long game you will see a positive return on your investment in time.

## Are you happy with the service Brown Dairy Equipment provided with the efficiency upgrade?

Very much so, the guys that came out were timely, neat, had great workmanship and handled themselves as professionals. After completing the installation they took time to show me how I can still milk if there would be a problem with the VSD in order to avoid an extended period of down-time in the event something did fail on the drive. It's better to have that information up front than finding out at 2 a.m. that you need an emergency service call and down time associated with it.



Please call  
**Brown Dairy Equipment**  
**800-373-2153**

or email Mike Whelan at  
[mwhelan@brown dairyequipment.com](mailto:mwhelan@brown dairyequipment.com) to  
see what incentives  
are available and may be  
best for you  
to take advantage of.



# Brown Dairy Equipment Newsletter

## Spring Edition 2018

2153 North Van Dyke  
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## Michigan Dairy Facts

Michigan's dairy industry provides nutritious foods produced and processed locally, while making a significant economic impact on communities across the state.

Here are some fun facts about one of our state's largest agricultural industries:

- Michigan's dairy industry provides jobs, employing local veterinarians, equipment dealers and farm employees. One dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy.
- Michigan has nearly 1,800 dairy farm families who care for over 425,000 cows.
- The average dairy herd in Michigan has 217 cows. Just like businesses grow to support more families, herd sizes increase to allow the next generation to continue farming.
- 97% of Michigan dairy farms are family owned, many by multiple generations of the same family.
- In 2016, Michigan ranked 5<sup>th</sup> place in milk production in the U.S. Dairy cows in Michigan produced 10.9 billion pounds of milk.
- The average Michigan cow produces 25,957 pounds of milk each year. That's just over 3,000 gallons of milk!
- Milk in Michigan is local! Michigan's nearly 1,800 dairy farms produce more than enough milk to supply the entire state. Surplus milk is exported to help meet demand in other states.
- In supermarkets and local farmers markets, you can find milk, cheese and yogurt produced by Michigan dairy farmers. *When you buy Michigan dairy products, you not only "buy local" and support area farmers... you buy quality.*
- Only 1.7 % of the U.S. population produces food for all of us, plus millions worldwide.

<https://www.milkmeansmore.org/milk-local/michigan-dairy-facts/>