



Benthem Brothers Dairy

McBain, MI

The Challenge: Benthem Brothers Dairy is a family owned and operated dairy farm. When brothers took over their father's dairy in 1981, they only had 30 cows. Today, the family manages 2,000-3,000 cows. The dairy's equipment could only handle milking 100 cows per hour, so a milking parlor upgrade was required to keep up with the demand.

The Solution: A preferred Trade Ally showed Benthem Brothers Dairy how to use energy-efficient equipment to increase their milking production to 300 cows per hour, improve operations and lower their energy bill. In total, more than 13 different types of energy-efficient equipment were installed. They also utilized the Buy Michigan bonus and received an extra 30% bonus incentive by buying Michigan made high-efficiency recirculation fans with thermostat controls.

The Result: After the upgrades, Benthem Brothers Dairy noticed their cows were more comfortable and milk production increased. Equipment also needed less upkeep, especially the lighting. Overall, the project saved 687,598 kWh annually and they received \$104,803 in incentives. All the savings will be reinvested back into the farm.

Project Details

• Upgrades:

- Variable speed drive (VSD) on vacuum, well and milk pumps
- High-efficiency recirculation fans with thermostat controls
- Heated water from milk plate heat exchanger storage tank (photo below)
- Low-energy livestock waterers
- Interior and exterior LED lighting retrofits
- New construction interior and exterior LED lighting

• Overall Incentive: \$104,803

• Annual Electric Savings: 687,598 kWh



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“We definitely reinvested the incentive payment back into the dairy and the ongoing electrical savings are helping us operate more efficiently, which really matters.”

Jason Benthem, Co-owner
Benthem Brothers Dairy

Energy Savings Performance:

Because they partnered with Consumers Energy Business Energy Efficiency Programs, Benthem Brothers Dairy was able to easily switch over to more energy-efficient equipment and an incentive of \$104,803 was reinvested back into the dairy farm. The benefits were so transformative, even the cows are happier.



We are here to help

The biggest challenge in reducing energy use in your business is knowing where to start. The agricultural energy efficiency team will guide you every step of the way and provide a simplified, hassle-free process.

Get started today

Visit ConsumersEnergy.com/agriculture and download the application or call **877-607-0737** to learn more.

