



Benthem Brothers Dairy

McBain, MI

The Challenge: Benthem Brothers Dairy is a family owned and operated dairy farm. When the brothers took over their father's dairy in 1981, they only had 30 cows. Today, the family manages 2,000-3,000 cows. With growth like that, and outdated equipment that could only handle 100 cows per hour, a milking parlor upgrade was overdue.

The Solution: One of our Trade Allies showed Benthem Brothers how to use energy-efficient equipment to increase milking production to 300 cows per hour, improve operations and lower their energy bill. They also applied for the Buy Michigan bonus and received an extra 30% in incentives by buying efficient, Michigan made recirculation fans with thermostat controls.

The Result: After upgrading, Benthem Brothers staff noticed their cows were more comfortable and milk production increased. Equipment also needed less upkeep, especially their lighting. Overall, the project saved 687,598 kWh annually and they received \$104,803 in incentives.

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 on reverse)
- 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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Jason Benthem, Co-owner Benthem Brothers Dairy

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

Energy Savings Performance:

Because they partnered with Consumers Energy Business Energy Efficiency Programs, Benthem Brothers Dairy was able to easily switch to more energy efficient equipment and qualify for \$104,803 in incentives. The benefits were so transformative, even the cows are happier.



We're 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/agriculturecs, download the application or call (888) 674-2770 to learn more.