



# Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont

*An organization of farmers, gardeners, and consumers working to promote an economically viable and ecologically sound Vermont food system*

## NOFA-VT Starts Dairy Farm Energy Pilot Project

Would you like to reduce your farm's electricity bill? Find out how you can generate energy on the farm? NOFA-VT has a new project in place to help you do that.

NOFA-VT will work with any VOF certified organic or transitioning dairy farmer to assess farm energy use and obtain technologies that will address efficiency and/or alternative energy sources. The goals of the project are to enhance the efficiency of energy use on Vermont's organic dairy farms and assist farmers in taking advantage of farm-based energy generation.

Reduction of energy-use operating costs may enhance annual farm profitability by as much as ten percent, thereby increasing farm viability. Treating energy production and consumption as a whole, the project will assist farmers with adopting by-product energy of the farm, such as methane digestion, and with implementing a combination of efficiency and renewable energy use strategies, such as variable speed pumps, wind, solar, hydro, tailored to the individual needs of a particular farm.

The project will also overcome the financial hurdles of up-front cost and extended payback period for investment. NOFA-VT, in collaboration with Chittenden Bank, has increased the size of our Revolving Loan Fund so that we can finance the cost of 10 variable speed pumps as a pilot energy efficiency project. Farmers can then make loan payments from the savings generated from their decreased energy bills.

Dan Smith, of the Montpelier-based *Integrated Energy Management*, is managing the project. In addition, NOFA-VT is collaborating with the Vermont Bio-Fuels Association, Efficiency Vermont, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, and other energy advisors. For more information, please contact NOFA-VT Farm Advisor, Willie Gibson.



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