

## Should I Build a Digester?

Good question, here's the place to start working on an answer.

AURI, Minnesota funded the development of a self screening document to assist potential digester owners in assessing whether a digester makes sense on a farm.

**FILL OUT THIS ASSESSMENT TOOL** and send it to us if a system could be advantageous to you.

Key Issues		YES/NO
Site Permanency	Projected facility life is less than 10 years	
Bedding	Sand (dairy)	
Confinement	Dairy: animals on pastured or on drylots more than 10% of the time	
	Hogs: "all in-all out"	
Storage	Storage and collection pit the same	
Manure removal	Flush	
Site Development Limitations	Problem finding 150X150 area for system	
Water managed	No water meter or meter is unread	
	Rainwater comes in	
	Dairy: parlor holding area hosed down, not scraped*	
	Parlor tankroom water flows to manure pit*	
Management	Is there question who will be incharge	
	Problem finding a good Farm Mechanic or service company	

**NOTE:** Any "YES" in the above list is an area, which may require costly changes that reduce likelihood of system success.

\*Is the producer willing to make necessary changes?

# RCM Digesters, Inc.

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<b><u>Weighted Issues</u></b>					<b>Weight</b>	<b>Selection</b>
(Select the best description, place corresponding <b>Weight</b> value in the <i>Selection</i> column, add <i>Selection</i> values, compare with guideline <i>Interpretation</i> below)						
Why install a Digester?	“A good idea”				1	
	Environmental Concerns				3	
	Financial benefit				6	
	Holsteins	Farrow/ Finish	Farrow/Wean	Finish		
Animal numbers	< 300	<500	<1000	<3000	1	
	300-500	500-1000	1000-2500	3000-5000	3	
	500-1000	1000-1500	2500-5000	5000-10000	6	
	>1000	>1500	>5000	>10000	8	
Electric rate,	<\$0.05				1	
Actual/ kWh	\$0.05-0.06				3	
charge	\$0.06-0.07				6	
	>\$0.07				8	
Floor heating	In use in the production areas (and parlor holding area)				10	
Fuel rate, average	<\$0.50/gal Propane		<\$3.00/1000 CuFt Natural gas		1	
	\$0.50-\$0.75/gal Propane		\$3.00-\$4.00/CuFt Natural gas		2	
	\$0.75-\$1.00/gal Propane		\$4.00-\$5.00/CuFt Natural gas		4	
	>\$1.00/gal Propane		>\$5.00/CuFt Natural Gas		6	
Use depreciation On taxes	No				0	
	Partial				3	
	Entirely				8	
Score						

**Interpretation:** 0-20 = success questionable, 21-35= success possible, 35-46= greatest chance of success

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