



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 15, 2017

Contact: Elise Nelson, 608-266-9600

Elise.Nelson@wisconsin.gov

PSC Approves Innovative Bioenergy Project in Brown County

Madison - The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) approved a conditional \$15 million Focus on Energy grant to BC Organics, LLC for an innovative bioenergy system in Brown County. The system will produce renewable natural gas from dairy farm manure and other waste. The project will reduce the need to landspread raw manure, protect sensitive groundwater and surface waters in northeastern Wisconsin, and provide positive economic benefits to participating farms.

At the direction of Governor Walker, the PSC, Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection collaborated to develop a request for proposals (RFP) on innovative anaerobic digester systems that could produce renewable energy, remove nutrients from manure, protect water quality, and reduce pathogens.

BC Organics was recommended unanimously by the evaluation team comprised of expert staff from the PSC, DNR, DATCP, UW-Madison and Focus on Energy. BC Organics must obtain all of the necessary state and local regulatory approvals before construction may begin and includes an odor control plan designed to minimize impacts to neighboring landowners.

The consortium consists of 24 members led by Wisconsin based Dynamic Concepts (Waukesha), along with WEC Energy Group (Milwaukee), US Biogas LLC (Plymouth), and BioStar Organics, among other Wisconsin based firms. The project's proposed location is northeast of Holland, near Green Bay, is co-located with a proposed landfill owned by Brown County. It has commitments from nine Wisconsin farms with over 22,000 animal units, with the capability to expand to include additional farms in the future. The facility is expected to begin operations by January 1, 2019. The project will employ up to 20 full-time employees.

Renewable Energy Production

The project involves the construction of multiple anaerobic digesters with capability to produce renewable natural gas (RNG) from manure and food waste, and eventually landfill gas. The estimated energy output of 5.7 million therms is equivalent to the home heating needs for 7,600 Wisconsin homes. The RNG will be injected into the interstate natural gas pipeline system for use as a heating and transportation fuel.

Water Quality

The project will improve water quality in surface and groundwater in Brown, Kewaunee, Calumet, and Door counties using advanced nutrient separation technologies to treat the wastewater and produce other beneficial by-products including, bedding for cattle, liquid fertilizer, and dry solids that can be converted to fertilizer or used as feedstock for a renewable electric generation facility. When fully operational the project will remove 577,837 pounds of phosphorus and generate 163 million gallons of clean water annually.

Nutrient Management

Wisconsin continues to lead the U.S. in on-farm digesters. BC Organics provides an innovative approach that could provide a model for eliminating the need to spread raw manure on the land and provides a framework that could be replicated in other parts of the state to improve environmental outcomes for the livestock industry.

Specifically, it will help farmers reduce the water quality impacts of dairy farming in the karst region of northeastern Wisconsin by: reducing or eliminating the need to spread manure and overtopping lagoons; removing phosphorus from the waste stream; improving the efficiency of uptake of nutrients by plants; and virtually eliminating the pathogens in treated manure.

For more information contact:

PSC: Elise Nelson, Elise.Nelson@wisconsin.gov, 608-266-9600

DNR: Jim Dick, James.Dick@wisconsin.gov, 608-267-2773

DATCP: Bill Cosh, William2.Cosh@wisconsin.gov, 608-224-5020

###