






Agricultural Services Department, P14-504
 Consumers Energy
 1945 W. Parnall Road
 Jackson, MI 49201

Some of Our Services Include:

 New farm service requests or upgrades

 Free stray voltage electrical inspections

 New natural gas service requests

 Advising clients on equipment needs

For more information about agricultural services visit ConsumersEnergy.com/farm or call **800-252-8658**

This newsletter may contain "forward-looking statements;" please see our SEC filings for information that could cause our results to differ materially.

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AgriCulture

Energy information for the agricultural community FALL 2018

New Dawn for Dairy

Michigan Farms Get Big Economic Assist



Gov. Rick Snyder was recently joined by other state, county and local officials to announce a new \$510 million world-class dairy processing facility in St. Johns.

MATT OESCH is tired of the financial pressures of the dairy business. He's hopeful a \$510 million world-class dairy processing facility in St. Johns will usher a new era for Michigan's dairy farmers.

Consumers Energy's economic development team played a key role in landing the 146-acre project that will bring nearly 300 jobs. The company expects to provide the processing plant up to \$500,000 annually in energy efficiency rebates for energy-saving equipment that will be installed in the new facilities.

The joint venture is comprised of three facilities:

- Spartan Cheese Michigan, LLC, the main dairy processing plant and a joint venture of Glanbia, Select Milk and Dairy Farmers of America.
- A secondary milk plant owned by Proliant.
- A wastewater treatment plant that will be built, owned and operated by Spartan Cheese Michigan group.

"This news is a silver lining we have been hoping for," said Oesch, a dairy farmer who owns Swisslane Farms in Alto, Mich. "It's a game changer that I didn't think would happen. But I am glad it did."

Farmers have struggled recently with rising transportation costs and too few milk processing options.

CONTINUED INSIDE

Powering Memories FAIRS AND FESTIVALS ENERGIZE CROWDS

IT DOESN'T MATTER if you are a little tyke mesmerized by the bright colorful lights and inviting music or if you are an adult salivating over the apple, pumpkin or blueberry pies at a contest – just about everyone has fond memories of fairs and festivals around the state.

Muskegon's four-day Michigan Irish Music Festival, held in September, is one of the many festivals Consumers Energy is proud to sponsor. Expected to draw around 40,000 people – it offered festival goers the sweet smells, sights and sounds made possible by clean, reliable and safe energy.

Chris Zahrt, president of the festival, said about half of the crowd is new to their festival experience.

"We offer something for everyone," she

said. "Whether it's food, music, dancing or kids activities – we have it here."

Zahrt said the crowds have increased over the last several years – and they are grateful that Consumers Energy helps power the venue.

"This is a very unique event," she said. "And with its growing popularity, we have added a stage each year for the last three years. Now we have seven stages."

The Irish Music Festival donated \$50,000 last year to organizations in the Muskegon community.

"Part of our mission is giving back," Zahrt said. "We are happy to give back to a community that's been so good to us."

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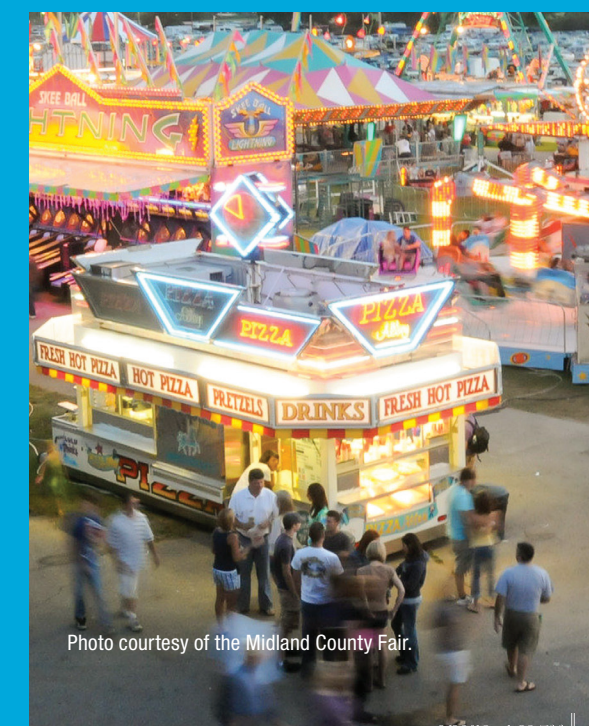


Photo courtesy of the Midland County Fair.

Lending a Helping Hand Business Account Manager Loves Her Field

Jessica Martin never knows how her day at work will take shape. And she wouldn't have it any other way. Whether it's attending agriculture meetings to get a pulse of the farm community or working with the company's leadership team to meet customer satisfaction, she keeps one thing in mind: an informed customer is a happy customer.

What does a typical day look like for you?

Every day comes with its own set of challenges and new adventures. My day is usually filled with helping customers over the phone, in person or through email. I enjoy getting out in the field and being able to shake the hand of the farmer I am helping. Most will make time out of their busy schedule to sit down and meet with me or give me a tour of their farm. I get to meet a lot of interesting people and see an aspect of farming that typically isn't viewed outside of the agriculture community. I often attend events sponsored by Farm Bureau, Michigan State University and Michigan Agri-Business Association.

What are some of the challenges of your job?

The biggest challenge is reaching as many customers as I can. Often, farms are under the farmer's personal name and not a business, so they don't always label themselves as farms. This is where the events come in handy and also word-of-mouth from the agriculture community.

What do you like most about your job?

I really enjoy my role and like to get out and meet my customers

face-to-face. I absolutely love visiting farms and seeing how they operate. Farmers are very united — which isn't always the case in other industries. They are very welcoming of any assistance I can offer them and often tell their farming neighbors and friends. It feels good to be able to help them save money through either energy efficiency or finding a better rate option.



Photo courtesy of the Michigan Irish Music Festival in Muskegon, Mich.

Powering Memories

FROM FRONT PAGE

Other fairs and festivals help put the best possible faces on the communities and Consumers Energy is there every step of the way to help.

From the bridge to the border, the company takes great pride in powering the midways of fairs and festivals across Michigan. It doesn't matter if it's your first time on a ride that's a thrill of a lifetime or if you are gazing at the stars from the comfort of a Ferris wheel.

That auctioneer with the bombastic voice that you hear in the distance? Consumers Energy supplies the energy to the sound system that makes the message crystal clear. Those fans in the animal barns that keep cows, horses, pigs and more cool and calm? You guessed it — Consumers Energy.

And don't forget the lights that highlight the prize-winning pies, jellies and veggies or the extra amps that help pump out the tunes for the rock concert of the year in the grandstand.

So go ahead, reflect back on those clear sunny days and starry nights at your favorite fair or festival. Or make a plan now to visit a Michigan fair or festival in the future and create new traditions.

POWERING MEMORIES IS WHAT CONSUMERS ENERGY DOES.

For ideas on future fairs and festivals to attend visit Michigan.org/fairs-festivals

WHAT IS STRAY VOLTAGE?

Consumers Energy's agricultural services department conducts thousands of stray voltage inspections per year.



STRAY VOLTAGE is a term used to describe neutral to earth voltage (NEV). NEV is a measurable level of voltage which may occur between a metal object and the adjacent floor or earth.

It is often called stray voltage when measured between two points that can be simultaneously contacted by livestock.

Voltage is the pressure that pushes electrical current through wiring systems, lights, and electrical equipment. When a person or animal feels a tingle or shock, the person or animal is actually feeling electrical current flowing

through the body or portion of the body.

Sometimes, a condition within wiring on a farm, the wiring at a neighboring property or the power lines supplying a farm may cause voltage between equipment and the adjacent earth or floor to increase to the point where it can be felt by an animal or person.

This stray voltage can range from a slight tingling or burning sensation at a cut to an uncomfortable jolt for animals.

If a person feels an uncomfortable jolt, the problem is probably not NEV but a serious problem with the wiring system or equipment.

What can I do to help reduce the risk of stray voltage on my farm?

Properly maintaining your wiring system is the most important step. Over time, your electrical equipment and wiring can become hazardous due to physical damage, corrosion and overloading, especially in a farm environment. Periodic inspections by a qualified person are highly recommended. They can identify potential electrical problems that may prove hazardous to your livestock and create future stray voltage issues.

What is Consumers Energy doing to protect my farm from stray voltage?

If you have livestock, chances are your electrical service has an isolated neutral completed at the transformer that serves your farm. More than 12,000 farms throughout the state have a separated neutral service. Consumers Energy's agricultural services department conducts thousands of inspections per year to ensure the neutral separations are maintained and working properly.

How can I have my farm tested for stray voltage?

Contact the agricultural services department at 1-800-252-8658 to schedule your free inspection.

New Dawn for Dairy

FROM FRONT PAGE

"This will help immensely," said Oesch, who plans to deliver his milk and cheese for processing at the new facilities. "I think this will keep a lot of dairy farms from closing in the future."

Gov. Rick Snyder lauded the new facility, which will rank among the largest dairy processing facilities in the country upon completion in 2020.

"Once again, Michigan's national reputation as the best place to grow jobs is bringing new investments to our thriving agriculture sector," Snyder said at groundbreaking ceremony for the facility in August. "Michigan's dairy industry is an essential economic driver in our state, and this new investment elevates and expands our potential to rise even higher while bringing new jobs and opportunities to this region."

Two dairy cooperatives, Dairy Farmers of America and Select Milk Producers, will supply milk to the processing plant, ensuring Michigan dairy farmers have a dedicated home for their milk. Glanbia PLC, a global nutrition group with presence in 32 countries, also is an investor. Michigan Milk Producers Association is expected to supply milk to the plant.

Scott Corrin, Economic Development Manager for Consumers Energy, said the facility, designed to process more than 8 million pounds of milk and produce more than 800,000 pounds of cheese each day, is the result of teamwork by local, regional, state agencies and economic development organizations.

"We are proud of our role in landing this great facility," Corrin said. "We worked with our state, regional and local allies to understand the long-term goals of each business, say 'yes' when other states said 'no,' and position Michigan as the best place to grow and thrive. Creating opportunities for jobs, investment and growth is always the goal with economic development projects of this magnitude."

Michigan ranks fifth in the nation for total milk production, with dairy farmers contributing \$15.7 billion to the state's economy, according to Gov. Snyder's office.

Local, county and state officials gather for the ground-breaking ceremony of a new dairy processing facility.



Renderings of a new processing facility in St. Johns.

At Your Service

Consumers Energy has launched an agricultural website that addresses the energy needs of farmers around the state.

Visit ConsumersEnergy.com/farm

