

# Meet An Anaerobic Digester Operator

## STORMS FARM

Blandeboro, Bladen County,  
North Carolina

### Let's Meet...

Billy Storms (*Owner/Operator*) & Don Britt (*Operator*)

**Anaerobic Digester Type:** Farm-Scale; Mixed Plug Flow

**Operating Since:** October 2013



### What's going in to the digester...

It's not pretty, but what digester is? 28,000 feed-to-finish hogs generate the manure, as well as slaughterhouse wastes and mortalities. It's not pretty, but it's energy efficient.

### Why did you build a digester?

The 28,000 hogs plus 200,000 chickens creates a lot of waste to manage and causes phosphorus is building up on the land. It is important to be a good farmer and good steward and look out for the next generation, which includes addressing the phosphorus issue now. Our needs will be met once we apply a nutrient recovery system and recover the phosphorus and some of the nitrogen.

### What's your challenge?

It took about six months to get the feedstock and gas production we wanted. That mix of feedstock is important. There were no other farms using a scraper system nearby, so converting our barns from a flush to scrap system was challenging.

### What is the biggest benefit for your operating project?

The hog houses don't smell since waste is moved quickly and there is no methane building up in the hog house. This makes for a healthier environment for the hogs.

### What outputs do you use from the system?

Will separate solids to bag and sell/spread on other farms. Biogas is converted to electricity in engine-gen set with biological H<sub>2</sub>S scrubber. The electricity that is generated is sold to the NC Electric Membership Co-Op that sells to all of the co-ops in the state (on the Four County Grid). RECs are sold to Duke Power and carbon credits are sold through Camco.

### Any advice for those seeking to build a system?

Make sure you have a good source of feedstock because you've got to feed the digester. Get everything planned on paper and get your financing lined up before you start. Do your homework before you start and be realistic about the timing. Be prepared to wait! In other areas of farming, you see immediate results with changes. That is not the case with the digester. You'll see the results, but you have to let the system build up in order to see the benefits. But, the results come.



*"Everyone involved with the system  
wants to see it succeed because it has the potential  
to change the hog industry in the US if it is successful."*

