

How is local dairy sustainable?



Many dairy farmers have implemented methods to reuse water up to five times on-farm. For example, water used to clean milking parlors is reused to clean production areas and then to irrigate fields. Many dairy farms often use a heat exchanger, a technology that uses cold water to partially cool milk, and then collects this water to use again as drinking water for cows.



The use of cow manure, cover crops and reduced tillage or no tillage practices help build and retain organic matter in soil, reduce soil loss and improve water infiltration, soil health and nutrient and water retention, all of which is increasingly important as we see longer periods of drought followed by more intense rains.



She's an icon. She's a legend. The dairy cow is downright amazing. Not only can she turn grass and other local-grown crops into milk; she can turn any number of foods that might otherwise become food waste into milk. In Maine, some common upcycled foods on dairy farms include whey from yogurt, spent brewery grains, canola meal, and wheat middlings from flour production.



Homes powered by cow manure and food waste, methane from cow manure used as natural gas for heating homes and cooking, solar panels on barn roofs and unproductive land - Maine dairy farmers are pioneers in the realm of renewable energy.



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