

Great Pathogen Kill in Bedding Solids from RCM Complete Mix Digester Projects



Brubaker Farms, Mt Joy, Pennsylvania

Complete Mix Digester; 1,000 cows, 200kW, separator.

Brubaker Dairy is using digested solids for bedding since the beginning of 2008.

The somatic cell count has gone down and Mike Brubaker said "I can't say it's only because of the bedding but I think it is a contributing factor." The dairy also reports the use of solids has resulted in better cow comfort. The farm also sells bedding to a neighbor. The neighbor would take more than they have.

Wanner's Pride-n-Joy, Lancaster Pennsylvania

Complete Mix Digester; 600 cows, 100 kW, separator.

John Wanner says he loves the solids bedding. The farm beds the milk string 2 to 3 times a week with solids right off the separator. Once a week they take a load to the heifer barn out of the reserve pile. They have not had to haul any solids out to the fields in a year. The farm is saving more than \$2,000 a month in sawdust cost. The whole manure system works better by using the solids for bedding. The lagoon is not filling up as fast.

Wanner says that cow comfort with the solids is better than sawdust and they are seeing fewer leg abrasions. They would not go back to sawdust.

To quote John "the dairy's somatic cell count is the same as it has always been...a little higher than we like to see it; we are always trying to improve that..." Wanner doesn't think the bedding is the limiting factor.

	digester raw influent coliform/g	digested solids from separator coliform/g	percent reduction of coliform in solids used for bedding
Reinford	> 50,000	10	99.98%
Wanner	> 50,000	280	99.44%
Brubaker	> 50,000	680	98.64%
Patterson	> 50,000	356	99.29%

Testing done by Fairway Laboratories in Altoona, Pennsylvania.