



Energy Goes Green in Moses Lake, Washington

J.R. Simplot Company's Moses Lake potato processing plant is producing more than potato products. It's also generating green power.

The innovative energy project uses biogas created by the plant's by-products to produce energy. The project is not only reducing carbon emissions and saving money, it's setting the stage for our future.

The Moses Lake Biogas Project began in 2007 when the Company installed and began operating an anaerobic digester at its process water treatment facility. The anaerobic process creates biogas, which is captured and used as energy.

The digester, named "Bertha" by employees, is basically "a big lagoon with a sealed cover on it," said Burl Ackerman, Simplot's environmental engineering manager. Water containing potato by-products from the processing plant feeds the 20-million-gallon digester.

The second part of the Moses Lake project begins when the digester's biogas is piped to the potato processing plant's boiler. The biogas is mixed with natural and hydrogen gases and burned in the plant's boiler.

"With the addition of biogas, we don't have to use as much natural gas to run the plant," Ackerman said. In addition to reducing energy costs, the capture and use of biogas in the boiler reduces the Moses Lake facilities' greenhouse gas emissions by an impressive 15,000 tons annually.

In partnership with Blue Source, a leading carbon capture and offset marketer, Simplot plans to sell the carbon offsets generated in the emerging carbon trading market.

Ackerman said the innovative Moses Lake Biogas Project helps create new revenue streams. "We need to be participating in the carbon market and addressing its potential," he said.

The Moses Lake project is a success on many levels. It reduces the Company's carbon footprint, uses by-product material to generate energy, provides new revenue, and showcases our sustainable business practices.

And, Moses Lake isn't the only plant making green energy. Other Simplot plants are using biogas in their boilers.