Eco-efficiency for Australian dairy processors

The Dairy Australia Eco-efficiency Project

Dairy Australia recently commissioned the UNEP Working Group for Cleaner Production and Sustainable Business to undertake an eco-efficiency project to develop a manual that consolidates and builds on existing knowledge about eco-efficiency opportunities for the dairy processing industry. The project was guided by a steering committee with representatives from Dairy Australia, Bonlac Foods, Warrnambool Cheese and Butter Factory, Dairy Farmers, Murray Goulburn Cooperative, National Foods, Parmalat Australia, Tatura Milk Industries and the Dairy Processing Engineering Centre. The manual describes initiatives already undertaken by the industry, the challenges faced by companies implementing process improvement projects and financial details on potential savings and cost benefits.

The manual is a practical resource for production managers, environmental managers, engineers and process improvement teams who are starting similar initiatives. Many of the findings from the project have been summarised on a series of ten fact sheets covering:

- water management
- water recycling and reuse
- refrigeration optimisation
- boiler optimisation
- utilisation of biogas
- use of treated wastewater
- yield optimisation and product recovery
  - optimisation of clean-in-place systems
  - chemical use
  - membranes.


What is eco-efficiency?

Eco-efficiency is about improving environmental performance to become more efficient and profitable. It is about producing more with less. It involves the application of strategies that will not only ensure efficient use of resources and reduction in waste, but will also reduce costs.

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For further information see the Eco-efficiency for the Dairy Processing Industry Manual, August 2004 or contact Penny Prasad, UNEP Working Group for Cleaner Production:

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Some images used in these fact sheets have been sourced from the Dairy Processing Engineering Centre and Dairy Australia.