



## Central Vermont Public Service

### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Board Approves CVPS Cow Power™ Program**

RUTLAND – Central Vermont Public Service customers who want to support renewable energy and Vermont dairy farms have a new energy choice – CVPS Cow Power™.

The Vermont Public Service Board has approved CVPS Cow Power™, which is intended to help promote development and reliance on renewable energy in Vermont by creating a market for energy generated by burning methane from cow manure. By enrolling in CVPS Cow Power™, customers will help support Vermont dairy farms that develop generators that run on methane from cow manure, renewable generation in the region, or incentives to farmers to get into the business.

“CVPS Cow Power™ will provide an income stream to participating farmers, help reduce some water-quality impacts of raw manure through the introduction of innovative manure technologies, and significantly reduce manure odors, particularly during spreading,” said Dave Dunn, a senior energy consultant at CVPS. “Participating farms may also reduce bedding costs by using dry byproducts of the process in place of sawdust or other bedding.”

In addition to PSB approval, CVPS Cow Power™ has received the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets’ Commissioner’s Choice Seal of Quality.

CVPS Cow Power™ will be offered to customers for energy used starting Sept. 1, and bills rendered Oct. 1, but customers can sign up now. Customers may choose to buy 25 percent, 50 percent, or all of their electricity through CVPS Cow Power™. Customers who choose CVPS Cow Power™ will be charged an extra 4 cents per kilowatt-hour. Customers using 500 kWh per month who choose to receive 25 percent of their power under the Cow Power™ rider would pay only \$5 a month more. At 100 percent, the charge would be \$20 per month.

For every kilowatt-hour requested by customers and provided by a Vermont farm, CVPS will pay the farmer the market price for energy plus the CVPS Cow Power™ charge of 4 cents for the environmental benefits of the energy.

Blue Spruce Farm in Bridport will be the first farm to provide energy through CVPS Cow Power™, although several other farms are interested in the program. Blue Spruce has about 1,200 total head on the farm, enough to produce 1.7 million kWh a year.

“We’re moving quickly to take advantage of CVPS Cow Power™,” Earl Audet said. “We think the benefits to the farm and the state will be significant.”

If not enough kilowatt-hours are available from participating CVPS farms, CVPS will attempt to acquire and retire Renewable Energy Certificates from other regional renewable generation, issued by the regional system operator, to support renewable generation in the region. If no certificates are available in the regional market for 4 cents per kWh, the company will deposit Cow Power™ payments into the CVPS Renewable Development Fund.

This fund, overseen by an independent board that includes consumer and renewable energy advocates, a farmer, a utility regulator and CVPS, will provide incentives to farmers to stimulate further renewable farm generation in the CVPS service area. The fund will provide grants, loans and incentives to farms to support generation development and start-up costs. It will also help farmers overcome market barriers, provide education on generation issues, support commercialization of farm generation, and link farms and customers in a renewable energy market.

In approving CVPS Cow Power™, the Public Service Board found: “The program may serve as a model or a touchstone for voluntary [renewable] pricing proposals, and holds the potential for expanding the scope and reach of this or similar tariffs over time.”

“Our goal is to stimulate renewable supply through incentives to farmers, while offering consumers a fully renewable energy choice,” CVPS spokesman Steve Costello said.

To learn more or enroll, go to [www.cvps.com/cowpower](http://www.cvps.com/cowpower) or call CVPS at 1-800-649-2877.