



Custom Efficiency

For Commercial and Industrial Projects

Idaho Power incentives help Ballard Dairy and Cheese bring the kids back to their family operation

Steve and Stacie Ballard of Ballard Dairy and Cheese of Gooding, Idaho, have always done whatever it takes to succeed. Having dreamed of starting a dairy, they arrived in 1993 from San Diego, California, knowing nothing about the dairy business. However, Stacie came up with an innovative way of learning the basics. “I told the guy we bought our first calves from that I’ll milk your cows for free if you’ll teach me how.”

Today, they have about 90 head of milk cattle and produce about 120,000 gallons of milk a month. Of that, roughly 40,000 gallons gets made into cheese. “We make about 70,000 pounds of cheese ourselves,” Steve said, “and ship the rest to a cheese processor.”

The project

The Ballards had some very personal reasons for finding ways to reduce their dairy’s expenses and increase revenues. “We wanted to bring the kids into the business,” Steve noted, “but, on a farm this size, we can’t make enough money just from a dairy operation to support the whole family, so we started using a portion of the milk to make hard cheese, which added value to our dairy business.”

“We also started working with Idaho Power,” Steve added, “to convert the residential power we’ve been running off of to commercial power, which costs a lot less.”

Through its Easy Upgrades and Custom Efficiency programs, Idaho Power also provided financial incentives for several energy-saving projects, including installing a new solar thermal heating system, new heat pumps, electric back-up boilers, new milk vacuum pumps with variable frequency drives (VFD), insulation on previously bare heating and cooling pipes, and retrofitting the dairy’s aging lighting system.



Changing lives

The project was a real team effort, from the concept to the engineering to the financing. “We went through four banks and got real good at rejection,” Steve said, “then Mike Schlatter at D. L. Evans Bank in Hailey agreed to work with us. This never would have happened without them.”

“Idaho Power’s participation in this project was also critical,” said Paul Conrad of Site Based Energy, LLC, the engineering firm that designed and built the Ballards’ new system. “The project may not have been feasible without its incentives.”

Continued on back

“We had help from the Small Business Administration and the USDA, too, but we really couldn’t have done it without Idaho Power’s assistance.”

*– Stacie Ballard
Ballard Dairy and Cheese*

The savings

“We knew switching over to commercial power would save us a lot,” Steve said, “but we were really surprised by how much we could save just by changing out the lights.” The Ballards replaced their old fluorescent lighting with a high-efficiency LED lighting system, which is 60 to 80 percent more efficient, and fitted it with motion sensors so the lights are only on when people are in the room.

The project saves an estimated 238,927 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year, which warranted \$28,604 in total incentives from Idaho Power and represents over \$12,000 in annual utility bill savings.

Uncommon savings are quite common

Saving energy has always been a smart business decision. Now, Idaho Power makes it attainable. Our complete suite of energy efficiency programs provides attractive incentives to commercial and industrial customers who want to reduce their utility costs.

- The **Custom Efficiency** program offers substantial incentives to large commercial and industrial customers who invest energy-saving improvements in their facilities.
- **Easy Upgrades** provides financial incentives to commercial and industrial customers who implement qualified energy-saving measures in their facilities.
- The **Building Efficiency** program helps offset the additional capital costs when a company upgrades its planned lighting, cooling, controls, and building-shell designs in favor of more efficient components.
- **FlexPeak Management** offers commercial and industrial customers incentives in the form of recurring payments for reducing their power consumption during times of overall peak demand.

How much can your business save?

For more information about Idaho Power’s energy efficiency incentive programs, go to www.idahopower.com/business or call us at 208-388-5624 within the Treasure Valley or 1-800-488-6151 outside of the Treasure Valley. We’ll show how you can join smart companies like Ballard Dairy and Cheese, saving energy and money.

The above success story was produced in cooperation with, and approval from, Ballard Dairy and Cheese.



Changing Lives (cont.)

For business owners like the Ballards, those incentives represent a bigger bottom line on two levels.

“Now, their dairy is stronger,” Paul continued, “operationally and financially. They can grow their capital and leverage it in the future. Without Idaho Power’s incentives, this project may not have happened at all.”

“For the Ballards, Idaho Power has created opportunities out here. It’s changed their lives.”