

iWG Assessment

SWATeam Recommendation Ref #: Energy001 – Anaerobic Digester Feasibility Study

Date of iWG Assessment Started: 4/27/2020

Assessment Transmitted: 10/27/20

iWG Recommendation:

The iWG encourages the College of ACES in coordination with the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center to identify a lead faculty member to initiate a feasibility study to construct and operate an anaerobic digester at the future new dairy facility. Partial funding for this study could be requested from the Student Sustainability Committee.

iWG Routing Direction (*department name, SWATeam, or Council*): College of ACES

Individual comments from each iWG member:

iWG Member Name	iWG Member's Comments
Ximing Cai (iSEE)	I support this recommendation. I hope the feasibility study can lead to a living lab that supports campus research and practice on food waste recovery.
Morgan White (F&S)	F&S supports this recommendation, and we are happy to work with ACES to facilitate the study. Additionally, we are very interested in using the resulting natural gas, when the digester is in place.”
Alma Sealine (Representing Auxiliaries)	I want to point out that counting on food waste from the dining halls may not be appropriate. As you know, we are working to install anaerobic digesters in each of our dining halls. When this happens, no food waste will be available to contribute to the digester in the College of ACES. Since this recommendation is about performing a feasibility study, I would assume that would get flushed out at a later time. As such, it is supported by the Auxiliaries.
Matthew Tomaszewski (Provost Office)	I support this feasibility study in principle as a wise means of determining the sustainable benefits of the digester. Given the necessary response and commitment of resources by Campus to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, careful consideration of timing and funding is a must.
John Dallesasse (Academic Senate)	I think this is a good idea, but perhaps it's best to delay the feasibility study by a year given the likely impact of COVID-19 on the budget. There are likely to be other priorities related to making the campus safe that need to be funded. Once the finances of the University have recovered from this crisis, it would be great if a feasibility study could be prioritized.
Sandy Yoo (System Office)	UOCP supports this recommendation. Taking into account input from university stakeholders, it will be good to validate sustainable benefits from for this campus specifically, type of, use of by-product, and economic impact(s).
Qu H. Kim (Representing College Facilities)	I would like to recommend the ACES anaerobic digester project to advance to the feasibility phase. This sustainable technology and potential synergies with the new Dairy Farm and our town partners align with the goals of 2017 University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Master Plan and the ACES legacy corridor plan to increase the public awareness of the programs and the potential corporate partnership opportunities. However, the feasibility should closely examine the constructability and connections to the various campus infrastructure and plausible funding sources for \$12 to \$15 million, which is significant, especially strategies for possible external grants from various state and federal entities. In addition, Analyses of Return On Investment,

	Break Even Analysis, and other financial studies should be included in the feasibility study to attract the funding partners.
Joe Edwards/Sarah Gediman (Student Sustainability Committee)	We fully support this feasibility study. It will help the university achieve several of the iCAP goals. We would like to see a stronger indication that the anaerobic digester will actually be installed if the feasibility study is promising. However, we support the project regardless.
Joey Kreiling/Jonah Messinger, Student Sustainability Leadership Council	See attachment.
Creen Ahmad, Illinois Student Government Environmental Sustainability Committee	Our committee supports this recommendation as the long-term benefits of this project will bring the University closer to achieving the iCAP goals. We believe that the study will yield tremendously beneficial knowledge to optimize the functional logistics of the system. Furthermore, we do suggest emphasizing greater research in participation with private enterprises and other big ten universities to ensure that the College of ACES has all resources to be diligent with this project.

Original SWATeam Recommendation:

The College of ACES should conduct a feasibility study to construct and operate an anaerobic digester on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. The College of ACES should then proceed in accordance with the results of the Feasibility Study.

iWG Assessment of budget and policy impacts (*check one*):

moderate budget and/or policy impact OR major budget and/or policy implications

iWG Routing Need (*check one*):

more detailed study OR transmit recommendation OR forward to Sustainability Council