



Investor Relations | Smithfield Foods USA, Global Food Company

Smithfield Foods Generates Renewable Natural Gas from Wastewater to Power North Carolina Communities

SMITHFIELD, Va., Jan. 08, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Smithfield Foods, Inc.](#), in partnership with [Duke Energy](#) and [OptimaBio, LLC](#), is now producing renewable natural gas (RNG) from the wastewater treatment system at its Tar Heel, N.C. pork processing facility, which will help power more than 2,000 local homes and businesses. The three companies are utilizing the world's largest pork processing facility to provide renewable energy to consumers while reducing their own, and the state of North Carolina's, carbon footprint.

The \$14 million project is the latest from [Smithfield Renewables](#), Smithfield's platform to unify and accelerate its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 25% by 2025. Through partnership with Duke Energy, roughly 140,000 dekatherms of RNG per year will be transported to natural gas plants and used to generate electricity for consumers.

"This project brings to life all three of our company's guiding principles – Responsibility, Operational Excellence, and Innovation," said Kenneth M. Sullivan, president and chief executive officer for Smithfield Foods. "For the first time, we are creating renewable energy from the biogas generated in our wastewater treatment system and using it to power local communities. With the help of our partners, we are producing additional value for our company and our neighbors—a concept that is ingrained in our culture."

To date, this is one of Smithfield's largest renewable energy projects involving wastewater, and its first in North Carolina. Smithfield also has "wastewater-to-energy" projects at its Milan, Mo.; Grayson, Ky.; and Sioux Falls, S.D. facilities, which are used to power their modified steam boilers.

The company's Tar Heel, N.C., project utilizes a gas upgrading and injection system operated by OptimaBio, LLC, a bioenergy project developer, which leverages the facility's three million gallon-per-day wastewater treatment system to collect and clean biogas through an existing on-site digester and convert it into RNG.

"We are proud to partner with Smithfield on this project, which has far-reaching and positive impacts for the environment, the local community, and industries that are key to the state's economy," said Mark Maloney, CEO and Founder at OptimaBio, LLC. "We're helping diversify and strengthen North Carolina's renewable energy portfolio through this endeavor."

Once converted, the RNG is injected into the Piedmont Natural Gas system, and then transported to Duke Energy to produce electricity. This project will help Duke Energy satisfy state swine waste-to-energy mandates under the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard law in North Carolina. Under this law, Duke Energy must generate 0.20% of its retail sales from swine waste by 2024.

"At Duke Energy, we are seeking innovative and cleaner energy solutions. Buying the output from Smithfield's renewable natural gas project will allow us to expand our diverse generation mix in North Carolina," said Stephen De May, Duke Energy's North Carolina president. "This project is creating safe and affordable energy that customers can rely on."

In addition to creating renewable energy at its facilities, Smithfield is implementing projects on its farms that transform manure into RNG. These [projects](#) capture methane from manure, and clean and convert it into RNG, which is then injected into local natural gas distribution systems for homes and businesses. In the next decade, Smithfield is implementing "manure-to-energy" projects in at least six states including Arizona, California, Missouri, North Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

Whether using biogas to power its facilities or nearby communities, these programs are part of Smithfield's robust sustainability program. To learn more, visit smithfieldfoods.com/sustainability.

About Smithfield Foods

Headquartered in Smithfield, Va., since 1936, Smithfield Foods, Inc. is an American food company with

agricultural roots and a global reach. Our 40,000 U.S. employees are dedicated to producing “Good food. Responsibly.®” and have made us one of the world’s leading vertically integrated protein companies. We have pioneered sustainability standards for more than two decades, including many industry firsts, such as our ambitious commitment to cut our carbon impact by 25 percent by 2025. We believe in the power of protein to end food insecurity and have donated hundreds of millions of food servings to our neighbors in need. Smithfield boasts a portfolio of high-quality iconic brands, such as Smithfield®, Eckrich®, and Nathan’s Famous®, among many others. For more information, visit www.smithfieldfoods.com, and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

About Smithfield Renewables

Smithfield Renewables is a strategic platform within Smithfield Foods, a \$15 billion global food company, and the world's largest hog producer and pork processor. Smithfield launched this platform in 2017 to lead, unify, and accelerate the company’s renewable energy efforts to help meet its industry-leading goal to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 25% by 2025—the first commitment of its kind by a protein company. To achieve this goal, Smithfield has implemented a wide range of projects across its farms and facilities, including converting hog manure into renewable natural gas and commercial-grade fertilizer, streamlining its transportation network, launching an ambitious solid waste reduction plan, sourcing sustainably grown feed grain, and implementing operational efficiency projects. For more information, visit www.smithfieldfoods.com/renewables.

Duke Energy

Duke Energy (NYSE: DUK), a Fortune 150 company headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., is one of the largest energy holding companies in the U.S. It employs 30,000 people and has an electric generating capacity of 51,000 megawatts through its regulated utilities and 3,000 megawatts through its nonregulated Duke Energy Renewables unit.

Duke Energy is transforming its customers’ experience, modernizing the energy grid, generating cleaner energy and expanding natural gas infrastructure to create a smarter energy future for the people and communities it serves. The Electric Utilities and Infrastructure unit’s regulated utilities serve approximately 7.7 million retail electric customers in six states – North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. The Gas Utilities and Infrastructure unit distributes natural gas to more than 1.6 million customers in five states – North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio and Kentucky. The Duke Energy Renewables unit operates wind and solar generation facilities across the U.S., as well as energy storage and microgrid projects.

Duke Energy was named to Fortune’s 2019 “World’s Most Admired Companies” list and Forbes’ 2019 “America’s Best Employers” list. More information about the company is available at duke-energy.com. The [Duke Energy News Center](#) contains news releases, fact sheets, photos, videos and other materials. Duke Energy’s [illumination](#) features stories about people, innovations, community topics and environmental issues. Follow Duke Energy on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

OptimaBio

Headquartered in Raleigh, N.C., OptimaBio is a swine waste-to-energy project developer, owner and operator and the leader in RNG development for North Carolina. It's a partnership bringing together experts in bioenergy, agriculture, project finance, and environmental stewardship to invest in rural communities for the greater good. pig.energy

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