

# FOCUS ON GRAIN DRYERS



## Environmental Stewardship

Gillis Farms Inc. is a crop farm in northwestern Wisconsin. Tom Gillis works alongside his older brother, growing corn on their 1,800 acres. As a delegate with the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association, Tom is committed to environmental stewardship.

To protect his cropland and the surrounding area, Tom embraced many new technologies and methods of planting. As Gillis Farms grew, Tom realized he needed to find more efficient methods to dry his crop during the fall months.

## Operational Changes

Until 2021, Gillis Farms dried corn with a 40-year-old continuous flow grain dryer. This older model created bottleneck issues by limiting the number of bushels that could be dried per hour. Tom wanted to upgrade his equipment to process more bushels per hour and use less natural gas.

Tom first learned about FOCUS ON ENERGY® in 2016 when installing a variable frequency drive on his irrigation pump. He consulted with his Energy Advisor and Trade Ally contractor, Seeds & Stuff Farm Inc., to explore his grain drying options. Tom decided to upgrade to a mixed-flow dryer that would solve his production problems while still meeting his energy needs.

## Energy Savings

Kevin Weiler, Energy Advisor with Focus on Energy, assisted Gillis Farms with the application process and made sure all the necessary paperwork was submitted. Tom was able to install the new grain dryer in time for the fall 2022 harvest season.

Gillis Farms received over \$20,500 in financial incentives and will save more than 727,000 therms annually. This is the equivalent of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from 830 gasoline-powered vehicles driven for an entire year.

## Project Breakdown:

- **Utilities:**
  - Midwest Natural Gas, Inc.
  - St. Croix Electric Cooperative
- **Equipment Installed:**
  - Mixed-Flow Grain Dryer
- **Benefits:**
  - Uses higher air temperatures without damaging the crops
  - Provides fuel efficiency
  - Consumes 40% less energy
- **Annual Energy Savings:**
  - \$27,266
- **Focus on Energy Incentive:**
  - \$20,560
- **Payback:**
  - Less than 7 Years



*Kevin has been fantastic to work with. He made multiple trips to our farm to assist with the application process and help with all the paperwork. I highly recommend Focus on Energy to other farms interested in upgrading their operations with energy-efficient technologies.*

**Tom Gillis**  
Gillis Farms Inc.

## REDUCING ENERGY WASTE ACROSS WISCONSIN

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, helps eligible residents and businesses save energy and money while protecting the environment. Focus on Energy information, resources, and financial incentives help to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that otherwise would not be completed.

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