

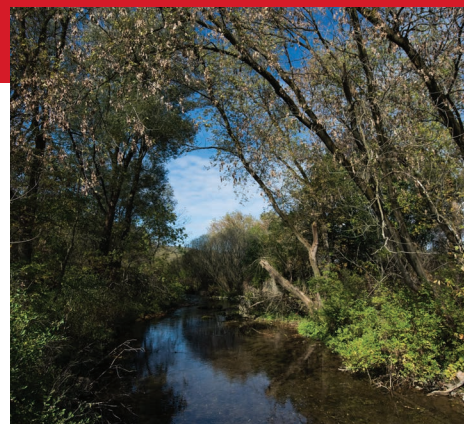


Activity  
**3**

# FARM ECOLOGY

Today's dairy farmers use sustainable farming practices to protect the environment by conserving energy and water, reducing pollution, and building soil health.

Look at the chart below. Read about the sustainable farming practices in the first column, and then decide if that practice helps conserve energy, conserve water, reduce pollution, or build soil health by putting an "X" in the correct box. You may mark more than one box for each sustainable practice. Then, fill in a way you can help achieve those same environmental goals at home.



Sustainable Farming Practice	A. Conserves Energy	B. Conserves Water	C. Reduces Waste and Pollution	D. Builds Soil Health	E. What I Can Do
1. Cow manure is used in place of commercial fertilizer to improve soil quality.					
2. Methane digesters use the gas given off by cow manure as fuel to generate electricity.					
3. Some dairy farmers use a device called a plate cooler to cool the milk as it comes from a cow. As cold water passes through the plate cooler, it absorbs heat from the warm milk. Farmers then re-use this water in different ways: as drinking water for cows (who prefer warm water); to cool the cows with a fine spray when air temperature is high; to wash farm equipment and clean the barn floor.					
4. Natural groundcover along stream banks reduces runoff from fields into the stream.					
5. Solar panels on barn roofs generate electricity for use on the farm.					
6. Shredded waste paper and peanut shells are recycled to provide bedding for the cows.					
7. Orange peels, cotton seeds, and other leftovers are mixed with grain to provide nutritious cow feed.					

