

# Energy Efficiency in Business

## Coulter Farms Harvest Big Savings



**Energy Provider: Great Lakes Energy Cooperative**  
Project Location: New Era

# Saving Energy = Cost Savings

➔ Saved more than 200,000 kWh/year

- Installed energy-efficient equipment
- Introduced energy-saving controls and VFDs
- Installed T8 FL high-bay lights

### **ACTION**

Implemented a wide range of energy-efficient equipment and features into a newly-constructed facility

### **INCENTIVE**

\$12,900 in Energy Optimization Program rebates

### **RESULTS**

Highly-efficient, controlled-atmosphere fruit and vegetable storage facility

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### COMPANY NAME: Coulter Farms

### ENERGY-SAVING ACTIONS:

A new state-of-the-art fruit and vegetable storage facility included:

- A super-insulated cooler envelope
- High-performance four-stage water chiller
- Centralized cooler evaporator fan controls
- On-demand evaporator coil defrost controls
- Energy-efficient carbon dioxide scrubber to downsize nitrogen generator
- Variable frequency drives (VFDs) on all process pumps and fans
- Centrally-controlled lighting and individual occupancy sensors
- High-performance T8 fluorescent high-bay lights
- High-frequency forklift battery chargers

### RESULTS:

- 200,000 kWh/per year savings
- Received \$12,900 in Energy Optimization Program rebates

The first step in any new endeavor is often the hardest. Caleb Coulter, owner of Coulter Farms in New Era, Mich., knew that he needed a new fruit and vegetable processing and storage facility. After learning about the substantial rebates available from the Energy Optimization Program offered by his electric cooperative, Great Lakes Energy, Coulter decided to move forward with designing a new facility for maximum efficiency.

“I enrolled in the Energy Optimization Program because I was positive many of the applications in my facility would meet or exceed the Program requirements. I was contacted very quickly by an Energy Optimization Program representative, and probably would have completed my improvements even sooner had I not been so busy at the time!”

- Caleb Coulter, owner of Coulter Farms

### WHOLE SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

In a refrigerated storage facility like the one used at Coulter Farms, all of the components work together to maintain the freshness of food products processed and stored inside. Greg Hundersmarck, an Energy Optimization Program field advisor, worked closely with Coulter and his equipment contractors to submit all of the rebate applications for the project. Energy efficiency features included variable frequency drives to improve the efficiency of pumps and fans, centrally-controlled refrigeration and lighting, occupancy sensors, and a custom-designed controlled-atmosphere system for fruit storage.

Hundersmarck believes that the key to the energy savings Coulter Farms now experiences is due largely to Coulter's understanding that energy efficiency is good for his business.

“Caleb knew that making his facility more energy efficient and taking advantage of the fantastic rebates offered by the Energy

Optimization Program would lead to an immediate decrease in his operating costs—and that the benefits would continue for many years to come.”

- Greg Hundersmarck, Energy Optimization Program field advisor

### REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Coulter feels rewarded to have not only received the monetary compensation for his efforts to save energy, but also the top-notch service of the Energy Optimization Program staff and the ease with which they helped him navigate the Program. Coulter is quick to compliment the entire Energy Optimization Program team he worked with.

“I received great service from start to finish with Great Lakes Energy and the Energy Optimization Program staff. They were punctual by showing up when they said they'd be there, and kept my project moving without delays. I must also say that in a small town, it's good to know your utility providers. One of those guys in particular got me out of a serious situation with a tractor and power line once, and I'm still grateful for that.”

- Caleb Coulter

### GET STARTED TODAY

To learn more about the energy-saving options available through your electric utility's Energy Optimization Program, call **877.296.4319** or visit [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org).



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