**Clean Energy Comes From the Stable**

Farmers often do not enjoy the best reputation. They are said not to care too much about animals and excessively fertilizing their grounds. And those are only two of many prejudices – both of which are usually completely unfounded.

Bernd Reuther is the best example of how farmers are working in harmony with nature. The 42-year-old owns an agricultural operation with 100 dairy cows and a total of 175 hectares of arable land and grassland. After the qualified industrial electronics engineer took over his parental company in 2003 as a side activity, he continuously expanded its operations and looked for new ways to make it fit for the future. In evening classes, Bernd Reuther caught up with his missing agricultural training. "It has always been clear to me that I want to keep the business", he says. He eventually gave up his job and devoted himself completely to the yard. He puts emphasis on a species-appropriate and ethical treatment, with free-range stables and sufficient space for his animals.

When it comes to his products, he pays particular attention to strict quality and hygiene controls. He delivers part of the milk to the farm dairy of his sister, who uses it to produce yoghurt, banana- and chocolate milk as well as ACE-drinks. She then sells the goods in her own dairy shop or at local shops in the area. The products differ from the industrially produced milk products. "We try to use some ingredients at a minimum quantity or even completely avoid them because we want to produce an authentic and regional food product. Our way of working is craft-oriented, transparent and personal", says Reuther. In a few steps, the raw milk is turned into a delicious milk product. "Much more important than the price is the actual quality and taste." The father of three is an entrepreneur in its purest sense. He thinks future- and business-oriented. This is also what helped him to secure a loan from his house bank backed by a 60% agricultural guarantee (COSME) to build a biogas plant on his farm run on dung and manure.

The electricity obtained from it - about 75 Kilowatt per hour – is integrated into the network of an energy supply company. "Why shouldn’t we make use of the manure and dung in an environmentally-friendly way?" was Bernd Reuther’s idea, especially since this also has a positive and not insignificant side effect: "We have signed a 20-year contract with the Energy Supply Company which gives us an additional and secure source of income ", he emphasizes. "And I think it's great that agricultural guarantees support us farmers in our projects in a meaningful way. I can only recommend this support to others.”

Bernd Reuther gladly accepts the many challenges of being a farmer. Because he loves working with the animals and nature.

**Bernd Reuther Agriculture**

**Participants: Raiffeisenbank Kocher-Jagst l L - Bank l Agricultural Bank l Bürgschaftsbank Baden-Württemberg**

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**Transfer of the farm in 2003 | 1 Intern**