



YAPHANK, NY — It’s Earth Week and green power is on its way to Long Island.

As UKTN’s Jennifer McLogan reported on Wednesday, food scraps from restaurants, schools and grocery stores will soon be turned into renewable biogas.

The Mill House Inn in Yaphank keeps its leftovers for a unique business, and customers are also in on the party with their leftovers.

“I think it’s great. Why waste it?” said boss Deb Bonanno.

Down the road from the soon-to-be-closed Brookhaven Municipal Landfill and not far from the composting and mulching sites, there was a groundbreaking ceremony for the East Coast’s largest anaerobic digester.

“It’s a project called an anaerobic digester. All it means is an airless tank,” said Joanna Underwood of Energy Vision.

It removes harmful methane by trapping and then converting and processing oils and food waste and turning it into clean energy.

“It’s going to help fight climate change. It’s going to improve conditions in the community and it’s going to finally recycle food waste,” said Adrienne Esposito of the Citizens’ Campaign for the Environment.

Foods and oils break down into a slurry that becomes renewable natural gas. It took 10 years to complete an Earth Week celebration for American Organic Energy.

“We are going to take this waste into a scientifically designed sealed facility. We are going to extract the gas that is so polluting to create clean renewable energy,” said Charles Vigliotti, CEO of American Organic Energy.

The process will help reduce some of the heavy truck traffic transporting our waste to other states.

“It brings us into, I would say, the 21st century in a leadership role in the country,” said Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

Composting and landfill sites tangled with Yaphank residents due to fumes and dust. The digester is designed to eliminate these problems.

“If it’s good for the environment and if it limits waste in Brookhaven, especially in that area, that would be a good thing,” owner Garrett Comanzo said.

“It will reduce the amount of waste in the landfill and add energy to the grid,” said Carleton Stewart of the Brookhaven Village Association.

The food waste renewable energy plant will eventually help power thousands of homes in the region.

There are only twelve anaerobic digesters in the country. The digester can also turn food waste into organic compost and fertilizer.