

EU business the Soviet way



European farmers have been using manure to fertilize their crops for [8,000 years](#), but the EU has decided that animal dung releases too much methane and nitrous oxide. This is good news for producers of biomethane, because they can use cow and pig manure and other organic materials to make a gas that is chemically indistinguishable from natural gas. [Dáša Hyklová](#) of MFD reported that biomethane is increasingly being seen as a key pillar of the European effort to strengthen energy security and to accelerate defossilization. If only there were less bureaucracy and easier access to subsidies for building biogas power plants, industry professionals say. If the economies of scale and subsidies could be maximized, Agrofert's [SKW Stickstoffwerke Piesteritz](#) and other fertilizer producers would be less dependent on foreign natural-gas suppliers. Farmers would then have more incentive to sell their manure to biogas plants and to use the money to buy low-carbon fertilizer. It's like the old joke about doing business the Soviet way. "Steal a case of vodka. Sell it. Get drunk on the money." Russians started telling that one soon before the USSR collapsed.

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