



Monitoring and control of anaerobic digestion for optimal biogas production

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Gas Transient Response & Intermittent Feeding

OPTIMISING INDIVIDUAL DIGESTERS



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Current State Of Instrumentation

- Instrumentation is generally lacking.
- Generally, a few easy to measure parameters are monitored.
- VFAs are one of the most important parameters, but not possible to measure online affordably.
- Each reactor has individual optimum level.

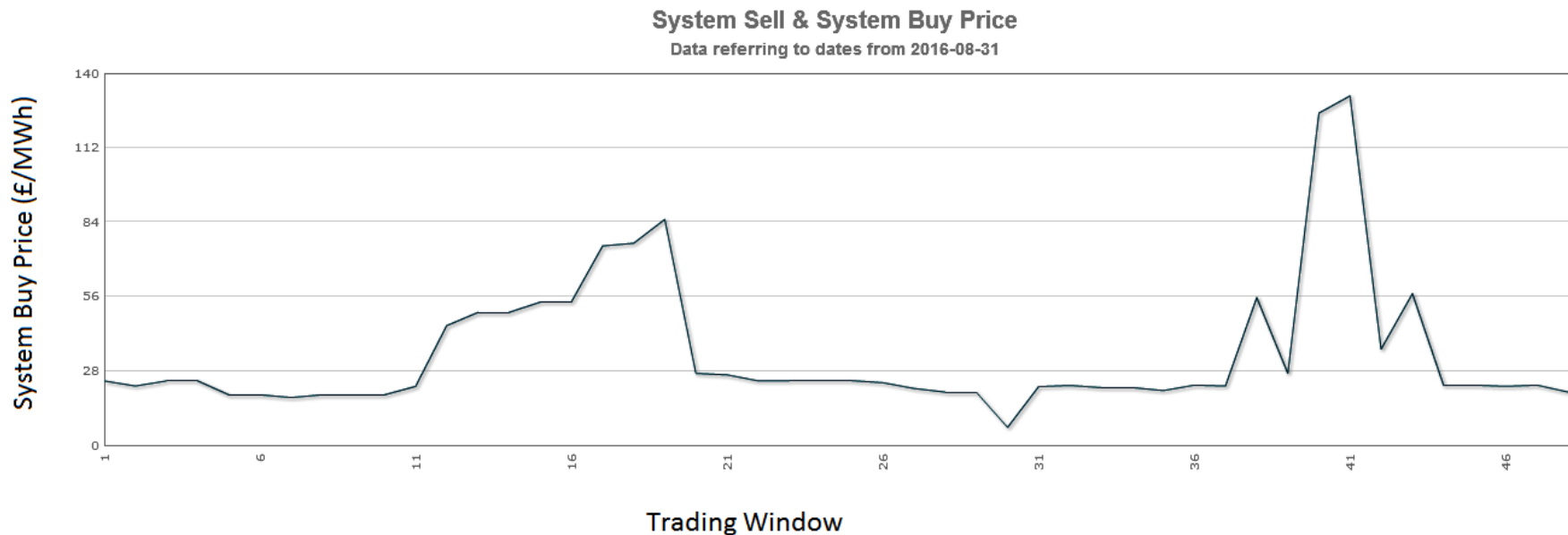
Gas transient response for optimisation

- Previous work completed by J-P Steyer et al. [2].
- Method only suitable for continuously fed systems.
- Principle is that as digester approaches inhibition, digester response to feeding events changes.
- Only uses gas production rate.
- This project is investigating applicability to intermittently fed reactors.

[2] Steyer, J.-P., Buffière, P., Rolland, D., Moletta, R., 1999. Advanced control of anaerobic digestion processes through disturbances monitoring. *Water Res.* 33, 2059–2068. doi:10.1016/S0043-1354(98)00430-8

Why feed intermittently?

UK Electricity Market System Buy Price



Source: <http://www.bmreports.com/bsp/SystemPricesHistoric.htm> - Data for 31/08/2016, Retrieved 01/09/2016

Intermittent Electricity Production

- Shift towards renewable energy.
- Biogas is well positioned to provide flexible electricity generation.
- Solar & Wind weather dependant, not controlled.
- Electricity is expensive to store.
- Gas is easier & cheaper energy storage medium.
- Gas production can also be controlled to increase production as required.
- Balancing electricity is more valuable than base load electricity.

Intermittent Feeding

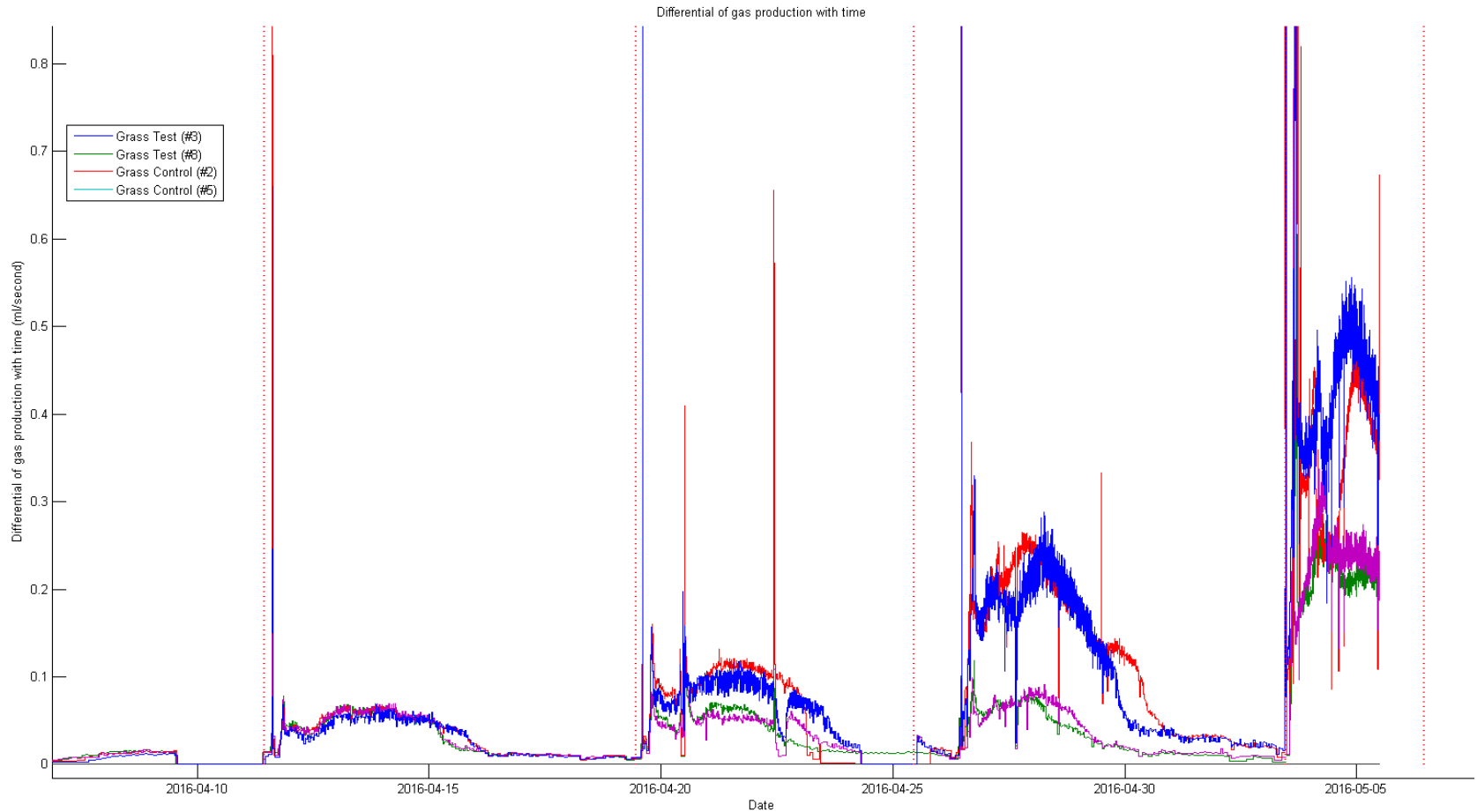
- Can produce higher value electricity for use balancing the power network.
- Flexible energy production is possible by large changes to feeding rates.
- Allows higher gas production as required than through continuous operation.
- Study by Hahn, et al concludes that flexible biogas production can be implemented with limited risk of process disruption [1].

[1] Hahn, H., Krautkremer, B., Hartmann, K., Wachendorf, M., 2014. Review of concepts for a demand-driven biogas supply for flexible power generation. *Renew. Sustain. Energy Rev.* 29, 383–393. doi:10.1016/j.rser.2013.08.085

Intermittent Feeding Test setup



Gas Production Rate



Testing, Modelling & Simulation

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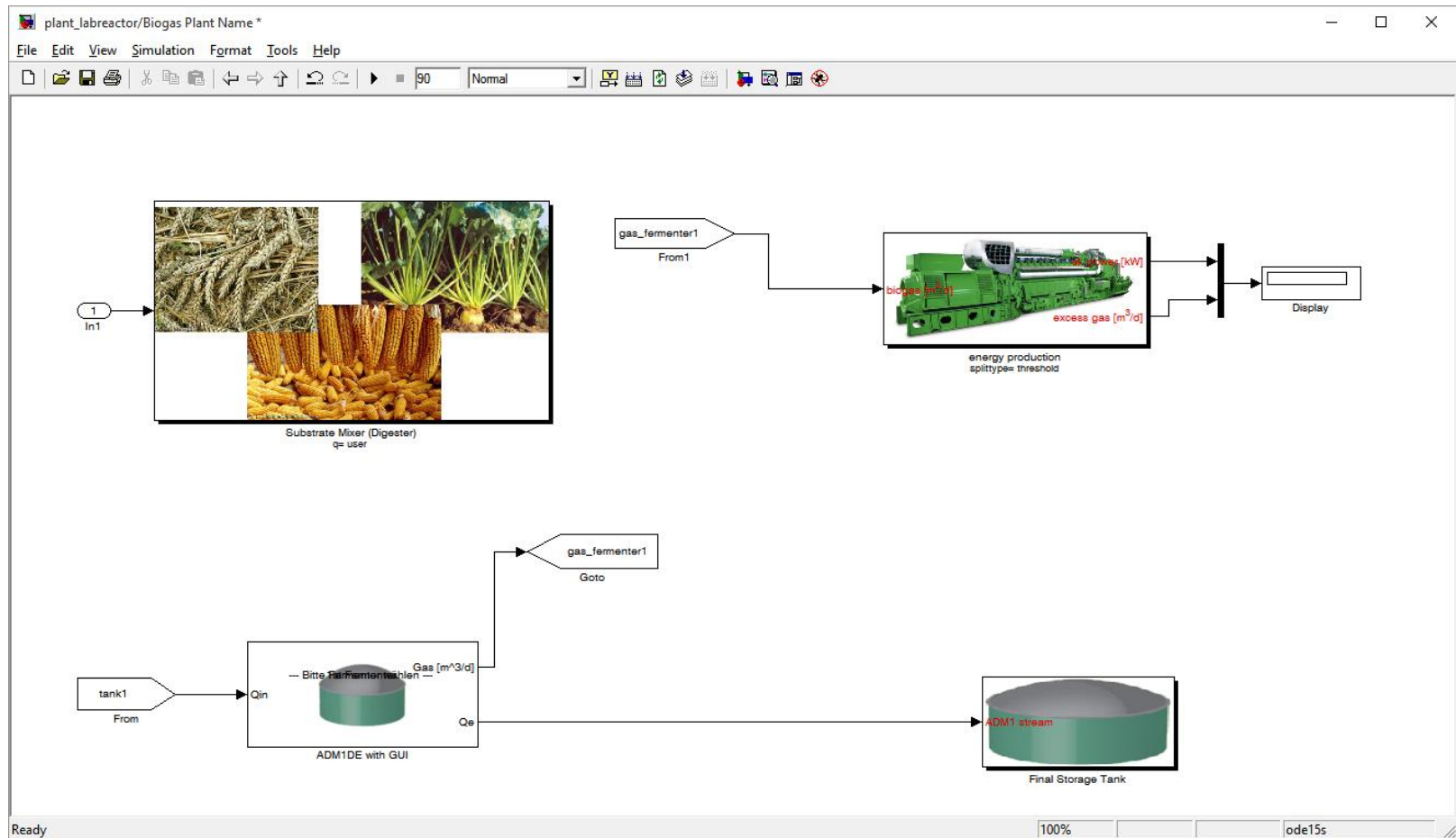


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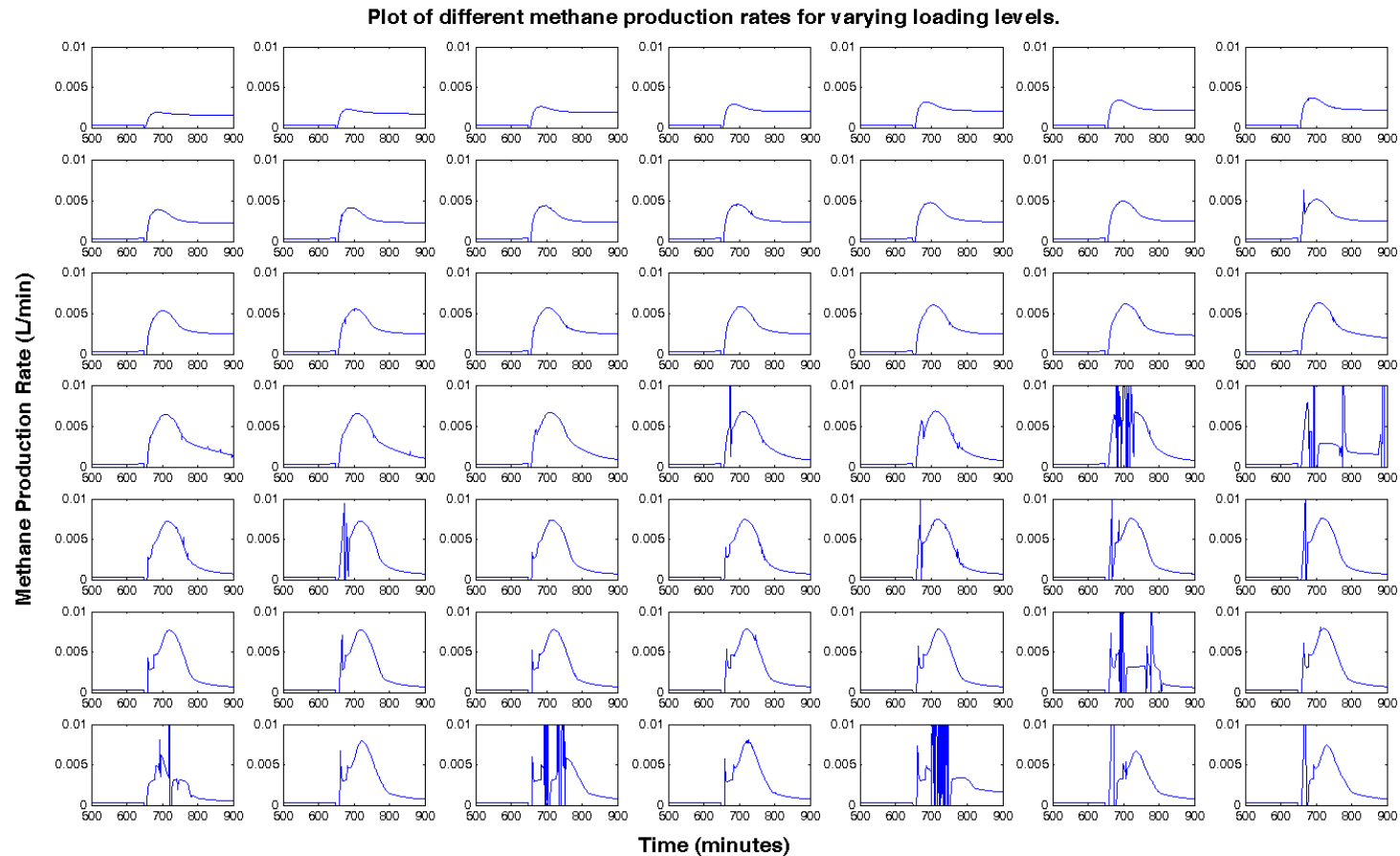


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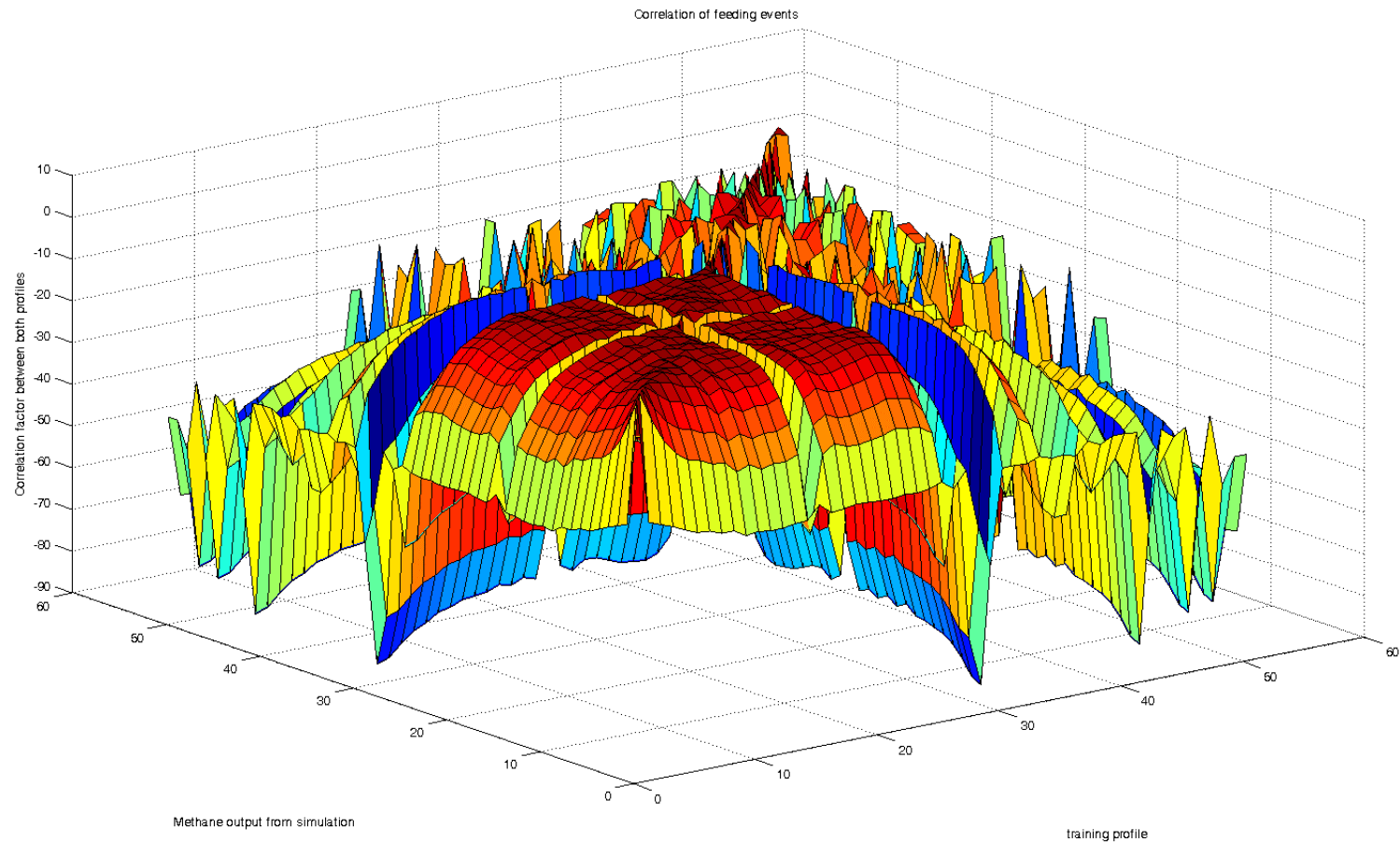
ADM1 Simulations



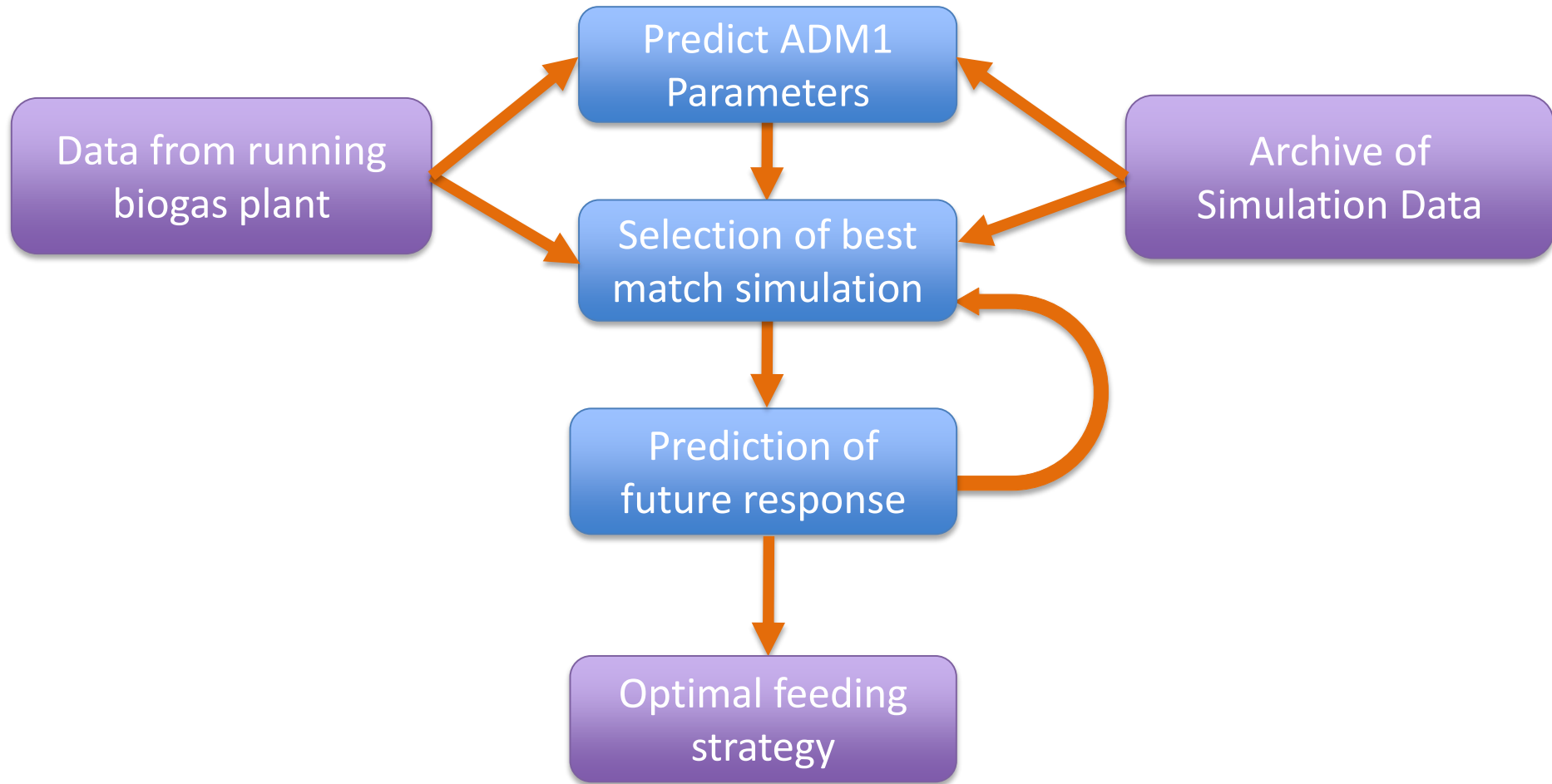
Multiple Different Scenarios Simulated



Feeding Event Similarity



Model Implementation



Challenges to Address

- Differentiate between
 - Differences due to substrate.
 - Variation due to loading rate.
- Determining Substrate Feed parameters.

Next Steps

- Investigate link between VFA levels and methane production rate response curves.
- Attempt to create control strategy which allows better use of available measurements.
- Run simulations with control strategy.
- Test strategy with lab scale / pilot scale reactors.

Goals for this task

- To use modulation in feeding levels and transient gas responses to understand digester operating condition.
- To set VFA thresholds which are the optimum for individual reactors.
- To produce a feeding & measurement technique that allows optimisation of biogas production whilst maintaining plant stability.

Conclusions

- Biogas production may have to shift towards intermittent production to stay profitable.
- This feeding modulation should be sufficient to optimize biogas reactors on an individual level.



Thanks for listening



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