

Rural areas install photovoltaic panels to generate electricity



Overview

Rural areas often benefit from ample open space, which can be advantageous for solar array placement. However, factors such as topography, shading from natural features, and local climate patterns play a significant role in system efficiency. As shown in Map 1, roughly 18% of ground-mounted PV facilities in the U. were installed between 2021 and 2023, with a notable portion of these projects built on former cropland or pasture in rural areas. This trend has raised skepticism in rural communities, prompting questions about land value. Farmers can benefit from solar energy in several ways—by leasing farmland for solar; installing a solar system on a house, barn, or other building; or through agrivoltaics. Landowners can produce some crops and raise livestock on the same land as solar, providing two revenue sources. Prioritize. With installation costs plummeting 70% over the past decade and government incentives reaching unprecedented levels, rural solar has evolved from an idealistic dream to a financially compelling reality. The timing has never been more critical. Agrivoltaics broadens participation in the rural economy, and can contribute.

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Harvesting the Sun-Twice: Agrivoltaics and Rural Land-Use

As efforts to conserve farmland intersects with the growth in renewable energy, agrivoltaics emerges as a solution to integrate agriculture and solar photovoltaic (PV) infrastructure.

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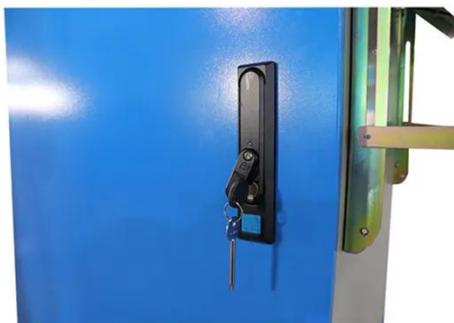
Farmer's Guide to Going Solar , Department of Energy

Farmers can benefit from solar energy in several ways--by leasing farmland for solar; installing a solar system on a house, barn, or other building; or through agrivoltaics.



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