

STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

USDA and DOE Develop Tools to Support Farmers and Local Stakeholders with Renewable Energy Siting

Agencies Implement Clean Energy Solutions to Benefit Farmers and Rural Americans

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 2024 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) are announcing the availability of several new resources for farmers and rural Americans to help them identify opportunities and navigate the rapid deployment of clean energy in rural communities.

USDA and DOE solicited stakeholder feedback during the [American Farms, Rural Benefits](#) listening sessions held in early 2024, which guided the development of the new website [Solar Energy & Farming Initiatives](#). This coordinated approach to promoting clean energy adoption serves as a one-stop shop for identifying new resources and expanding existing programs to support farmland conservation and agrivoltaics, as well as pilot projects and future research.

The Solar Energy & Farming Initiatives website aims to benefit both rural communities and renewable energy projects. This one-stop shop provides information on initiatives that have been implemented to assist farmers in transitioning to clean energy while also creating more economic opportunities for rural Americans. These initiatives include information on aligning federal funds to local support and benefits, promoting agricultural benefits at utility-scale projects, expanding agrivoltaics research, assisting farmers in lowering costs and increasing income, and much more.

To learn more about how USDA and DOE are committed to safeguarding farmland, while also assisting family farmers in developing sustainable sources of income, go to <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/usda-doe-solar-energy-farming-initiatives>.

Background

Clean energy deployment is critical to ensuring domestic energy security, combating climate change, promoting rural economic development, and creating jobs. Clean energy investments can create economic opportunities for farmers and rural Americans. For farmers facing droughts or other extreme weather events, leasing non-productive land for clean energy production can be a valuable source of revenue. There are also opportunities to co-locate clean energy on agricultural land while still farming it.

USDA and DOE held a series of listening sessions at the beginning of the year. Feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on what the agencies can do through leadership, program guidance, or research and information sharing helped to achieve positive clean energy siting outcomes for farmers, rural Americans, the renewable energy industry, and others.

USDA and DOE will continue working to develop a comprehensive strategy that encourages the use of clean energy while also addressing the unique needs of farmers and communities since there is no one-size-fits all solution or best practice for siting renewable energy projects (e.g., wind or solar). Several key steps toward achieving this goal, such as providing valuable informational resources to local stakeholders, expanding existing programs, and launching new initiatives. Taking these steps to make the government more efficient and effective, as well as more responsive to constituent and stakeholder issues, will help us achieve our goal of

making clean energy more accessible and viable for everyone, while also aligning with the priorities of farmers and communities alike.

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