

Solar Energy

A preservation tool for Maryland's farmland



Solar & Agriculture are compatible.

- Solar energy not only provides a new “cash crop” for farmers but enables opportunities for land to have dual income streams by growing crops under solar panels or grazing livestock on the same land.
- “Agrivoltaics” is the term commonly used for these integrated solar/agriculture practices that serve as a sustainable approach to conserving farmland, supporting farmers, and providing a drought-proof revenue stream thanks to solar leases.
- Solar energy helps preserve and restore farmland, which can be even more productive in the future after years of rest and regeneration.
- Bees and other pollinators are an essential aspect of crop production and are disappearing from our landscape. By installing native flowers and plants beneath ground mounted solar arrays, they become pollinator-friendly places and support critical habitats. Not only will this benefit future crop yield, but it will also prevent erosion and contribute to biodiversity.
- Solar energy projects can help keep family farms in the family for generations to come.

The real threat to Maryland farmland is suburban sprawl.

- Solar energy projects help preserve and protect farmland by ensuring the land remains agricultural land instead of being paved over permanently for other development.
- The United States has lost more than 11 million acres of farmland to development over the last 20 years, according to the American Farmland Trust. Data shows that agricultural land is increasingly being developed for other uses, which threatens the integrity of local and regional food systems. The loss of farmland to low-density residential development at the edge of urban and suburban areas is a prime culprit in the permanent loss of farmland.

Solar energy provides economic opportunity.

- 231,000 American's work in the solar industry.
- Solar energy projects are often sited in rural areas that have otherwise seen little job or economic growth. The projects help infuse new revenue into the county that helps pay for critical amenities like first responders, roads and bridges, and schools.
- Land lease payments to landowners help provide American farmers with a revenue stream they can depend on during ever-fluctuating commodity markets.