

Comments to DOER regarding  
SMART regulations Sept. 5, 2019

I am a crop farmer from Northfield, MA. I am putting in a dual use solar agricultural project. It started out with a 5 acre field for 1/2 megawatts production. Now I have 1.2 megawatts with a dual use solar array.

*Program*  
Solar should be expanded and made more efficient. For business projects, a minimum of 1/2 megawatts is needed. The whole process needs to be easier with different methods used to obtain the desired results.

Massachusetts gives some support-about a 3 rating. We need more support for agriculture. We need bigger megawatt programs. Now, they get all filled up before a project can even get all its permits. I have had 3 projects started, and have been *filled up* trying for solar for over 6 years. DOER needs to work with power companies. Need much better hook up time with less expense. It takes over a year once built to get a project hooked up. Expense is 1/2-3/4 million dollars.

We need newer and better incentives for agricultural projects. We need to allow use of open land, fields, and forests, so that the rest of the these lands can be saved for agricultural use. Solar in a field is better than houses. It would use only a few acres to save hundreds of acres of open land.

We need to have a new program for agriculture with a certain number of megawatts designated just for agriculture. Agricultural use rules and regulations should be different in order to make the best use of an acre of land. If a field is in a buffer zone, solar should be able to be used. We need to bring back net metering for all agricultural projects, i.e. solar, wind, digesters, etc. Agricultural projects need about \$20,000 per megawatt, *to land owner* so less land can be used to save the rest.

The end benefits of all this are; more solar on less land, saving farming, open space, and forest lands, and the towns will be receiving money for all the projects.

Farmers are the biggest users, and the best stewards of the land.  
Let us do what we do BEST.

Thank you for considering my points of view.

Very truly yours,

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