

Solar & Farmland

OUR POSITION

Solar energy can be compatible with agriculture when it is thoughtfully designed, responsibly sited, and implemented in ways that harmonize and preserve the long-term productivity of working lands.

WHY IT MATTERS

Solar projects are an important option for farmers navigating rising input costs, volatile commodity prices, and increasing operational pressures. [REFA's research shows](#) that even in the most aggressive projections, less than 1 percent of the total 897 million acres of farm and ranchland in the US hosts solar panels.

Solar farming is productive farming. Landowners use their ground to create value, just as they choose the most productive mix of crops, grazing, or conservation practices, solar is a reasonable choice. Farmers are best positioned to decide the highest and best use of their acres, and solar should remain one option that supports operational resilience.

WHAT WE SUPPORT

REFA supports solar development that works with agriculture and preserves the long-term productivity of working lands. Solar projects should fit the agricultural landscape, support soil health, and sustain the economic value of the land over time. Responsible siting practices help ensure solar complements, rather than diminishes, the farm operation.

REFA supports dual-use practices—often called agrivoltaics -- wherever feasible. Many farms can integrate grazing livestock under panels, cultivate perennial crops, or implement pollinator-friendly and restorative groundcovers. These practices improve soil conditions, reduce maintenance costs, and reinforce the agricultural character of rural land. REFA encourages developers and landowners to evaluate these options early in project planning.

REFA supports allowing farmers and ranchers—not external entities—to decide how solar fits into their operation. Landowners understand their soils, machinery, labor, and business needs better than anyone. Every operation is different, and farmers should have the space to evaluate whether solar strengthens their land and long-term goals.

REFA supports siting approaches that protect agricultural potential without relying on inconsistent or subjective land classifications. Definitions of “prime” or “high-value” agricultural land vary widely across states and do not always reflect farm-level realities. REFA favors siting strategies that respect local agricultural conditions, protect soil integrity, and recognize the farmer’s role in determining land suitability.

ABOUT REFA

The [Renewable Energy Farmers of America](#) is a 501(c)(6) membership trade association that empowers farmer and rancher landowners with expert guidance, education, peer-to-peer networking and advocacy for renewable energy decisions while protecting property rights.