



General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Joint State Government Commission
Room 108 Finance Building, 613 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-787-4397

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Short summary in response to House Resolution 224, Printer's No. 2061 (2023)
Agrivoltaic Farming in Pennsylvania
Report of the Advisory Committee

House Resolution 224 directed the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of agrivoltaic farming in Pennsylvania. Agrivoltaic farming provides for the simultaneous use of farmland for agricultural production and solar energy harvesting, consequently protecting farming interests while increasing energy independence. The Commission was directed to form an advisory committee composed of various stakeholders in the agricultural sector to assist in the study and to report findings and recommendations. The advisory committee included farmers, academicians, and governmental agencies involved in agriculture and energy generation.

This report examines how solar energy is produced, and the federal and state regulatory climate it is governed by. The report then looks at the current state of farmland preservation in Pennsylvania and how it impacts potential solar development. Ultimately, this report looks at the interplay of agricultural production and solar energy production, and how they can co-exist in the field of agrivoltaics. The means of solar production that this study focuses on is grid-scale, which generally involves a solar developer entering a long-term lease with a farmer to use all or part of the farmer's acreage to install solar panels. The energy produced by the developer belongs to the developer and is transmitted to the electric grid and sold to various entities.

Three popular methods of agrivoltaics farming currently being practiced in Pennsylvania are pollinator habitat, growing crops under panels, and livestock grazing.

The recommendations in this report are intended to support the preservation of farmland and assist and encourage farmers to continue engaging in agricultural production. While the recommendations reproduced in this report are the consensus of the members of the advisory committee, it should not be assumed by the reader that agreement was unanimous. Some provisions were the subject of much debate and concern, and not every recommendation is endorsed by every member.

Recommendations include:

- Establishing a statewide definition of agrivoltaics.
- Incentives for developers wishing to install grid scale solar.
- Non-financial incentives for use of non-agricultural lands for solar development.
- Incentives for farmers to install solar installations.
- Some of the potential benefits of community solar.
- Potential areas of future study.

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