CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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www.CTGrown.gov
Bureau of Agriculture Development & Resource Conservation
Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

Agrivoltaics Requirements

for Solar Energy Generating Facilities located in whole or in part on Prime Farmland

Projects that impact prime farmland, in whole or part, and that are 2 MW AC or more in size or are otherwise required to comply with this requirement require submission to the Siting Council as an application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need, pursuant to Public Act 17-218, amending CGS Section 16-50k(a). A Petition for Declaratory Ruling may be pursued if, among other requirements, the following document is included in the application package submitted to the Siting Council: a letter from DOAG stating that the project will "…not materially affect the status of such land as prime farmland…"

Potential applicants to the Siting Council are encouraged to visit the Connecticut Siting Council website for additional information.

To "… not materially affect the status of such land as prime farmland …" DOAG requires the following:

1. Soil disturbances and soil compaction shall be minimized, especially during construction and decommissioning, and a vegetation and soil management plan shall be developed for the lifetime of the solar project;
2. The solar array shall not interfere with the continued use of land beneath the canopy for agricultural purposes, and an Agrivoltaics Farm Plan shall be developed for the lifetime of the solar project;
3. Certification that if the Applicant sells the solar project to another entity, any approved programming and decommissioning responsibilities will carry over to the new owner; and
4. Certification that applicants shall grant any person authorized by the State of Connecticut access to the Project Site for research and data collection related to Agrivoltaics for the lifetime of the Project, with advance notice of site visits.

A complete application to DOAG shall include the following:

1. An Agrivoltaics Farm Plan;
2. A vegetation and soil management plan prepared by a soil scientist; and

3. A soil health assessment performed by a soil scientist to establish baseline conditions for soil restoration upon decommissioning.

4. How the Applicant shall, at a minimum, provide ecosystem services and/or sustainable landscaping co-uses that preserve and/or improve soil quality including but not limited to crop plans, rotational grazing of livestock, pollinator habitats and apiaries.

5. If the site has been used for production agriculture in the past five years, documentation that demonstrates how production agriculture could continue on the site that contains prime farmland soils after the project is decommissioned.

Projects with the following design standards are encouraged, but these components are not required to receive a letter of no material affect:

- Height and spacing of panels sufficient to accommodate crop-specific needs for sunlight, farm machinery, and worker accessibility;
- Row width between panels sufficient to allow for the continued production of crops and accommodate farming equipment to continue agricultural production;
- The need for access to and from the site for vehicles with trailers or farming equipment has been considered;
- Plans for access to water for grazing or vegetation;
- Sunlight reduction from panels compatible with the proposed agricultural products and sufficient sunlight remaining to sustain production agriculture;
- Elevations of panels adequate to accommodate any livestock grazing and/or row crop production;
- Vertical photovoltaic (PV) panels;
- Fixed tilt or tracking arrays raised substantially above the ground;
- Transparent panel or other progressive designs which have the potential to allow agrivoltaics systems to support crops with high sunlight needs.