



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Office of the Commissioner

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer



Requirements for Solar Grazing Properties

Below is a list of requirements for the co-location of sheep on solar array sites. Solar developers and grazers must adhere to the requirements below to ensure that the sheep on site are provided with the appropriate management and care to promote and sustain their health.

Site Requirements

1. Proper site preparation must be completed by solar developers to create a safe and productive environment for livestock. No debris from construction should be left in the array and panels should be designed for maximum grazing efficiency.
2. Proper soil preparation must take place including preliminary soil testing, followed by repeated testing every 2-3 years and the incorporation of soil amendments as needed.
3. If herbicides or pesticides will be used on the property, the solar developer must share application areas and plans with the solar grazer and a plan for animal safety must be established.
4. Exterior fencing around the solar site must completely enclose the overall array without any holes or gaps.
 - a. Eight-foot-tall chain link fencing with a curl back underground and tension wire running along the bottom should be installed.
 - b. Gates with opening should be tight enough to prevent predators.
5. The solar developer shall provide the necessary fencing identified by the farmer within the solar site to create grazing paddocks. Fencing is also necessary to keep livestock out of hazardous areas including roads, catch basins, transformers, drainage ditches, and containment ponds.
6. In addition to exterior fencing, best practices for flock protection other than dogs, includes llamas or donkeys. If you are planning to utilize guardian dogs, you should be aware of the significant training required to implement such a program. Texas A&M has created an introduction to using guardian dogs that can be found here: <https://sanangelo.tamu.edu/research/lgd/>
7. Signs must be installed around the exterior fencing of the solar site announcing the presence of livestock and providing contact information for the solar grazer.

Livestock Health and Wellness

8. A reliable water source will be provided by the solar developer. The water source, whether surface or groundwater, shall be tested for contaminants prior to livestock being brought to the site. The solar developer is responsible for ensuring that the water source has sufficient yield throughout the season when sheep are grazed on the property.
9. Livestock cannot have access to waterways, ponds, etc. Water shall be pumped from its source and provided to the sheep via a trough or stock tank.
10. A productive and nutritious forage needs to be established and maintained. This shall include regular mowing to keep fields from becoming overgrown. The developers shall work with a grazing expert to select a forage mix that is suitable for the climate, soil quality, and livestock. The solar developer should not expect to graze sheep on the site until the forage has had a full growing season to establish. A forage sample analysis shall be completed yearly to ensure the crop meets livestock nutritional needs.
11. Solar grazers will use proper stocking rates to ensure that a sufficient quantity and quality of forage is available for the livestock.
12. Solar grazers will be required to perform mandated health checks on their sheep which shall include:
 - a. All animals should be officially identified with either an 840 tag or Scrapie tag https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA/Title_22Subtitle_22-278-A/
 - b. Regular monitoring of body condition, foot health, and visible signs of injury or illness.
 - c. Mandatory, at least annually, health check performed by a veterinarian including all vaccinations deemed necessary at the veterinarian's discretion including a yearly rabies vaccine that is labeled for use in sheep - https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/RCSA/Title_22Subtitle_22-359/
13. If sheep come from out of state, all imported animals need to meet all importation requirements. [CTImportRequirements2021.pdf](#)
14. If a dog or any animal other than sheep will be on site, they must be vaccinated for rabies. Dogs must be licensed. Records must be kept up to date and provided upon request. https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_435.htm#sec_22-338
15. Department of Agriculture staff must be allowed to visit the site with notice to check on the welfare of the livestock.

Education and Training

16. Developers need to ensure there is an adequate plan for care and management of the sheep and training for anyone working at the site to ensure that both worker and animal welfare is effectively managed.
17. The solar developer will work with the grazer to create a contingency plan for unforeseen events such as flooding, drought, or other natural disasters.
18. Training must be provided to solar employees who regularly access the site regarding how to interact with the sheep on site.
19. Solar developers are expected to hire and financially compensate solar grazers/farmers for the vegetation management services they are providing.
20. Solar grazers must have 24/7 access to the site.
21. The solar developer shall allow a representative of the Commissioner of Agriculture to conduct a site visit on an as needed basis to confirm compliance with solar grazing activity on the site.