



Raising sheep to generate solar power

Can sheep graze on solar panels?

Blueberries aren't the only crop researchers want to pair with solar panels. One farm up Maine's coast lets sheep roam around panels installed there. And it's not alone. Silicon Ranch, a company based in Nashville, Tenn., is installing solar panels at 17 farms with sheep. Their grazing keeps the grass low, which means no one has to mow.

Are sheep better than goats on solar farms?

There are a few reasons sheep are the superior choice for grazing on solar farms. For one, they are shorter than cows and horses. They will also eat most kinds of forage, which helps keep plant growth at bay. Goats, on the other hand, will chew pretty much anything, which is a bit of a risk on solar farms.

Are solar panels good for sheep flocks?

"Sheep flocks also benefit from the shade provided by the panels in solar arrays, so animal welfare, flock health and productivity are high," Kochendoerfer told CALS News.

Can solar panels help grazing livestock?

One key area of collaboration is between grazing livestock and solar arrays. Vegetation around solar arrays requires constant maintenance to not interfere with the functionality, while sheep have been found to enjoy resting under the solar arrays. This combination has inspired a new form of partnership between agriculture and renewable energy.

Can solar farms boost local economies?

Raising the livestock in the US could also bolster local economies. There are a few reasons sheep are the superior choice for grazing on solar farms. For one, they are shorter than cows and horses. They will also eat most kinds of forage, which helps keep plant growth at bay.

Should agrivoltaic planners put solar over a farm?

Or farm first, and put solar over it?" If farming is the main priority, she says, then the solar panels may need to be spaced farther apart and possibly be raised higher. Such changes could potentially limit how much electricity those farm fields generate. And agrivoltaic planners may need to treat the soil, Macknick says.

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