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New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station



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NJBPU Approves Agreement with Rutgers for Dual-Use Solar Pilot Program

TRENTON, N.J.—The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBP) has approved an agreement with the Rutgers University Agrivoltaics Program (RAP) to facilitate the development and implementation of a Dual-Use Solar Energy Pilot Program over the next three years. The Pilot Program is designed to demonstrate and study the compatibility of agricultural or horticultural production with solar photovoltaic infrastructure on the same property.

The Pilot Program will allow for the installation and operation of up to 200 Megawatts of direct current (MWdc) of solar installation capacity over three years, extendable by the Board to up to 300 MWdc over five years. Individual solar projects would be limited to 10 MWdc. The Pilot Program and the results from its associated research requirements will inform a permanent program that includes standards for construction and operation of dual-use solar energy projects.

“This action by the Board represents the next exciting step in the expansion of our already successful solar program,” said **NJBPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso**. “Adding dual-use solar to our Community Solar, utility-scale solar, and customer-sited solar programs will provide us with the renewable energy we need to reach the Governor’s goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2035. The dual-use program provides a balanced approach to growing our solar industry while providing additional financial support to New Jersey’s working family farmers. We look forward to working with the Rutgers Agrivoltaics Program on this project.”

“The approval of this pilot program will provide an avenue for New Jersey farmers to gain an additional revenue source, while also benefitting from the Governor’s clean energy strategy,” **NJDA Secretary Douglas Fisher** said. “The outstanding work being done by the Rutgers Experiment Station is an example of agricultural innovation and opportunity.”

"Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station has made a large commitment to investigate the opportunities for dual-use Solar by installing agrivoltaic R&D systems at three of our research farms. By working closely with NJBPU and the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, I am confident that we can utilize this new technology to not only generate clean energy, but also improve farm viability and sustainability," said **Margaret Brennan-Tonetta, senior associate director of Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) and director of the Office of Resource and Economic Development.**

The Pilot Program will provide incentives to solar electric generation facilities, located on unpreserved farmland, which plan to maintain the land's active agricultural or horticultural use. Dual-use solar can provide farmers with an additional stream of revenue, assisting with farm financial viability enabling continued agricultural or horticultural production of land while also increasing the statewide production of clean energy.

Staff anticipates that projects seeking to participate in the Pilot Program will be determined after a competitive process that considers price and non-price terms, as directed by the Dual-Use Solar Act of 2021.

The Board anticipates a straw proposal for the pilot program will be issued during Summer 2023 followed by a robust public engagement process.

About the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU)

NJBPU is a state agency and regulatory authority mandated to ensure safe, adequate and proper utility services at reasonable rates for New Jersey customers. Critical services regulated by NJBPU include natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater, telecommunications and cable television. The Board has general oversight and responsibility for monitoring utility service, responding to consumer complaints, and investigating utility accidents. To find out more about NJBPU, visit our website at www.nj.gov/bpu.

About New Jersey's Clean Energy Program (NJCEP)

NJCEP, established on January 22, 2003, in accordance with the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act (EDECA), provides financial and other incentives to the State's residential customers, businesses and schools that install high-efficiency or renewable energy technologies, thereby reducing energy usage, lowering customers' energy bills and reducing environmental impacts. The program is authorized and overseen by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), and its website is www.NJCleanEnergy.com.