Setting Up Agricultural Solar

Agriculture is America’s Lifeblood

The American economy runs on production, and much of that is agricultural. The farmers and ranchers within the heart of America really are the lifeblood of the country. So the question is, “if they are the lifeblood then what pumps that blood and enables it to lead to production for the farmer, rancher and the nation’s economy”?

Solar Energy Pumps Agricultural Lifeblood

In the case of Zoltenka Hog Farms in Courtland Kansas, the answer to that question, in part, is electricity. This is not uncommon for a lot of farmers and ranchers. It takes energy to get things done; to operate equipment and machinery. And now, most of the

electricity they use on their hog farm is produced by an agricultural solar energy system, or photovoltaic energy.

Seeing Solar as the Solution

Near the end of 2016, one of our Big Dog Solar consultants came into contact with the CEO of Zoltenko Farms, who was looking for a way to save on operation costs while still maintaining a reliable source for the needed energy. Through a careful study of the needs analysis and other contributing factors, Big Dog Solar was able to present a bid and project plan which would offset 80% of the farm's current annual electricity consumption. In most scenarios, a 100% offset is achieved, but due to particular regulations within this jurisdiction, 80% is the max offset allowed.

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4 Solar Systems were integrated with this project.

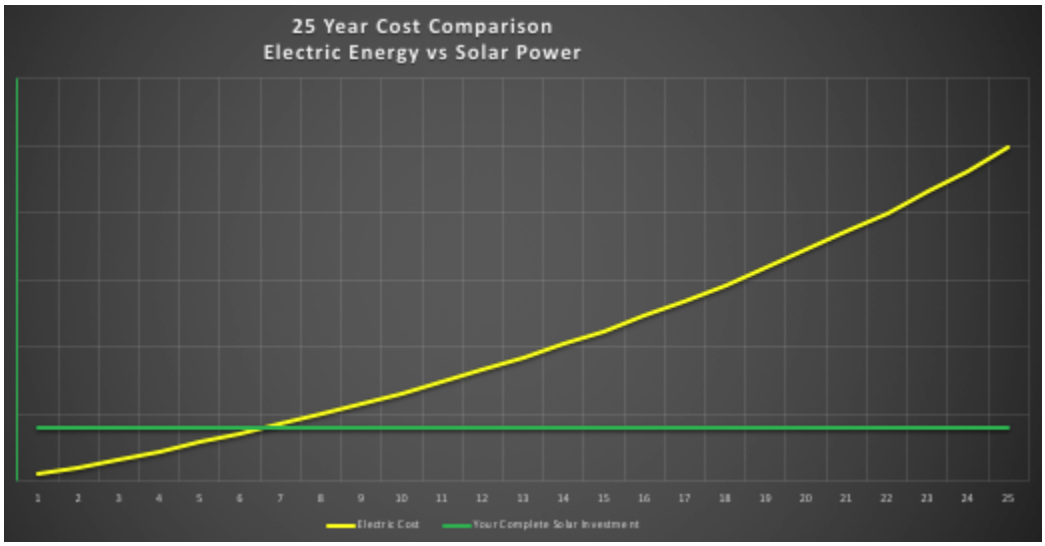
378 Kilowatts of Installed Capacity

1,164 Panels

Setting Up Agricultural Solar Arrays

The proposed project would include 378KW of photovoltaic energy consisting of 4 separately metered systems. To break that down would equal 1,164 GCL panels that produced 325 watts apiece. The project build time ended up being 4-5 weeks, which was made much faster by the use of the Schletter G-Max ground mounting system. We had worked with Schletter previously and knew from experience that integrating this mounting system into the project would save us weeks worth of work. In the end, we

completed the installation of the ground mount racking system in about one-fourth of the time. The G-Max system also allowed us to run a slightly smaller crew, because of the ease of install and provides a more reliable and sturdy racking.



Solar Savings can provide a short buyback for the system and continue to provide reliable power for decades.

Saving With Solar

Being located in Idaho, we are extremely familiar with America's agricultural community and have been a big supporter of the farmers and ranchers who produce so much for our economy. As in the case of Zoltenko Farms, there is a lot of money to be saved with agricultural solar energy systems. In this particular scenario, the expected return on investment should be just under 7 years, which would leave a remaining life of the system to be an additional 18 years of cost savings. If someone you know is looking to save operational costs on a farm or ranch, encourage them to look into solar.

Between the Federal tax incentives, extremely low maintenance, and the reliability of the sun's power it's the perfect homegrown solution for agricultural energy. For any other questions on this project or other solar scenarios, feel free to contact us anytime.

Related post: *Seven Steps to Solar Setup* | *The Solar Industry is Hot*

Frequently Asked Questions

How does solar energy benefit farms like Zoltenka Hog Farms?

Solar energy helps farms by significantly reducing operational costs for electricity. For Zoltenka Hog Farms, their solar system offsets 80% of their annual electricity consumption, resulting in substantial savings.

What was the scale of the solar project at Zoltenka Hog Farms?

The solar project at Zoltenka Hog Farms included 378 kilowatts of capacity with 1,164 panels installed across 4 separate systems. The installation took 4-5 weeks, facilitated by the Schletter G-Max ground mounting system.

What is the expected return on investment for solar energy at Zoltenka Hog Farms?

The expected return on investment for Zoltenka Hog Farms' solar system is just under 7 years, with an additional 18 years of cost savings anticipated from the system.

Why should farms consider investing in solar energy?

Farms should consider solar energy for its cost-saving benefits, low maintenance, and long-term reliability. Solar energy can significantly reduce electricity bills and is supported by federal tax incentives, making it a practical and sustainable choice.