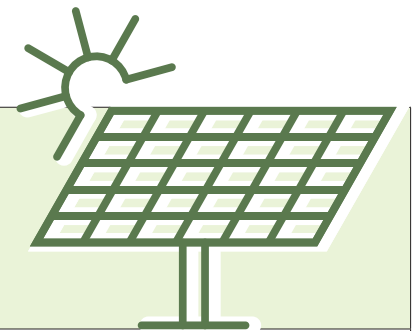






Zoning Considerations for Agrivoltaic Practices

Utility-scale solar development offers significant benefits to rural communities, including new jobs, tax revenue, and an additional source of income for landowners. But solar development has raised land-use concerns, particularly regarding taking land out of agricultural production to host electric generation. One method for alleviating the conflict between types of land use is to incorporate dual-use practices, commonly referred to as “agrivoltaics,” on solar sites.







To enable or promote combined land use, siting and zoning standards must not impede common agrivoltaic practices such as grazing or using native vegetation. The matrix below provides a checklist of common solar zoning standards as well as their potential impact on agrivoltaics. For more information on agrivoltaics, please visit our website: cfra.org/agrivoltaics

Common solar zoning standards and impact on agrivoltaics



Common solar zoning standards	Support adoption of agrivoltaics	Likely no impact on adoption of agrivoltaics	Possibility to negatively affect adoption of agrivoltaics	Additional information
Height restrictions				Height restrictions may negatively affect the potential integration of agrivoltaic practices like grazing or crop production.
Vegetation management				Vegetation management requirements can support the adoption of agrivoltaics by allowing for management practices such as livestock grazing or the use of low-growing native vegetation or pollinator habitat.
Decommissioning				Although decommissioning standards may not directly affect the adoption of agrivoltaics, site restoration requirements can ensure that land can be returned to agricultural use once a project has reached the end of its operational life.
Glare				Standards related to glare from panels are unlikely to affect agrivoltaic practices.



Common solar zoning standards	Support adoption of agrivoltaics	Likely no impact on adoption of agrivoltaics	Possibility to negatively affect adoption of agrivoltaics	Additional information
Screening				Requirements for screening to limit viewshed impacts are unlikely to limit the incorporation of agrivoltaics, but relevance likely depends on the method used for screening. For example, if trees are used, they may limit light exposure to parts of the solar site that could be used for crop production or native vegetation.
Setbacks				Setbacks are not likely to directly affect agrivoltaics.
Operations and maintenance requirements				Operations and maintenance standards can support the adoption of agrivoltaics by allowing for the incorporation of practices like integrated vegetation management and ensuring site access can be maintained for third parties engaged in agrivoltaics on site. Standards that narrowly limit site access or do not provide project operators flexibility in their operations and maintenance strategy can affect agrivoltaic practices.
Road use/public infrastructure requirements				Requirements related to road use or the use of other public infrastructure, such as water or electric distribution/transmission for solar energy systems, is unlikely to affect agrivoltaics. Limitations on the use of roads or water infrastructure may affect the types of agricultural practices that can be used on site. For example, grazing would require a nearby water source.
Overlay districts				Overlay districts are used to create special zoning areas, such as agricultural or industrial, in addition to existing zoning districts. The districts can provide an opportunity to intentionally promote certain types of land use, including agrivoltaics.
Definitions				A definition of practices that qualify as agrivoltaics is essential if such practices are incorporated into zoning standards or if a county wants to promote their adoption.

