



Solar Farms and Ag Land

My name is Tina Peters. I would like to share my personal and professional opinions concerning solar and ag land.

Being a 4th generation farmer/agriculturalist, along with 30 years of environmental consulting, my opinions vary from most people.

From birth, I was taught the importance of clean water, quality of soils, erosion control. My environmental career has always been one in dealing with soil and water quality, environmental studies, well drilling, safety and more. Asked, through the years, why I decided on environmental work, with each answer, I soon realized that what I was told early on in my career, that I had been born to do environmental work was true. As I have gained many years of experience in dealing with the private and corporate sectors, as well as all levels of government, I have seen the changes not only with government, but population, disasters, the more my pride grew in being a farmer's daughter and granddaughter, being 4th generation from same county, on same farm, being "Steward of The Land".

The situation of the water quality, soil quality, good farmland did not just happen as political views may cast shadow with recent years of those serving elected offices. The issues have evolved as time has passed. I view it as greed on some levels and find humor, personally, at the thought of each individual casket or urn being same size, meaning all the toys and money collected while alive does not go with us.

Good farmland has been traded for a dollar, for the growth of residential and commercial developments, roads, with not a thought of the long-term effects or growth for the future. Now more than ever, we must stop and evaluate our area, our county, even worldwide. The population continues to grow. With population growth, the need for food to feed people grows, and with that, the need for clean water grows. Science has assisted farmers in being able to produce more with the same amount of land, with good water quality playing a major role. The year to year unknown of a Natural Disaster/Act of God plays an especially important role in food production. Complete crops have and will be once again wiped out.

It is up to us, the private citizen, farmer, business owner, local, state, federal elected officials to come together, set aside any personal opinions and political opinions for the good of future generations or face results that some of us will find difficult to live with. This is part of my effort, sharing my professional, personal views, opinions and offering to work together bringing to the table my experience, wisdom, and resources to assist others, not only in my home area, but throughout my state and country. I believe every child, every adult should be as blessed as I am, to lead a healthy life, where I love my profession and heritage more with each passing day.

I received a request recently to review a situation concerning farmland and solar farms.

Result of my research:

All States do not have the same requirements. County and local governments requirements on planning, zoning, etc. are different.

Fact: No more land can be made.

Population is growing. The need for housing is growing. We need food to feed people, animals. We need clean soil and water for all living things to survive.

Fact: Some farmland is better suited for growing crops to feed people, raising cattle, etc.

This should be taken into consideration when we look at converting ag land to something else, including solar farms.

Fact: Humans are responsible for the damage that exists in our current water situation as well as environmental damage. It cannot be corrected overnight.

While saying this, I also believe that we should entertain the idea of new types of technology to assist with the energy that we depend upon. A way that quickly returns utilities to working order after disasters, while maintaining the lowest cost to the consumer.

As with many things in life, everything comes with pros and cons. I do believe that protecting our water and environment followed by assuring food production is priority. With a risk-based assessment, along with research of products, technology, development of an overall laws, rules, and regulations with addendums that each area is different and may require more studies, more detailed ways to protect water and environment, developed, we can achieve a balance between adapting to new technology and protecting the environment for future generations.

Before converting farmland to solar farms, or any other type of development these are some of the things that should be considered:

- Adjacent property and its use.
- Wildlife, ecosystem impacts.
- Erosion control.
- Environmental risk: damage to equipment due to an Act of God or illegal activity. The risk to soil, air, and groundwater contamination.
- Farmland Preservation.
- Noise Pollution and dust risk.
- Maintenance, property upkeep.

- Buffer zones
- Visual appearance.
- Emergency response in case of incident.
- Fencing.

The list can vary depending upon the area. Planning and zoning departments, from my experience, do a decent job. Very few come from an environmental background, have the field experience, and/or the health and safety training to view each angle that is needed, depending upon to project. Sadly, most do not encourage management to bring in someone on a case-by-case proposed project to provide a professional opinion. In current times, realizing too late can result in damage to the environment and ecosystem.

I shared this due to the request of Solar Farms and Ag Land. But this is true with oil, wind, communication towers, commercial development, residential development.

By the way, in conducting my research, I did learn something else that I would like to share.

Many assume American made means American owned, that profits stay in the United States of America. American made is a play on words. Conduct your research if you are one of many trying to buy local, support American businesses. Key words; American Owned, American Made, American Manufactured, American Operated, American Managed. In my research, I found out that a large company taxpayer relies on formed an agreement with a foreign owned company to provide a vital piece of equipment that is being used to replace agriculture land. The foreign company it is said, has a location within the United States where said equipment is manufactured. I do not know if this is true or not, regardless, the profits, made from the American people and taxpayers, are not staying within the United States to support area businesses, the profits return to the main location of this company, in a foreign country.

Personally, and professionally, I have a problem with this. I do not have issue working with other countries, helping other countries, I do however, believe in putting this country, the United States of America, first.

Recent events in our country have brought up the words "America First", Patriotic", "Pride in Our Country", etc. Personally, and professionally, I would like to suggest that everyone stop, take the time, and think about what that truly means. Pride in Country means we honestly support American Owned, American Made, American Manufactured, American Managed, American Operated, American Grown, American Supplied. In my opinion, if you are blessed to live in this country, support this country first.

The difference we could make in our economy, people, environment, and communities would be amazing. I would bet that it would bring unity, support of one another. If people are being fruitful, have busy hands, they have less time to worry, to find fault.

I do not expect, scratch that, I do not desire for everyone to agree with me. Calmly discussing, sharing, asking questions, explaining, educating one another is how change for the better is made. You will find my contact information below. Due to my schedule, it may take me a few hours, but I will contact you back.

Thank you for taking time to read this. Please share with others. Change must start somewhere for our future and that of our future generations.

Please feel free to contact me; Tina Peters, at either email, tina@mallard-inc.com , tina@farmheritageinc.com , or via phone at: (850) 326-2154.

Wishing everyone good health and safety. God Bless.

Sincerely,

Tina Peters