

# **Agri-PV / Agrivoltaics**

The Future of Farming

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### Introduction

**Agrivoltaics** (agrisolar/agri-PV) is the simultaneous use of areas of **land for both solar panels and agriculture**. It is important for decarbonization as less barren land is available.

Because solar panels and crops must share the sunlight, **the design of agrivoltaic facilities may require trading off** such objectives as **optimizing crop yield, crop quality, and energy production**. In some cases crop yield increases due to the shade of the solar panels mitigating some of the stress on plants caused by high temperatures and UV damage.

The technique was originally conceived by Adolf Goetzberger and Armin Zastrow in 1981. Agrivoltaics can refer to different methods of combining crops with solar panels: crops and solar side by side, solar above crops, and greenhouses made of (semi-transparent) PV panels.





### **Benefits**

There are many **benefits** for the co-location of PV and agriculture:



### Income Diversification

• Profit from investment in solar energy overcompensates for the reduction of crop yield.

### **Food Production**

- In some cases crop yield increases due to the shade of the solar panels.
- Based on climate change and increasing drought and extreme weather events, agrivoltaics offers key advantages such as the protection of crops from drought and damage caused by hail or heavy rain.

### Efficient Water Consumption

• PV arrays help reduce water evaporation.

### Improved Renewable Energy Production

 The agrivoltaic PV arrays were cooler by approx. 9°C during the day thanks to the plant-based understory, allowing for better performance.



### **Agri-PV System Designs**

### > Interspace PV

With interspace PV, crops grow between large-spaced, ground-level rows of module rows, making room for machinery to pass through. Source: https://www.baywa-re.es/en/solar/projects/agri-pv#interspace-pv

### > Overhead PV

With Overhead PV, crops are cultivated underneath elevated solar modules. Source: https://www.baywa-re.es/en/solar/projects/agri-pv#overhead-pv

### > Greenhouse PV

There are some cases. However, in one study, greenhouses with half of the roof covered in panels were simulated, and the resulting crop output reduced by 64% and panel productivity reduced by 84%.

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agrivoltaics#:~:text=The%20technique%20was%20originally%20conceived,of %20semi%2Dtransparent%20PV%20panels.









What crops are suitable for agrivoltaics?

Current studies indicate that most crops tolerate shading up to 15% without significant yield loss, with berries, fruiting crops, and some vegetables benefiting from shading. Leafy vegetables, tubers, root crops, and certain cereals experience minimal yield reduction.

Source: https://www.pv-magazine.com/2023/05/26/agrivoltaics-can-mitigate-effects-of-drought/



Raspberries



Strawberries



Blueberries





Pears









### Japan

Over 120 kinds of crops have been grown in the Japanese agrivoltaic farms. **Top ten popular crops** includes mioga ginger (65 farms), Sakaki or Japanese cleyera (41 farms), paddy rice (35 farms), shiitake mushroom (31 farms), and blueberry (20 farms), fuki or butterbur (18 farms), tea (15 farms), green onions (14 farms), pasture grass (13 farms), and pumpkin (13 farms).

Source: Evolution of agrivoltaic farms in Japan, Makoto Tajima; Tetsunari lida



**Agrivoltaic** development in Japan took off after the introduction of feed-in tariff (FIT) in **2012**.

Development of agrivoltaics in Japan started in 2004 in Chiba Prefecture initiated by Akira Nagashima. He coined the term "solar sharing (synonymous to agrivoltaics)" in 2003 and made its patent free for public use in 2005.

Two directives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), one in **March 2013** and another in May 2018, institutionalized agrivoltaics and promoted its development.



More in research ...

In December 2022, the US Department of Energy (DoE) has announced the Foundational Agrivoltaic Research for Megawatt Scale (FARMS) funding, which has allocated \$8 million for six solar energy research projects across six states and the District of Columbia.



**Iowa State University (Ames, Iowa)**: This project will study horticulture and beekeeping at solar sites, produce decision support tools, and provide agrivoltaics training programs for farmers and other stakeholders. (Award Amount: \$1.6 million)

**RutgersUniversity (Piscataway, N.J.):**This project team will conduct crop and grazing trials at two solar array testbeds, study community perceptions of agrivoltaics, and create a regional agrivoltaics network for agricultural extension staff in the Northeast, beginning with their partnership with Delaware State University, a historically black land-grant university. (Award Amount: \$1.6 million)

**Solar and Storage Industries Institute (Washington, D.C.)**: This project team will partner with the agriculture and utility sectors to identify barriers to implementing agrivoltaics and produce case studies and guides for solar developers, farmers, and decision-makers. (Award Amount: \$500,000)

**The Ohio State University (Columbus, Ohio)**: This project will conduct grazing and hay production trials using precision agriculture technologies and study the impacts on soil health at an operating utility-scale solar site. (Award Amount: \$1.8 million)

University of Alaska Fairbanks (Fairbanks, Alaska): This project will research agrivoltaics specifically adapted to the food and energy needs of high-latitude underserved communities. (Award Amount: \$1.3 million)

**University of Arizona (Tucson, Ariz.)**: This research will pilot grazing and climate-smart agriculture under a traditional utility-scale solar site to maximize energy, food, and water benefits in the arid Southwest. (Award Amount: \$1.2 million)



### More in research ...



BayWa r.e. is deploying many plant-based agrivoltaic experiments – growing strawberries, apples, and red currents – and it has plans to develop tens of megawatts of solar facilities in 2023. It has also been experimenting with agrivoltaic operations involving livestock, like bees and sheep. (Source: https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/11/04/baaaaa-wa-optimizes-its-business-model-for-agrivoltaic-sheep/)





Major Players in Agrivoltaics

According to Allied Analytics, major agrivoltaic market developers include BayWa, Insolight SA, JA Solar, Enel Green Power, Sunseed APV, Mirai Solar, Namaste Solar, Ombrea, Sun' Agri and Next2Sun.





### Mirai Solar

<u>Semi – Transparent PV Modules with Bifacial Solar Cells</u>





BayWa r.e. & Insolight SA Semi – Transparent PV Modules with Bifacial Solar Cells

### insolagrin Replacing Plastic Tunnels

Replacing plastic tunnels in berry production with transparent solar modules can have multiple benefits. It provides a protected growing environment for the crops while allowing for natural diffused light optimised for crops' needs. It also generates renewable energy for self-consumption, reducing the carbon footprint of the operations.



plastic tunnel





insolagrin



### Namaste Solar JACK' S SOLAR GARDEN

the largest commercially active agrivoltaics system researching a variety of crop and vegetation growth under solar panels in Colorado, U.S.A.





Sun' Agri Single-Axis Solar Tracker

### Weather station

Collects data on weather conditions and physiology info on the plant

### Trackers on one axis

The panels are movable to optimise the yield



### **Bifacial panels**

Anti frost nets

Protect the plants and fruits



**REM TEC** Dual-Axis Solar Tracker





#### TRACKER 10

POWER FROM 2.5 TO 4.35 KWP PER TRACKER 10 PV MODULES INSTALLED ON EACH TRACKER TRACKER LENGTH. 12 M HEIGHT 4-5 M



15

#### TRACKER 2.1

POWER UP TO 16.8 KWP PER TRACKER 24 PV MODULES 78 CELLS PER TRACKER (MONO- OR BI-FACIAL) TRACKER LENGTH 14 M HEIGHT 4-5 M



### Next2Sun Vertical Racking









# PART 03 Huge Energy' s Agri-PV Systems







## **Background and Findings**





Huge Energy has focused on Japanese marketsince its startup in 2008 and supplied300MW+ agri-PV racking systems to Japan.



**Agrivoltaic** development in Japan took off after the introduction of feed-in tariff (FIT) in **2012**.

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Two directives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), one in **March 2013** and another in May 2018, institutionalized agrivoltaics and promoted its development.



As of March 2019, total number of 1,992 agrivoltaic farms (560.0 ha) is registered under the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). A reasonable estimate of the installed capacity of agrivoltaics in Japan would be 500 to 600 MW based on the total installed area of officially registered agrivoltaic farms. Source: Evolution of agrivoltaic farms in Japan, Makoto Tajima; Tetsunari lida

	TABL	E 1. The numb	er of officiall	y registered ag	rivoltaic farms	in Japan by	prefecturea	March 2019
AAB <sup>b</sup>	Prefecture	Agrivoltaic farms	AAB <sup>b</sup>	Prefecture	Agrivoltaic farms	AAB <sup>b</sup>	Prefecture	Agrivoltaic farms
Hokkaido	Hokkaido	6		Shizuoka	264	Shikoku	Okayama	9
Tohoku	Aomori	10	Hokuriku	Niigata	27		Hiroshima	31
	Iwate	13		Toyama	0		Yamaguchi	2
	Miyagi	29		Ishikawa	3		Tokushima	131
	Akita	12		Fukui	16		Kagawa	45
	Yamagata	34	Tokai	Gifu	46	Kyushu	Ehime	32
	Fukushima	75	Color Districtions	Aichi	47		Kochi	6
Kanto	Ibaraki	111		Mie	36		Fukuoka	15
	Tochigi	19	Kinki	Shiga	17		Saga	6
	Gunma	196		Kyoto	17		Nagasaki	3
	Saitama	100		Osaka	4		Kumamoto	36
	Chiba	298		Hyogo	39		Oita	6
	Tokyo	4		Nara	30		Miyazaki	10
	Kanagawa	31		Wakayama	23		Kagoshima	9
	Yamanashi	67	Chugoku	Tottori	6	Okinawa	Okinawa	19
	Nagano	34	3	Shimane	18	Total		1,992

<sup>a</sup> Reference 3.

<sup>b</sup> AAB = Agricultural Administration Bureau



Over 120 kinds of crops have been grown in the Japanese agrivoltaic farms. **Top ten popular crops** includes mioga ginger (65 farms), Sakaki or Japanese cleyera (41 farms), paddy rice (35 farms), shiitake mushroom (31 farms), and blueberry (20 farms), fuki or butterbur (18 farms), tea (15 farms), green onions (14 farms), pasture grass (13 farms), and pumpkin (13 farms)

(Table 4).





	TABLE 4. Crops grown in agrivoltaic farms in Japan <sup>a</sup> March 2019
Number of cases	Common name (Scientific name) [number of cases]
>10	<i>mioga</i> ginger (Zingiber mioga Rosc.) [65], Japanese cleyera (Cleyera japonica) [41], paddy rice (Oryza sativa) [35], shiitake mushroom (Lentinula edodes) [31], blueberry (Cyanococcus spp.) [20], fuki / butterbur (Petasites japonicus (Siebold et Zucc.) Maxim.) [18], tea (Camellia sinensis (L.) O. Kuntze) [15], green onions (Allium fistulosum L.) [14], pasture grass [13], pumpkin (Cucurbita maxima) [13], sweet potato (Ipomoea batatas) [11], persimmon (Diospyros kaki) [11]
9	orange (Citrus unshiu)
8	soybean (Glycine max), potato (Solanum tuberosum L.), taro (Colocasia esculenta (L.) Schott)
7	asparagus (Asparagus officinalis L.), wood ear mushroom (Auricularia auricula-judae), lettuce (Lactuca sativa), peanut (Arachis hypogaeaii)
6	cabbage (Brassica oleracea L. var. capitata.), senryu (Sarcandra glabra)
5	bracken fern (Pteridium aquilinum (L.) Kuhn.), Japanese horseradish (Eutrema japonicum (Miq.) Koidz.), carrot (Daucus carota subsp. sativus), ashitaba (Angelica keiskei (Miq.) Koidz.), onion (Allium cepa), radish (Raphanus sativus var. hortensis), dwarf mondo grass (Ophiopogon japonicus 'Tamaryu'), tomato (Solanum lycopersicum), Chinese cabbage (Brassica rapa var. pekinensis), Japanese star anise (Illicium religiosum Siebold & Zucc.), garlic (Allium sativum)
4	Grape (Vitis spp.), Japanese chestnut (Setaria italica), young soybean (Glycine max), barroom plant (Aspidistra elatior)
3	<b>buckwheat</b> (Fagopyrum esculentum Moench), <b>wheat</b> (Triticum aestivum), <b>komatsuna</b> (Brassica rapa var. perviridis), <b>citron</b> (Citrus junos), <b>spinach</b> (Spinacia oleracea), <b>Chinese chives</b> (Allium tuberosum. Rottler ex Spreng.), <b>chameleon plant</b> (Houttuynia cordata), <b>lemon</b> (Citrus limon), <b>kiwifruit</b> (Actinidia chinensis)
2	fig (Ficus carica), mini tomato (Lycopersicum esculentum), potato (Solanum tuberosum L.), ginger (Zingiber officinale), udo (Aralia cordata), broccoli (Brassica oleracea var. italica), Japanese pepper tree (Zanthoxylum piperitum), shiso (Japanese basil) (Perilla frutescens var. crispa), cucumber (Cucumis sativus L.), dekopon (Citrus unshiu x reticulata Siranui), garden peas (Pisum sativum L.), sesame (Sesamum indicum), red clover (Trifolium pratense L.)
1	hascup (Lonicera caerulea var. emphyllocalyxi), maitake (hen-of-the-woods) (Grifola frondosa), Jerusalem artichoke (Herianthus tuberosus L.), garland chrysanthemum (Chrysanthemum coronarium L.), water convolvulus (Ipomoea aquatica Forsk.), leaf lettuce (Lactuca sativa var. crispa), Blackberry (Rubus fruticosus), sudachi (Citrus sudachi), ostrich fern (Matteuccia struthiopteris), Hydrangea (Hydrangea macrophylla), pak choi (Brassica rapa var. chinensis), Christmas rose (Helleborus spp.), turf grass (Zoysia spp.), bulb, black squirrel (Ilex rotunda), yacon (Smallanthus sonchifolius), rakkyo (Allium chinense G.Don), dichondra (Dichondra spp.), holly manten (Mahonia japonica (Thunb.) DC.), rape (Brassica campestris L.), trefoil (Cryptotaenia japonica), fukinoto (Petasites japonicus (Siebold et Zucc.) Maxim.), cauliflower (Brassica oleracea var. botrytis), mugwort (Artemisia spp.), apple (Malus pumila var. domestica), high moss (Hypnum plumaeforme. Wilson.), currant (Ribes spp.), flowers, maize (Zea mays), kiboshi (Hosta spp.), strawberry (Fragaria × ananassaDuchesne ex Rozier), shimeji (Hypsizygus marmoreus), moss, herbs, eggplant (Solanum melongena), watermelon (Citrullus lanatus), June berry (Amelanchier canadensis), prickly pear (Anredera cordifolia), Japanese apricot (Prunus mume), jabara (Citrus jabara hort. ex Y. Tanaka), moss phlox (Phlox subulate), coralberry (Ardisia crenata), plantain (Plantago asiatica), shibuki (Myrica rubra), turnip (Brassica rapa L.), okra (Abelmoschus esculentus), senna tea (Senna obtusifolia), kiyomi tangor (Citrus unshiu × sinensis), cherry (Prunus spp.), giant elephant ear (Colocasia gigantea), Chinese milk vetch (Astragalus sinicus L.), fodder, hanashiba (Illicium religiosum), mulberry (Morus spp.), hyuganatsu (Citrus tamurana), kumquat / cumquat (Citrus japonica / Fortunella japonica), Solomon's seal (Polygonatum spp.), dracaena (Dracaena spp.), coffee (Coffea spp.), bitter gourd (Momordica charantia), turmeric (Curcuma longa)

Source: Evolution of agrivoltaic farms in Japan, Makoto Tajima; Tetsunari lida



**Shade tolerance** of a crop or **shading rate** is one of the major factors to determine agrivoltaic system. Average shading rate ranges from 31.1% for rice to 100% for mushroom, ginseng, and bracken fern.

Classification	Major crops	Number of cases	Ratio (%)	Number of crop change cases <sup>b</sup>	Crop conversion rate (%)
Land use crops	rice (Oryza sativa), wheat (Triticum aestivum), soybean (Glycine max), buckwheat (Fagopyrum esculentum Moench.)	173	9	26	15%
Vegetables	Vegetables: komatsuna (Brassica rapa var. perviridis), Chinese cabbage (Brassica rapa var. pekinensis), green onions (Allium fistulosum L.) pumpkin (Cucurbita maxima) etc.: Root crops	713	37	592	83%
Unique crops	mioga ginger (Zingiber mioga Rosc.), fuki / butterbur (Petasites japonicus (Siebold et Zucc.) Maxim.), udo (Aralia cordata), ashitaba (Angelica keiskei (Miq.) Koidz.), bracken fern (Pteridium aquilinum (L.) Kuhn.), chameleon plant (Houttuynia cordata), red clover (Trifolium pratense L.)	403	21	358	89%
mioga	mioga ginger (Zingiber mioga Rosc.)	209	11	180	86%
Fruit tree	citrus (Citrus spp.), blueberry (Cyanococcus spp.), persimmon (Diospyros kaki), grape (Vitis spp.)	211	11	122	58%
Flowers	lily (Lilium spp.), pansy (Viola × wittrockiana)	12	1	8	67%
Ornamental plants	Japanese cleyera ( <i>Cleyera japonica</i> ), Japanese star anise ( <i>Illicium religiosum Siebold &amp; Zucc.</i> ), senryo ( <i>Sarcandra glabra</i> ), dwarf mondo grass ( <i>Ophiopogon japonicus 'Tamaryu'</i> ), etc.	553	29	447	81%
Others	-	252	13	129	51%
Pasture	Italian ryegrass ( <i>Lolium multiflorum</i> ), sorghum ( <i>Sorghum bicolor</i> ), Chinese milk vetch ( <i>Colocasia gigantea</i> )	68	4	24	35%
Mushrooms	shiitake mushroom ( <i>Lentinula edodes</i> ), wood ear mushroom ( <i>Auricularia auricula-judae</i> )	98	5	68	69%
Tea	tea (Camellia sinensis (L.) Ó. Kuntze)	65	3	28	43%
	TOTAL	1,914	100	1.324	69%

Source: Evolution of agrivoltaic farms in Japan, Makoto Tajima; Tetsunari lida



The **crop conversion rate** is particularly high for mostly shade tolerant crops in the unique crops and the ornamental plants category (Table 5) and they are ranked in the upper tier of popular agrivoltaic crops (Table 4).



FIGURE 2. Average shading rate by crop classification. Plotted from reference 15. n=1,174 out of 1,465 (80.1% response rate). 100% shading rate for shiitake mushroom (*Lentinula edodes*), ginseng (*Panax ginseng*), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum (L.) Kuhn.*) and some shiitake mushroom farm with photovoltaic panel installed at 60 cm above ground reported.

Average shading rate ranges from 31.1% for rice to 100% for mushroom, ginseng, and bracken fern.



## **Huge Energy Agri-PV Solutions**





















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Tech Drawing (Span 11.5 meters)



# Huge Energy implemented 1MW flexible PV project with **span up to approx. 40 meters** for a sewage treatment plant in Fujian, China.

It withstood super typhoon with speed up to 50.9m/s in July, 2023.

Its design can also be applied to agrivoltaics.





1MW Guanyinpu Sewage Treatment Plant, Fuqing City, Fujian Province



### **Features**

By applying prestress to the cable, the cable can obtain rigidity.

By stabilizing the cable and the quadrangular pyramid, the system can resist wind vibration under the action of wind load.

Efficient control of disturbance of cable

The use of special connectors makes the construction adopt the sliding method, which effectively solves the vibration impact on the cable during installation and maintenance, and avoids the occurrence of hidden cracks.







#### **Quadrangular Pyramid**

As the rigid fulcrum of the system, a geometrically stable space system is formed by arranging tie rods, horizontal connecting cables and longitudinal stabilizing cables through the quadrangular pyramid.



### Tie Rod

Its function is to connect the array of components into a whole, and form a spatial whole with the horizontal connecting cable, improve the overall spatial rigidity, and effectively resist wind vibration.

#### **Longitudinal Stabilizing Cable**

There are two types of longitudinal connecting cables, which bear the downward (upward) wind load caused by south wind (north wind) respectively. At the same time, the deflection of the main cable can be adjusted, and it can withstand the snow pressure of blizzard weather. Fix the spatial position of the quadrangular pyramid and effectively control the amplitude of the component.





Aluminum Agri-PV Racking Flexible (Pole and Wire) Solar Racking

3

4

### **Fixed Tilt Racking**

Others



### 3. Fixed Tilt Racking



![](_page_45_Picture_0.jpeg)

### 3. Fixed Tilt Racking

![](_page_45_Figure_3.jpeg)

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![](_page_46_Picture_0.jpeg)

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### 3. Fixed Tilt Racking

### Bill of Materials (Regular)

Main Parts					Spare Parts					
N o.	Product	Part Number	Picture	Specifications	N	N b.	Product	Part Number	Picture	Specifications
1	Rail	C100-50-12-2.0-5520		Q355(HDG)	1	1 SI	olice for C Steel	C88-43-3.0-320	le col	Q235(HDG)
2	Rail	C100-50-12-2.0-4050		Q355(HDG)	2	2	Angle bracket	L75-50-5.0	00	Q235(HDG)
3	Front Bracing	C60-40-10-2.0-825		Q355(HDG)	3	3	Diagonal Joint	L100-4	e e	Q235(HDG)
4	Rear Bracing	C60-40-10-2.0-1590		Q355(HDG)	2	4	End Clamp	HE-18-EC3560-C45		AL6005-T5
5	Post	13-UZ-2540		Q355(HDG)	5	5	Inter Clamp	HE-17-IC1940-C50		AL6005-T5
6	Post	13-UZ-3220		Q355(HDG)	e	6	HexBolt	HE-36-G10-25-Q		HDG
					7	7	HexBolt	HE-36-G12-40-Q		HDG

![](_page_47_Picture_0.jpeg)

### 3. Fixed Tilt Racking

Huge Energy' s fixed tilt racking systems (steel) are almost the same as traditional ones except that higher ground clearance or larger distance between each array may be required. Fixed tilt racking can be applied to **traditional crops** as well as **livestock grazing** and **pollinator gardens, etc**.

![](_page_47_Picture_4.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Figure_2.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Picture_3.jpeg)

![](_page_49_Picture_0.jpeg)

### 4. Others

Huge Energy is a project-oriented solar racking designer and manufacturer and can also offer other agrivoltaics racking systems.

![](_page_49_Picture_4.jpeg)

### **Vertical Racking**

### **Solar Tracker**

![](_page_49_Picture_7.jpeg)

![](_page_50_Picture_0.jpeg)

### 4. Others

Huge Energy is a project-oriented solar racking designer and manufacturer and can also offer other agrivoltaics racking systems.

![](_page_50_Picture_4.jpeg)

![](_page_51_Picture_0.jpeg)

# Thank you!