Photo: ASGA

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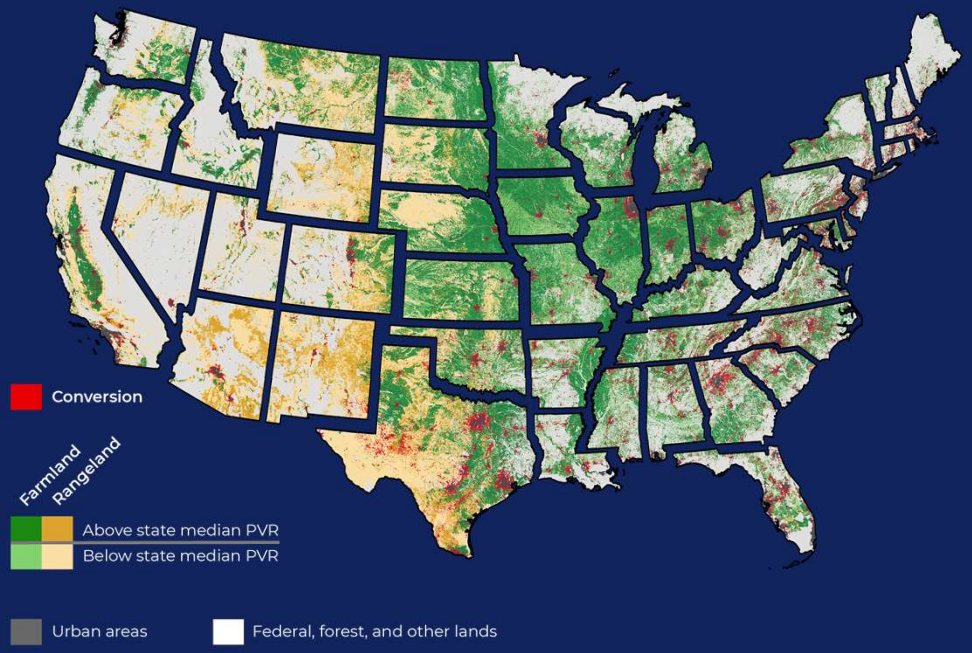
Smart Solar Siting on Farmland

NY State Association of County Planning Directors

January 21st, 2022

Development Threatens Each State's Best Agricultural Land – What About Solar?

Farms Under Threat



Smart Solar Siting

Achieve energy goals while ensuring the viability of our most productive farmland.

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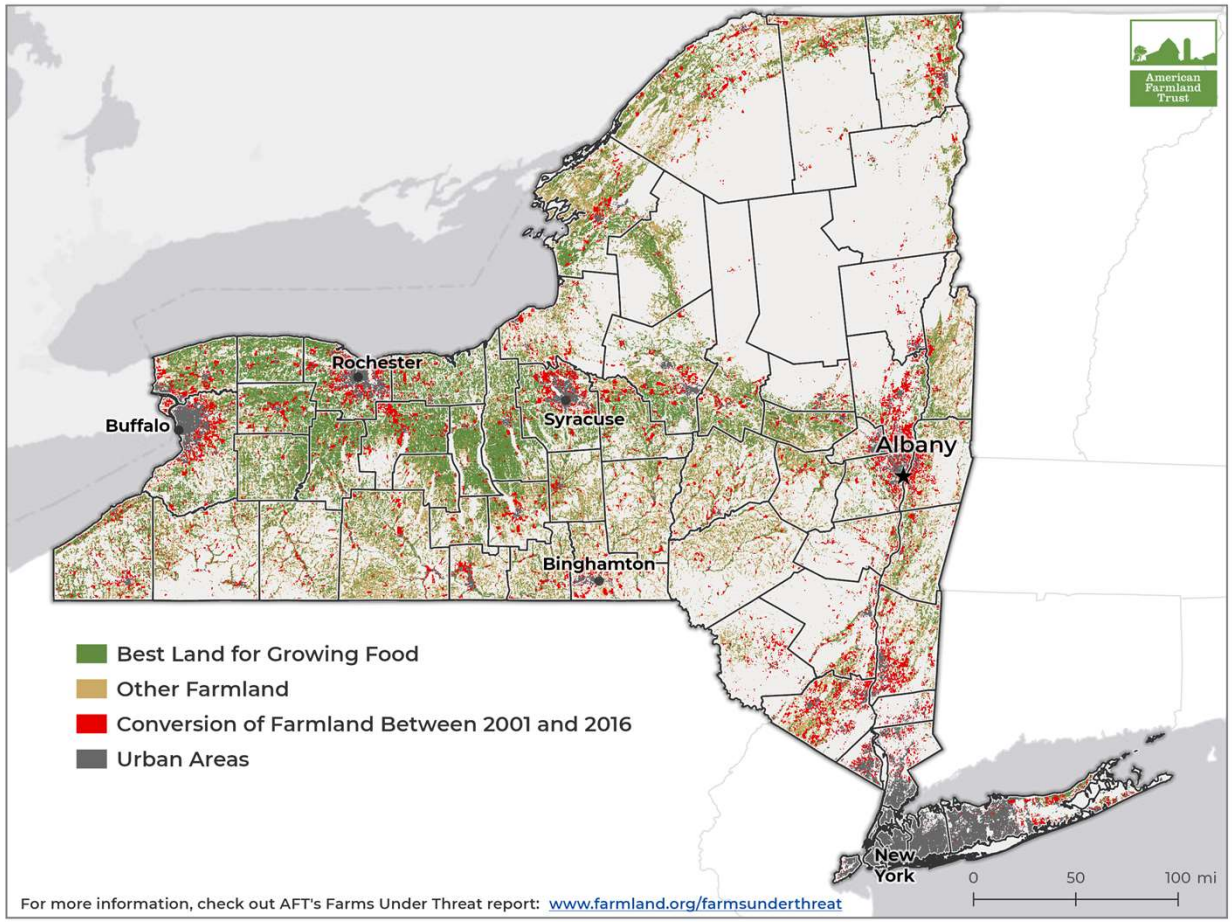
SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US

New York's Farmland



Farms Under Threat

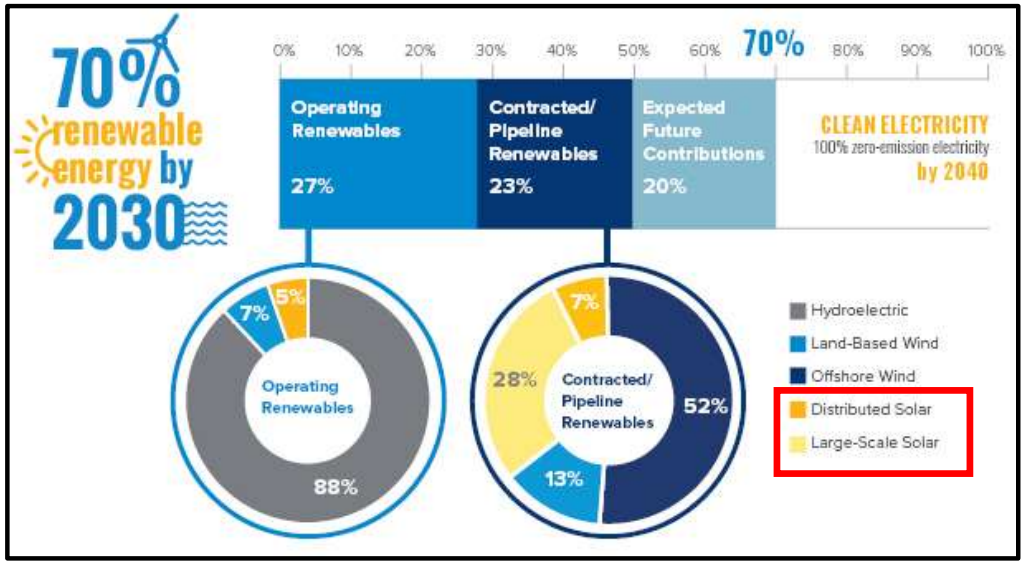
New York has **6.9 million** acres of cropland and pastureland

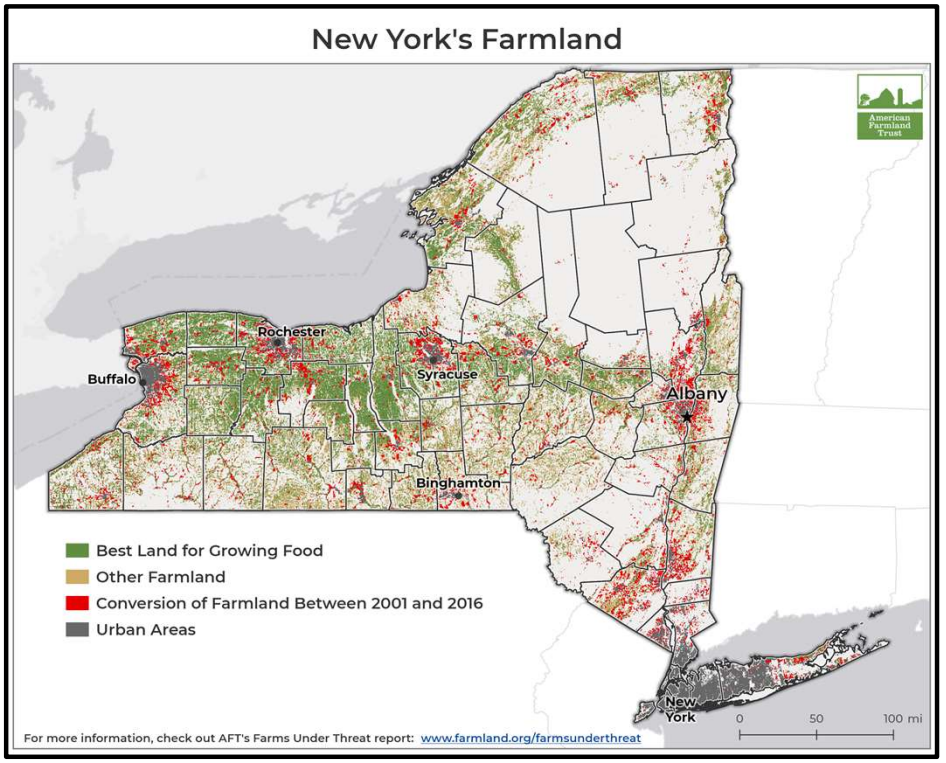
54% of New York's farmland is nationally significant

253,500 acres of farmland converted between 2001-2016

- 78% to low density residential development
- 1/3 of NY farmers are 65 or older (2 million acres)

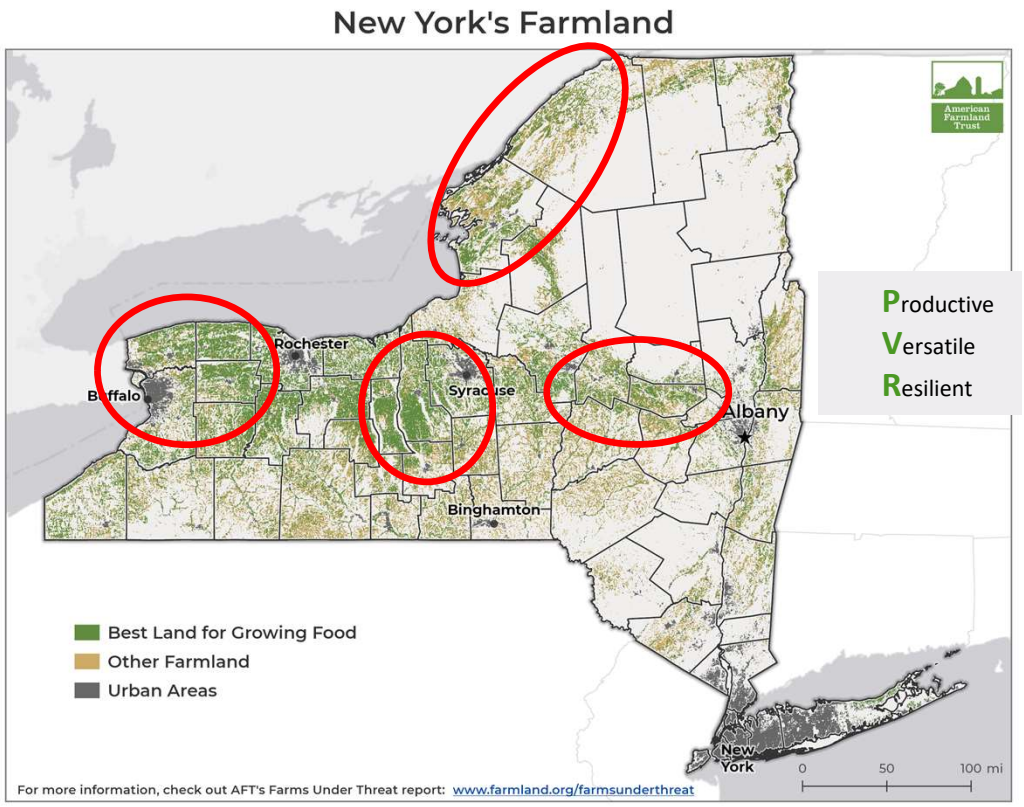
Smart Solar Siting on Farmland

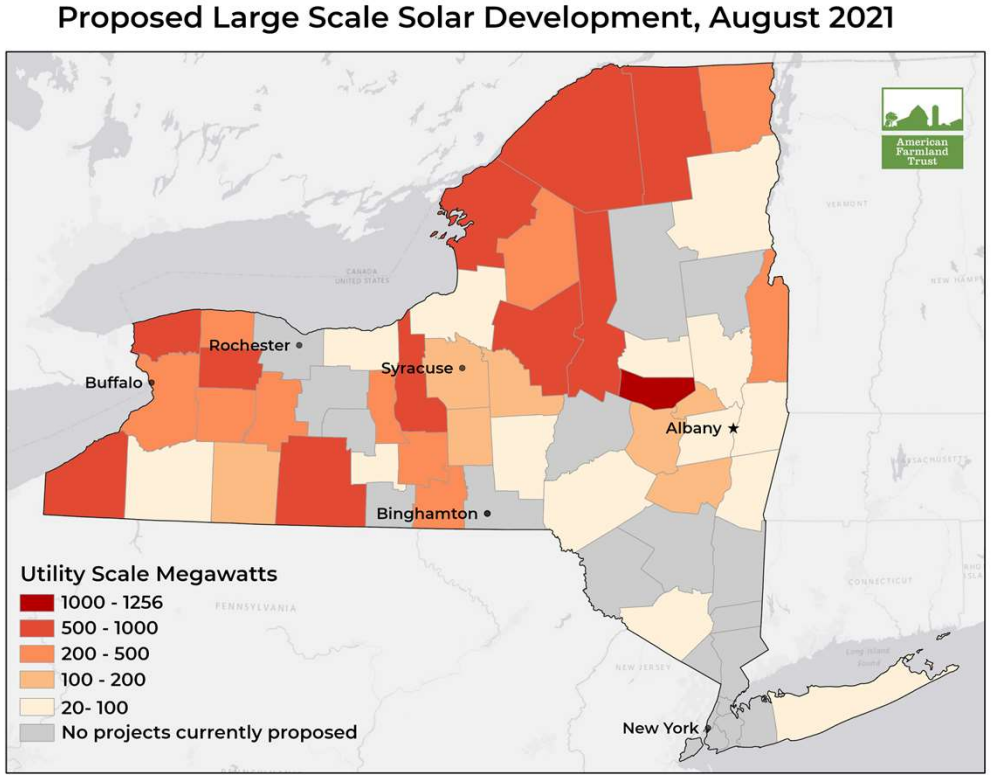




Protect Best Farmland
Ensure Farm Viability
Benefit Farmers

Solar Development & New York Farmland





Data Source: New York Independent System Operator, Inc. (NYISO) Interconnection Queue

Data Access Date: August 10, 2021

Regional Distribution of Large Scale Solar

REDC Region	Total Proposed MW	Share of Total Proposed LSR Solar
North Country	3,136	22%
Mohawk Valley	3,170	22%
Finger Lakes	2,435	17%
Western NY	1,972	14%
Southern Tier	1,357	9%
Central NY	1,201	8%
Capital Region	840	6%
Mid Hudson	140	1%
Long Island	59	-----
Total	**14,310**	

NY ISO Interconnection Queue – August 10, 2021

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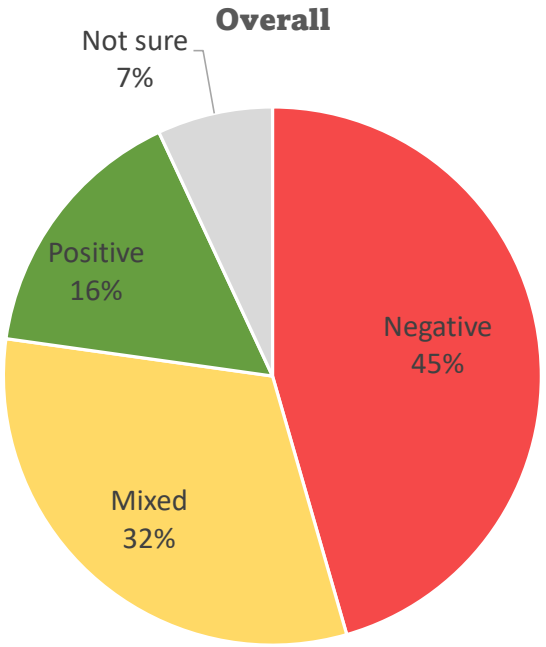
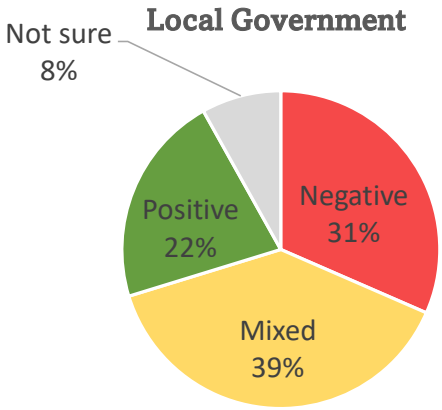
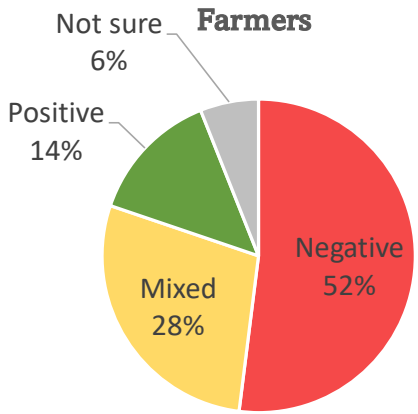
Mixed Impact to Farm Viability Expected







"It's possible solar developments could make profit for a farm to offset lower profitability in other farm ventures, thus having a positive impact. It's also possible that continues solar could drive up land prices, reducing the affordability of farmland."

-Survey Respondent

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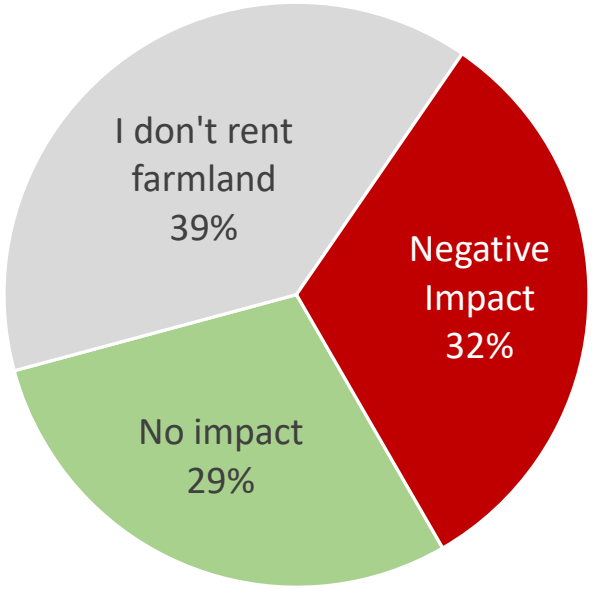
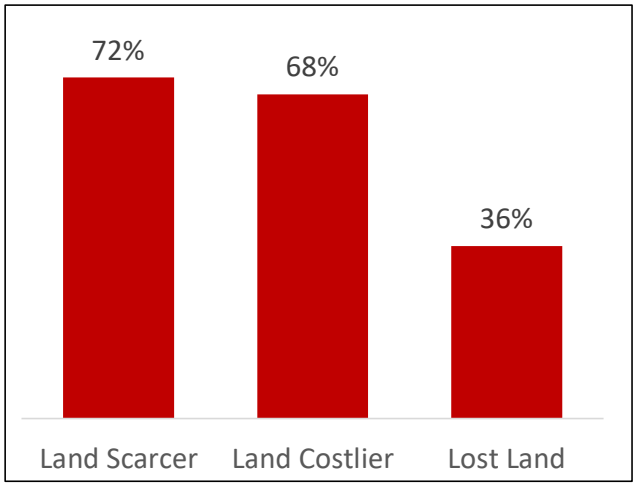
Who Owns the Land?

Impacts to Farmer-Renters

Approximately 60% of New York farmers rent land to support their operations.
Of those who rent farmland, **over half (51%) reported a negative impact** from solar.





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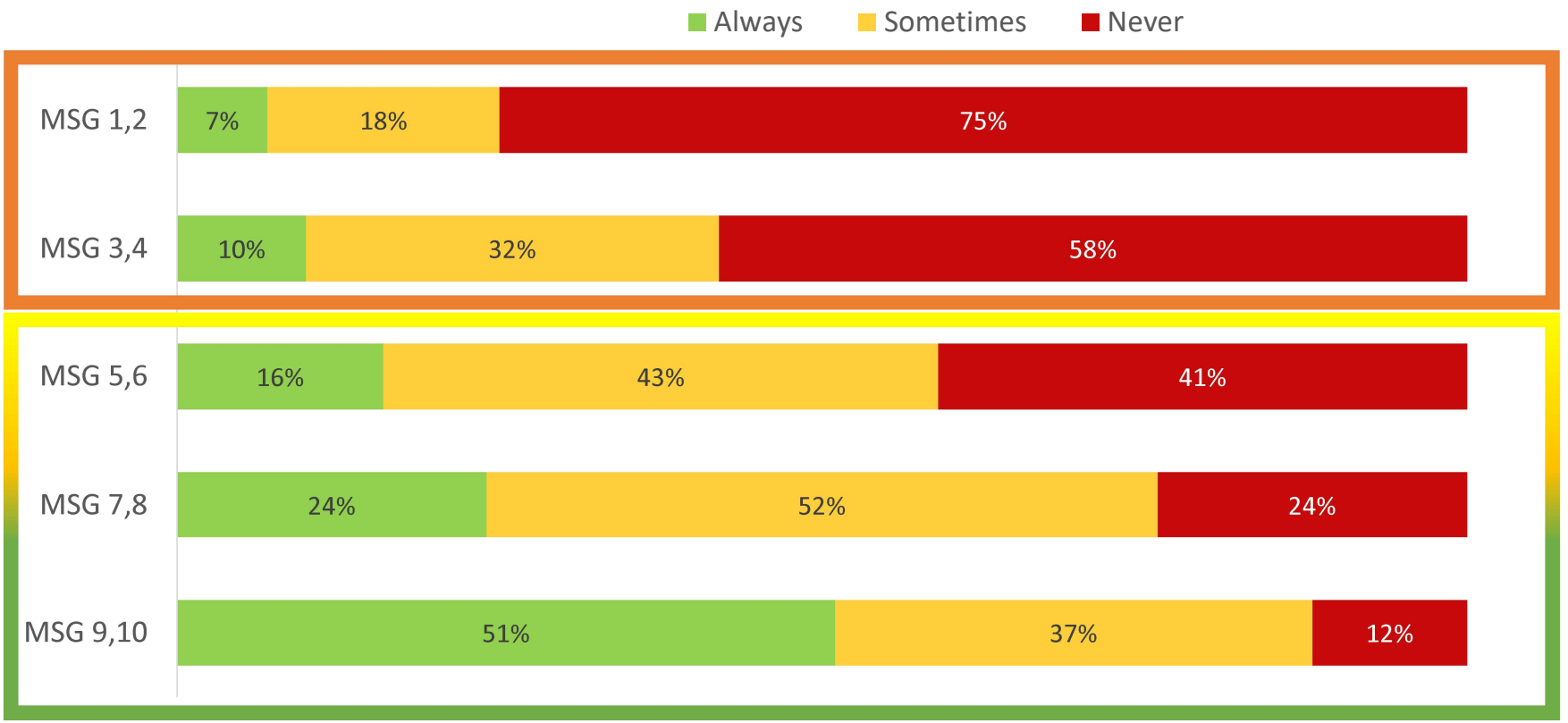
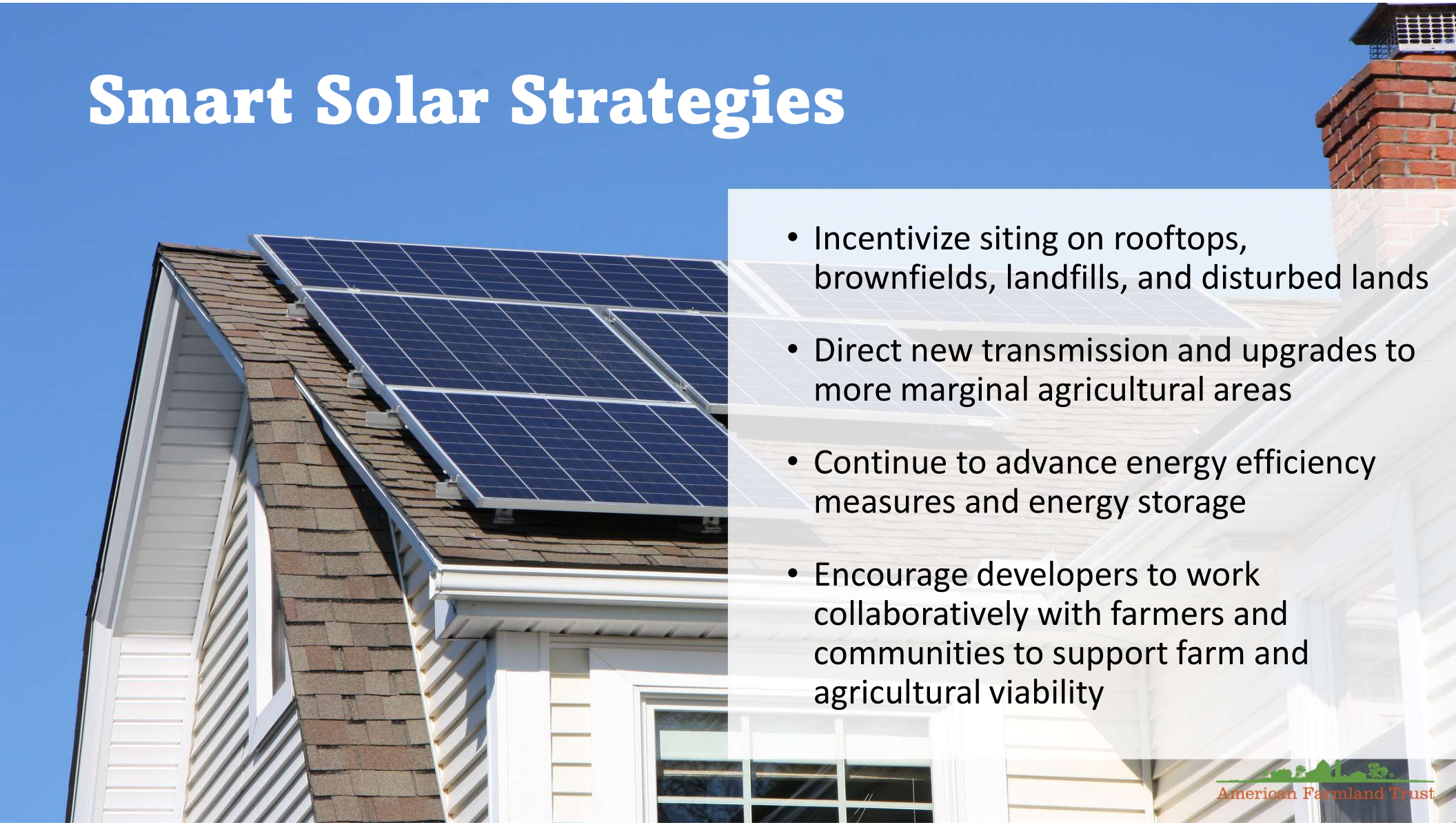
Farmer's Preferred Locations for Solar

"The sun shines just as brightly on crummy land for farming as it does on our best." - Survey Respondent



Smart Solar Strategies



- Incentivize siting on rooftops, brownfields, landfills, and disturbed lands
- Direct new transmission and upgrades to more marginal agricultural areas
- Continue to advance energy efficiency measures and energy storage
- Encourage developers to work collaboratively with farmers and communities to support farm and agricultural viability

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Stronger Protections for New York's Best Farmland

- Ensure best practices (eg NYSDAM Construction and Mitigation Guidelines) for solar sited on farmland
- Minimize conversion of New York's most productive, active farmland [Focus on active farmland, MSG 1-4]. Consider "red" threshold limits.
- Adopt robust farmland mitigation requirements and base mitigation payments on true cost of farmland protection (eg NYSDAM farmland protection awards)
- Increase EPF funding for local farmland protection, regional farmland planning, and land trust capacity

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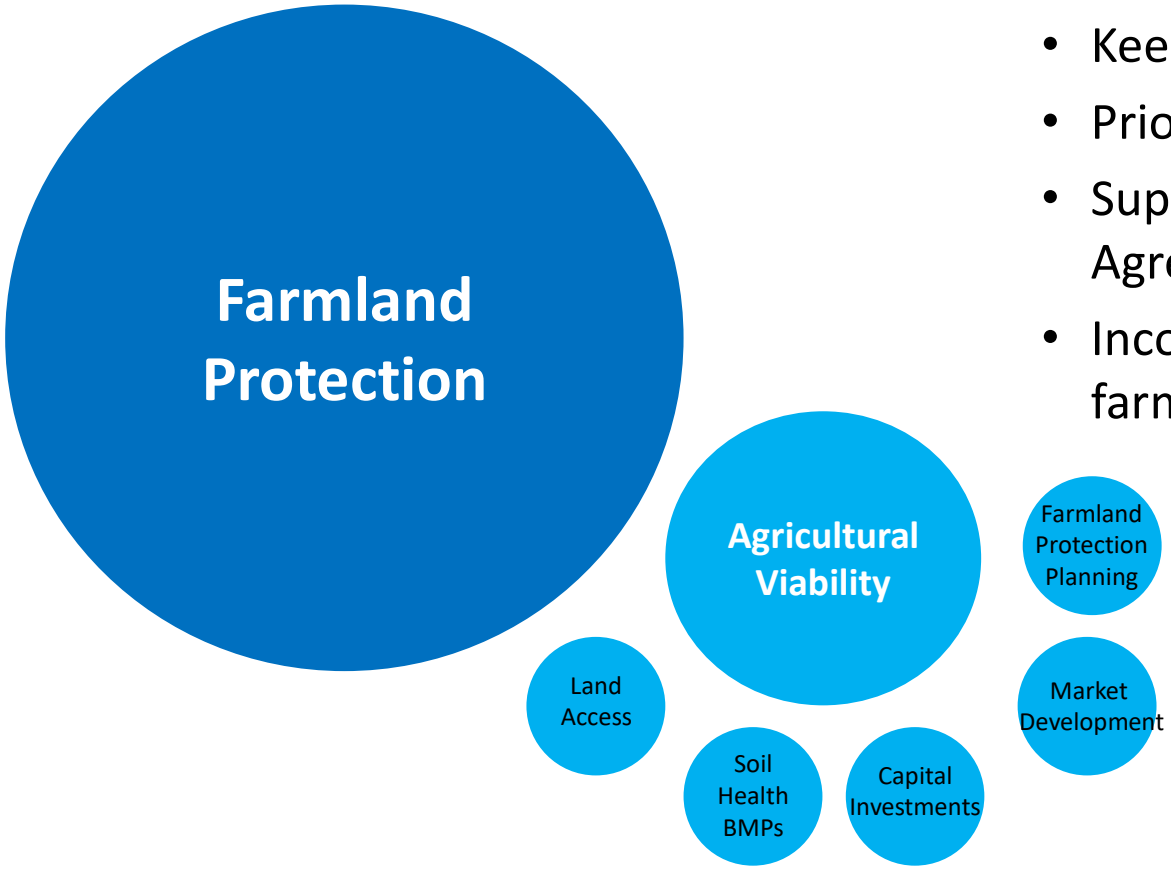
Recommended Use of Mitigation Funds



- Keep mitigation funds as local as possible
- Prioritize farmland protection (FPIG)
- Support agricultural enhancement via Host Agreements, PILOTs, IDAs, REDCs
- Incorporate solar development potential into farmland appraisal valuation (PDR)

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Photos: Silicon Ranch, AFT, Jacks Solar Garden

Support Dual Use and Co-Utilization

- Support research on dual use & demonstration projects (proof of concept)
- Establish and ensure best practices (standards)
- Design and implement market mechanisms to encourage broader use of dual use; invest in and reward innovation (incentives)
- Aggregate and centralize site performance information from projects coupling agricultural activities with solar generation (research)

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Q + A

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