

BLUEWAVE

February 2, 2021

Dear Northfield Community,

It is often said in the solar industry that you are only as good as your last project. Since the beginning of solar in Massachusetts, we at BlueWave have taken this to heart by constantly transforming the way solar is developed and integrated into the communities where we work. As a lifelong advocate for environmental protection, former Massachusetts Secretary of the Environment and New England EPA Director, I founded [BlueWave](#) to drive environmental and social good, pioneer development approaches that allow solar to clean up polluted lands, deliver energy savings to communities, bolster local governments and support struggling farms. I am proud that BlueWave has successfully pursued that mission for nearly a decade now.

These [values](#), reflected in our certification as a [B-Corp](#), have been core to BlueWave from the start and are often only possible because of the farmers we work with. Our farmer partners have taught us so much about the many challenges of modern farming in Massachusetts, from unreliable power sources and old infrastructure to low commodity prices and the difficulty of competing with huge farms outside of the Northeast. Through this learning process, we have seen how well-positioned solar projects can help solve many of these exact problems. We have partnered with farmers to innovate new methods of solar development throughout the Commonwealth, including a farm down the road in Hadley where we helped a farmer keep his land by using part of his field for an unique new [community solar](#) development in 2013. In the years and projects since, we have seen for ourselves that solar can make positive impacts in rural towns when farmers lead the way.

At BlueWave, we believe wholeheartedly that the future of solar development is dual use solar plus agriculture. The challenges facing the agricultural community today are too daunting to tackle in isolation, but we can help by re-thinking how solar interacts with the land to layer on even more benefits to the farmer and the surrounding community. By elevating and spreading out panels to create space for farmers and their equipment, using minimally-invasive installation practices for the posts, and allowing the land directly underneath and surrounding the solar array to stay in agricultural production, dual use allows farmers to manage the land according to their values. Far from destroying farmland, dual use gives farmers a direct opportunity to shape the vision, plan, and outcome of solar projects while ushering in the next chapter of land management, including sustainable design and regenerative farming techniques to build healthy soil, ecology, and agricultural vitality.

Over the past four years, BlueWave has become an established leader in dual use by developing some of the first commercial dual use projects in the Commonwealth. From our pilot project on [Knowlton Farms](#) in Grafton, MA, to collaborating on dual use research conducted by the University of Massachusetts on crops like cranberries and blueberries, we have used our platform to proactively push the solar industry towards a healthier relationship to the land we work so closely with. Our long-standing relationships with the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture (MDAR) and the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) helped us shape solar policies that put farming and environmental

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stewardship at the center of industry business models. Our long-term partnerships with agricultural organizations, agencies, and companies also ensure healthy scrutiny that drives improvements across the solar industry.

This expertise in dual use, as well as our long-standing commitment to responsible development practices, is what interested the L'Etoile family in BlueWave. We are extremely grateful to be working with a family who shares our holistic view and is equally excited by it – keeping their land in agriculture by incorporating clean energy into their long-term vision for the farm, the community, and the climate. The vision for the project includes a holistic grazing operation, run by Jesse Robertson-DuBois of Finicky Farm, within the footprint of the solar arrays. The grazing operation gives this project the opportunity to provide the community of Northfield with healthy, sustainable local protein and environmentally friendly maintenance of the solar arrays while building healthy soil and ecology. The project will also bring Four Star Farms and its surrounding neighbors three-phase power, allowing the farm to upgrade from outdated diesel equipment, and other local businesses and households to benefit from more reliable power.

As a development company, we understand that our projects introduce change to communities and we are committed to engaging in a respectful, open dialogue with all stakeholders throughout the development process. We particularly invite engagement from the neighbors of the project and look forward addressing any concerns. We at BlueWave are excited about the prospects of this project, and we look forward to working with the Northfield community to build another innovative win for the environment and agricultural community. Together, we can provide Northfield with local food, jobs and tax revenue, all while conserving farmland and improving infrastructure.

Very best regards,

John P. DeVillars
Founder and Chairman
BlueWave Solar