



# Is solar power good for fruit trees

Are solar panels good for fruit trees?

A winemaker in France has installed solar panels around grape vines. On a farm in southern Italy, solar panels offer valuable shade to fruit trees. Engineers in the Netherlands are testing the suitability of raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, black currants and blackberries at solar sites.

Can solar panels shade fruit trees in commercial orchards?

In Victoria's Goulburn Valley, researchers are exploring the potential benefits of using solar panels in commercial orchards to shade fruit. Agriculture Victoria's Smart Farm in Tatura is running an agrivoltaic project where pear trees are grown under solar panels. This is the first time solar has been trialled in an Australian orchard.

Are solar panels good for crops?

Jordan Macknick at the Energy Department's National Renewable Energy Lab describes the benefits of bringing solar panels to farms. In many cases, the green crops may actually benefit from the panels' shade. Researchers are studying how all of these factors affect the health of crops.

Are there sunburned fruit trees under the solar panels?

"During the previous season, we found there was no sunburn under the panels compared to the control. However, we did find a slight reduction in fruit size and colour development." Dr Goodwin said the project had generated some interest from local growers, however, the infrastructure was still too costly.

Can pear trees be grown under solar panels?

Agriculture Victoria's Smart Farm in Tatura is running an agrivoltaic project where pear trees are grown under solar panels. This is the first time solar has been trialled in an Australian orchard. (ABC Rural: Annie Brown) The \$500,000 project is the only solar orchard in Australia and has been running for two seasons.

Are solar panels a good idea for farmers?

Emerging data, he says, show that even as the solar panels go in overhead, farmers must protect the natural processes that help plants grow. "That can do a lot of good," he says. "Otherwise, it's really hard to cheat nature." Agrivoltaics merges agriculture with photovoltaic panels, which generate electricity from sunlight.

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On a farm in southern Italy, solar panels offer valuable shade to fruit trees. Engineers in the Netherlands are testing the suitability of raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, black currants and blackberries at solar sites.

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