Renewable Energy Infrastructure on Livestock Properties – Solar Panels and Wind Turbines

ISC FACTSHEET

Issued by Integrity Systems Company (ISC), a subsidiary of Meat & Livestock Australia

Overview

As Australia increases its rate of renewable energy generation, infrastructure such as solar panels and wind turbines is becoming increasingly common across Australia's agricultural landscape.

Growing numbers of Australian livestock producers have had renewable energy infrastructure built on their properties or are considering doing so. Livestock producers who are considering establishing renewable energy generation on their property need to consider how this activity will interact with their land and farm business.

The Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program is Australia's on-farm assurance program that underpins food safety, biosecurity and market access for Australian red meat. Most Australian meat processors and retailers require it.

There are seven key requirements which producers must meet to gain LPA accreditation.

One of these requirements focuses on a 'Property Risk Assessment'. This requires a producer to identify and consider the risk associated with livestock exposure to persistent chemicals, pathogens from recycled water, or physical infrastructure.

This includes access to renewable energy infrastructure, including solar panels and wind turbines, particularly as they degrade with age. These risks and any required mitigations must be identified and considered in the Property Risk Assessment.

This factsheet is designed to guide decision making around renewable energy infrastructure and livestock production, particularly how this relates to LPA accreditation, the key red meat industry assurance program.

Renewable energy and LPA

- Solar panels and wind turbines are regular features in rural areas, often coexisting with livestock operations.
- The LPA program **does not** prohibit having renewable energy infrastructure e.g., transmission lines, solar panels, wind turbines, on accredited properties.
- There is no requirement to declare renewable energy infrastructure on the National Vendor Declaration (NVD or eNVD) when consigning livestock.
- LPA-accredited producers must consider the risks associated with infrastructure degradation and end-of-life management, maintenance, and animal welfare when grazing.
- Biosecurity plans also need to consider risks during the build process and maintenance access by visitors.

LPA Property Risk Assessment

- LPA Property Risk Assessment guidance prompts producers to consider all infrastructure on-farm which can include solar panels and wind turbines.
- LPA has always required producers to:
- Identify infrastructure on-farm.
- Consider the potential contamination or physical risks of all on-farm infrastructure.
- Maintain risk management practices aligned with current and emerging issues which could be as simple as monitoring.

Key actions for producers

- Include renewable energy infrastructure located on-farm in their LPA Property Risk Assessment.
- Monitor the condition of this infrastructure and consult developers about decommissioning obligations.
- Be aware of end-of-life considerations of aging renewable energy infrastructure.
- Ensure any livestock grazing around renewable infrastructure have access to adequate water and pasture and are not at risk of being injured or trapped underneath solar panels.
- Ensure their LPA Biosecurity Plan addresses risks associated with visitors to the property and the use of equipment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Livestock Production Assurance Property Risk Assessment – ISC factsheet

Livestock Production Assurance Property Risk Assessment – ISC webpage

Do renewable energy technologies impact farm land? – Clean Energy Council Fact Check

Renewable Energy Landholder Toolkit - Queensland Farmers' Federation

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