

Considering a renewable energy system?

If approached by a renewable energy salesperson, there are six key questions you should ask.

1. Can a renewable energy system be connected to your existing grid supply?
2. Will they come to your farm site to measure the voltage and line resistance during preliminary investigations?
3. For solar systems, will they conduct a site specific survey including taking into consideration shading?
4. Will they design a system to match your energy use profile? Knowing your real time energy use is crucial. It will impact on the size of the system you should install and your return on investment.
5. What is the value of the feed-in tariff?
6. Have they included all costs including installation and connection to the grid?

For more information, download Dairy Australia's fact sheet, '[Is renewable energy right for my farm?](#)'.

Looking for independent advice?

The Alternative Technology Association offers an independent advice service for \$225/hour ata.org.au/what-we-do/advice-services. The consultation covers issues such as:

- › what size and system design will optimise system performance and maximise economics
- › how to integrate solar with other major loads (e.g. hot water, heating and cooling)
- › how to design for off grid
- › how to source and compare quotes?

For more information please visit ata.org.au/ata-energy-consult

“Will they come to your farm site to measure the voltage and line resistance during preliminary investigations?”

Buying a photo voltaic solar system?¹

- › Have you obtained at least three supplier quotes for the same size system?
- › Do the quotes include details on the type and quality of solar panels and inverter?

The website Solar Quotes, solarquotes.com.au, provides a free quote service from accredited installers.

- › Does your chosen solar retailer and installer have Clean Energy Council Approved Solar Retail Accreditation?

See: solaraccreditation.com.au/retailers/approved-solar-retailers

- › If installing batteries, does your installer have grid-connect installation accreditation with battery endorsement or grid connection installation accreditation plus stand-alone accreditation?

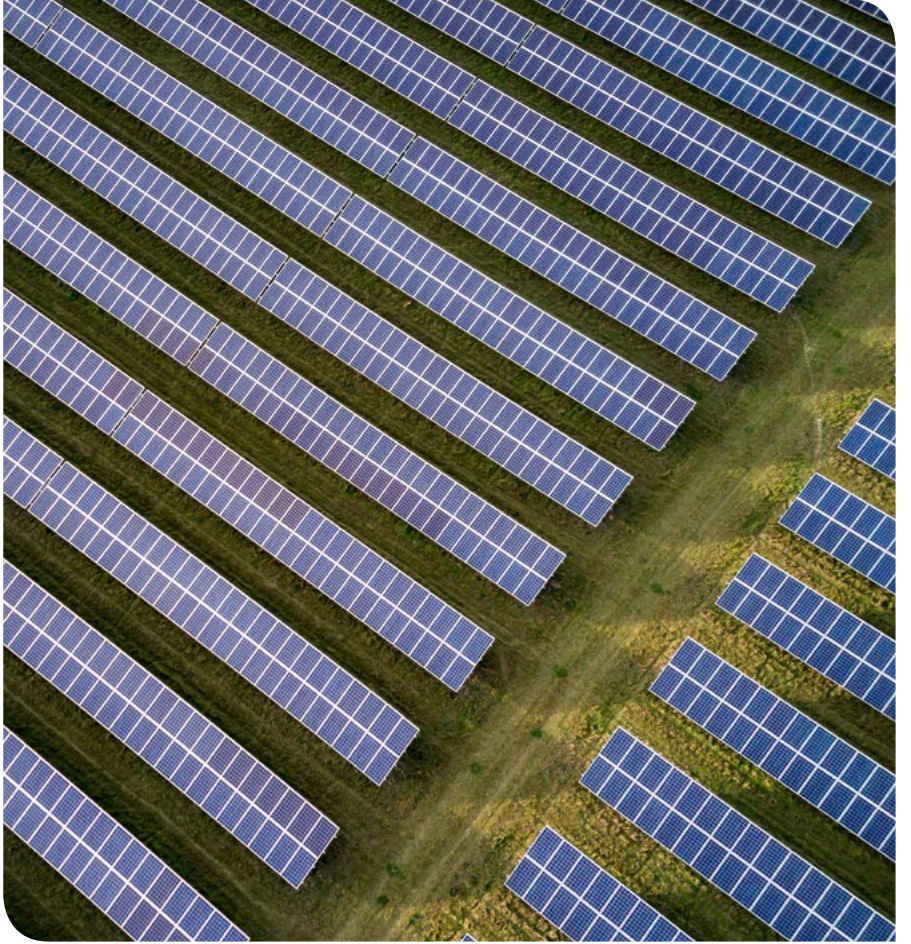
See: solaraccreditation.com.au/consumers/find-an-installer

- › Have you discussed possible grid connections with your energy supplier? This is essential for systems larger than 5kW.
- › Have you checked the costs of grid connection? Costs can vary depending on your location, distributor and retailer. You may need to engage an energy professional to negotiate the grid connection process.

¹The information in this fact sheet is adapted from the Alternative Technology Association booklet, Solar Electricity: Plan your own solar electricity system, November 2017.



Points to consider when comparing PV panels

- › Do the panels have Clean Energy Council approval?
 - › What are the brand and type of solar panels and where are they made?
 - › Are the solar panels and inverter made by the brand name company or are they made by a different manufacturer and re-labelled?
 - › How many panels are required for a selected kW system and what size is each panel (in watts)?
 - › What is the average daily and yearly kWh production for this system?
 - › Does the inverter have a larger capacity than the panels or are they size matched?
 - › How long is the inverter likely to last?
 - › What is the warranty on: panels? inverter? mounting frame? workmanship?
 - › What is the total purchase price for the selected kW system?
 - › What are the additional costs on top of the system purchase price, for example, grid connection costs?
 - › Does someone inspect the property first to check the site is appropriate and whether extra installation costs might apply?
 - › For how long have the solar panel and inverter brand name companies been selling these products?
 - › What is the after sales service for enquiries and trouble shooting and warranty issues?
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- › How long has the installer been installing solar voltaic batteries?
 - › Who is responsible for organising metering and switchboard modification, including the inspection and paperwork?

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