

RISING SUN: Empowering Progress Through Sustainable Energy

STEPHEN JORDAN • Jordan Energy

Rising energy costs continue to put pressure on mushroom growers, where climate control, ventilation, and consistent production cycles make power a non-negotiable expense. For many operations, energy is one of the few costs that can fluctuate significantly year to year, making long-term planning increasingly difficult.

Solar has often been part of the broader conversation around energy independence, but within the mushroom industry, interest has been cautious at best. A past negative experience at a farm left a lasting impression, reinforcing concerns about reliability, return on investment, and whether solar solutions can truly align with the unique demands of controlled-environment agriculture.

At the same time, the economics around energy are shifting. Incentives, grant opportunities, and storage technologies have evolved, prompting some in agriculture to take a second look—particularly when solutions are tailored to the realities of farm operations rather than imposed on them.

That context makes the American Mushroom Institute's newest member, Jordan Energy & Food Enterprises, a noteworthy addition. The family-owned company has spent the past 17 years developing solar and storage projects specifically for farms, with

an emphasis on long-term viability and practical integration. Their work across 22 states—and partnerships with organizations such as Dairy Farmers of America, American Farmland Trust, and state Farm Bureaus—reflects a model built around collaboration rather than one-size-fits-all deployment.

One distinguishing aspect of their approach is a focus on securing available grants and tax credits, helping offset upfront costs that have historically been a barrier for growers. With the current 30 percent federal tax credit scheduled to phase out at the end of 2027, the timing of these conversations may be increasingly relevant for farms evaluating future energy strategies.

Equally important is how these projects are positioned. Rather than viewing farmland as an opportunity for large-scale energy production, Jordan Energy emphasizes working within existing agricultural operations—supporting the farm first, not replacing it. For an industry that depends on both land stewardship and operational efficiency, that distinction matters.

As energy costs continue to rise, mushroom growers may find themselves revisiting options that previously felt out of reach or misaligned. Whether solar becomes part of that solution will depend, as always, on trust, economics, and the ability to meet the specific needs of the farm. 🍄

With substantial grant assistance, Jordan Energy often helps reduce payback periods to as little as one to three years, Bill explained. Jordan Energy also provides growers with detailed 25-year cash flow projections, which allows customers to understand not just upfront savings but the generational value of being energy independent.

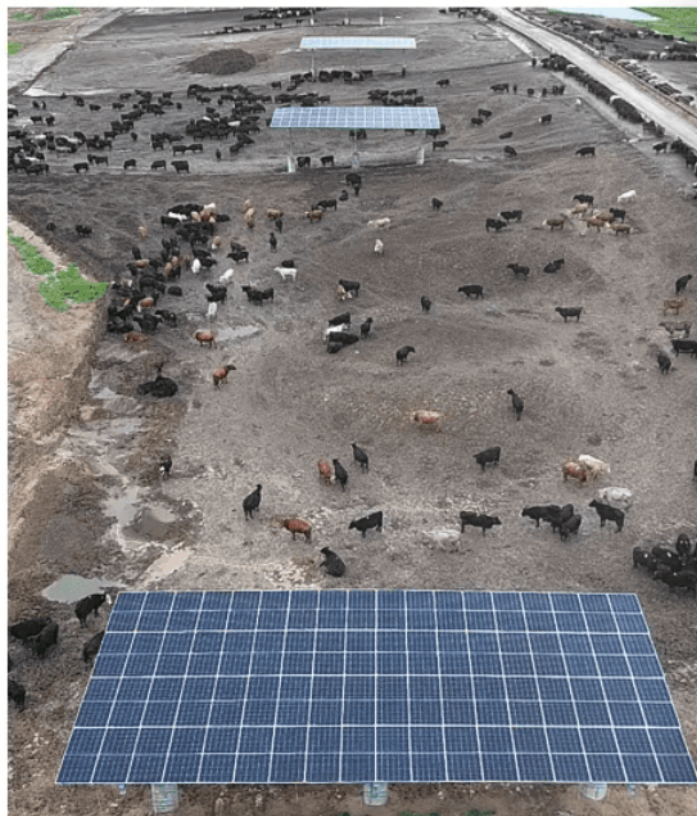
“Farmers have worked with the sun longer than anyone else in our society, and at the end of the day, we want more of the energy dollars in the pockets of the farmers who have been working with the sun and growing food their whole lives,” Bill said.

Like many Western Growers members, Jordan Energy itself is a family business, creating a shared understanding with customers whose livelihoods often depend on preserving family legacies.

Bill often reflects on his own family’s farming ties, particularly the example set by his uncles, who farmed lettuce and cantaloupe in the Imperial Valley. Watching multi-generational farming operations shaped his vision not only for business success but for preserving the integrity of family agriculture.

“My Uncle Joe and my Uncle Tony (Colace) were my heroes,” Bill said. “When I’m 70, I want to be in that passenger seat, just like my uncle was with his son, heading out to the fields. What a gift it is to work with family, with Bernie and my son Stephen.”

For growers facing rising costs and uncertain futures, Jordan Energy offers more than lower electric bills. It offers a pathway to energy independence powered by the sun. *P*



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