On May 15, 2022, the latest revision of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Guideline Regarding the Definition of Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Units (Guideline) for the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program took effect. The Guideline supplements the SMART Program regulations (225 CMR 20.000), provides guidance on how a Solar Tariff Generation Unit (STGU) may qualify as an Agricultural Solar Tariff Generation Unit (ASTGU) under the SMART Program, and establishes compliance requirements for ASTGUs.

In general, ASTGUs are STGUs located either on land that is currently being used for agriculture or land that has been classified as Important Agricultural Farmland under 225 CMR 20.02 that allows the continued use of the land for agriculture. The SMART Program has a goal of reaching 80 megawatts (MW)AC capacity of ASTGU systems. ASTGUs receive adder value under the SMART Program.
The revised Guideline significantly increases the maximum AC rated capacity of an ASTGU to 5 MW from 2 MW. Further, the Guideline sets a DC to AC capacity ratio of 2:1 and caps projects to a DC capacity of 7.5 MW.

The Guideline also establishes criteria for newly created farmland to be deemed eligible farmland on which an ASTGU could be located. Specifically, newly created farmland is eligible if it has established agricultural production before the date of the associated application to the SMART Program. However, newly created farmland that is the result of clearing or conversion of forest land is not eligible.

The Guideline also establishes a requirement for ASTGUs to submit annual agricultural productivity reports. These reports are required to show that the ASTGU continues to engage in commercial agriculture to retain and use the land primarily and directly for agricultural purposes. In the event of reduced crop yields, waivers may be granted for good cause. If an ASTGU fails to comply with the reporting requirement, then it may lose its eligibility for the ASTGU adder for one or more years.

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