

Easy-To-Install Solar “Pods”

The “Solar Pod” system is designed to make the use of solar power easy. Completely self-contained multiple pods can be set up in series to produce as much energy as desired. Just plug them into each other. Designer and manufacturer Mouli Vaidyanathan says the units cost 30 to 70 percent less than comparable output panels.

“Standard solar arrays cost more because they are individually designed and installed,” he says. “Our system comes complete with panels, inverters, a wiring harness and a custom mounting rack. It also performs 15 to 20 percent better than other systems.”

The 4-panel Solar Pod systems require a 14 by 6-ft. ground space. They also can be mounted to a roof with a new mounting system for gabled roofs that hangs over the roof peak. “Our new design will reduce roof penetrations by 80 to 90 percent and, in some cases, eliminate them completely.”

Solar Pod systems are available for direct connection to the electrical grid or for off-grid installation. Although units are relatively simple to assemble, Vaidyanathan says an electrician may be required to connect the

socket and wiring to the home’s circuit box. If a 240/20A outlet is available, installation is even easier. The local power company needs to provide a 2-way meter if excess power is to be sold back to the company.

Solar Pods for grid connection are priced at about \$3,300 each. Off grid, stand-alone systems with batteries are priced at \$5,000. Each 4-panel unit can generate from 1,200 kWh to 2,000 kWh a year depending on available sun.

“A Solar Pod in Minnesota can produce around 1,300 kWh a year, while one in Arizona will produce around 2,000 kWh,” he says. “Depending on the cost of local electricity, you can save \$200 to \$300 each year for a payback of 8 to 10 years.”

Vaidyanathan points out that solar tax credits reduce the cost by 30 percent. Farms and other businesses can claim additional credits that reduce payback even more.

Vaidyanathan suggests visiting his website or calling him to discuss installation needs. He offers a 25-year warranty and suggests maintenance is very limited.

“I’ve had mine installed for 4 years, and



Self-contained “Solar Pods” simply plug together in series to produce as much energy as needed, or to expand the system later.



“No roof penetration” solar system (Solar Pod™ Crown).

the only maintenance has been looking at it,” says Vaidyanathan.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mouli Engineering, Inc., 655 Lexie Court, Eagan, Minn. 55123 (ph 612 424-5176; mouli@mouliengg.com; www.mysolarpod.com).

Reader Inquiry No. 43

Service Offers Stress-Free Leasing Of Hunting Land

Grain and cattle farmers have found another source of income for their land: renting to hunters through Base Camp Leasing.

“Hunters are desperate for good places to hunt, while landowners are looking for additional income,” said Steve Meng, owner of Base Camp Leasing. Base Camp has agents in 22 states who will meet with landowners and inspect the land to access the value of the land to hunters. “Most properties are a minimum of 40 acres, ideally 80 percent woods and 20 percent tillable, but each one is different,” said Meng. “We are always looking for new properties. Eighty-five percent (of available land) is leased out, and we are happy with that. A lot of them get leased the day they come out.”

Base Camp’s Leasing Agents are hunters and have become expert at determining what hunters are willing to pay to lease a property. Some properties get leased within 5 minutes of being released and others can take a few weeks or longer. Hunters are encouraged to introduce themselves and go over guidelines with the landowner before embarking on a hunting trip.

“A lot of our landowners are farmers. Some are absentee landowners as farms are handed down to kids who don’t work

the land. The landowners want to know who’s on their land and don’t want people knocking on their door during harvest,” Meng said. “The majority of landowners stick with us. Hunters move around more, which is expected as they look for different opportunities. Some prefer to manage a property over time.” Meng reported that his website BaseCampLeasing.com attracts 39,000 visitors per month to the website, and his email list is 34,000 hunters looking for opportunities – and willing to pay for them. Leases in the Midwest usually go for \$10 to \$30 per acre.

One of the advantages that Base Camp Leasing hears about from landowners is that they don’t have to deal with friends and neighbors who want to hunt the land and they don’t have to deal with the paperwork. Base Camp makes it easy for the landowner. “We have built a strong demand base through our website so we can get it leased for a premium price and we require payment up front. Because we deal with a lot of absentee landowners who have inherited the property and live out of state, knowing who is hunting the property can make a landowner feel more secure. Plus our hunters can help keep an eye on the place during hunting season,” said Meng.



Landowners like Base Camp Leasing’s service because it saves the hassle of paperwork, includes liability insurance, and the income helps pay taxes. The business provides insurance for landowners and hunters with a \$3 million liability certificate.

Base Camp Leasing does business in 22 states. The map can be viewed on the website: www.BaseCampLeasing.com. Landowners are invited to call for a free information packet that lays out the process. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Base Camp Leasing, 10412 Allisonville Road Suite 101, Fishers, IN 46038. Call: 866-309-1507. www.BaseCampLeasing.com, info@basecampleasing.com

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