

Industrial Wind Projects Clash with Real Farming

Farmers, the backbone of the American economy, have become a frequent target of industrial wind energy developers. The wind speculators realize the hardship usually endured by hard-working farmers, and often try to exploit that by presenting a one-sided case claiming a farmer can earn big bucks, with little or no effort or downside.

This insightful [farmer says](#) that legislators are being fooled by easy money promises: "There is not enough critical thinking skills or common sense being used when big money energy companies enter rural communities". [Note that the wind developer involved with this controversy is Apex, the same developer for [Timbermill](#).]

This is consistent with what other farmers have written. This one says: [Four Reasons We Will Not Sign a Wind Lease](#). Then there is this: "[Farmer Regrets Signing Wind Turbine Lease](#)". This Wisconsin farmer came to realize that he had effectively signed away control of his own property, and now says that it is his [biggest regret](#). This farmer laments signing a wind lease, saying "[What Have I Done?](#)" An Illinois farmer says the extra income is [not worth the problems that have resulted](#).

Clearly Buyer Beware applies here! Below is a sample of studies and reports that have concluded that there will likely be a financial loss to farmers who either host industrial turbines, or (in some cases) when the turbines are even within 15± miles of their farm:

- 1 - [Economic Importance of Bats in Agriculture](#).
[Economic Loss data for selected North Carolina Counties](#).
- 2 - [Wind Turbines Can Reduce Crop Growth](#).
- 3 - [Simulating impacts of wind farms on local hydro-meteorology](#).
- 4 - [How Higher Energy Prices Will Affect U.S. Agricultural Production](#).
- 5 - [Analysis of Environmental Impacts of Large Wind Projects](#).
- 6 - [The Incompatibility of Wind Turbines and Crop Farming](#).
- 7 - [For Crop-Dusters, Turbines Pose a Hidden and Growing Danger](#).
- 8 - [Crop dusters worried about wind farm impact](#).
- 9 - [Agriculture and Wind Development are Incompatible](#).
- 10-[Modern Wind Turbines Generate Dangerous Dirty Electricity](#).

It's likely that most farmers are not familiar with these studies and reports, as they are not only highly technical, but are in a very specialized area.

Wind leases with farmers have been called among the most restrictive contracts in the country. Since they are written by the wind developer's attorneys, it's not surprising that they are extremely one-sided. **Here's an outline of over forty legal and financial concerns that should be given a LOT of thought.** Independent observers have concluded that these contracts effectively change the farmer's legal position from being a [fee simple](#) owner, to that of a caretaker.

Due to the severe complications that can result from these lopsided contracts, there have been many cautionary advisories (e.g. from [farm agencies](#), [lawyers](#), [academics](#), etc.). One attorney [said](#) the wind lease: “was the most one-sided, unconscionable, overreaching contract I had ever examined in my entire 54 years of law practice!”

If you only have time to read one, please see “[Wind Energy Production: Legal Issues and Related Liability Concerns for Landowners](#).” This is written by Dr. Roger McEowen, a renowned scholar at the *Iowa Center for Agricultural Law and Taxation*... The fact that there are so many of these reports is a testament to the complexity and severity of the wind lease contracts – which can be over 35 pages of legalese.

Note also that the wind developer who signs the Lease will likely soon be gone (after they have skimmed the profits), so the farmer will end up dealing with not only a stranger, but a LLC with little or no assets. In other words, there will be little recourse for the farmer if something goes wrong – which over 20± years may well happen.

Yet another consideration is the paltry amount most landowners are paid. This *Penn State College of Agricultural Resources News Release* says: “[Don’t give it all away for crumbs from the table](#).” As a point of reference, each 2.5 MW turbine could make \$500,000± a year in profits to the developer. Why should the farmer – a key ingredient in the whole process – get such an insultingly low amount?

Even if a farmer says that they can accept all the liabilities mentioned so far, what about the health consequences to his own family? [Numerous studies](#) from independent experts have identified a variety of potential health risks for those living within a mile of industrial wind turbines. This Leaseholder now [says](#) they would not do it again.

Watch these short videos ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), and [4](#)), which are a reenactment of a farmer being solicited by a fast-talking wind energy salesman. In these films the farmer isn’t fooled by the slick salesperson, and asks several insightful questions. “[Mr. Farmer, Please Read](#)” also makes some excellent points.

[Consider this](#): 23 landowners who host wind turbines on their property have filed suit against two different wind developers, claiming that the developers “carelessly and negligently failed to adequately disclose the true nature and effects that the wind turbines would have on the community, including the plaintiffs’ homes.”

[This](#) and [this](#) both sum up the situation nicely: *wind energy is a completely artificial idea, where there is zero scientific proof that it has any **Net Societal Benefit***. There is no free lunch, so farmers should be **extremely** cautious about these solicitations.