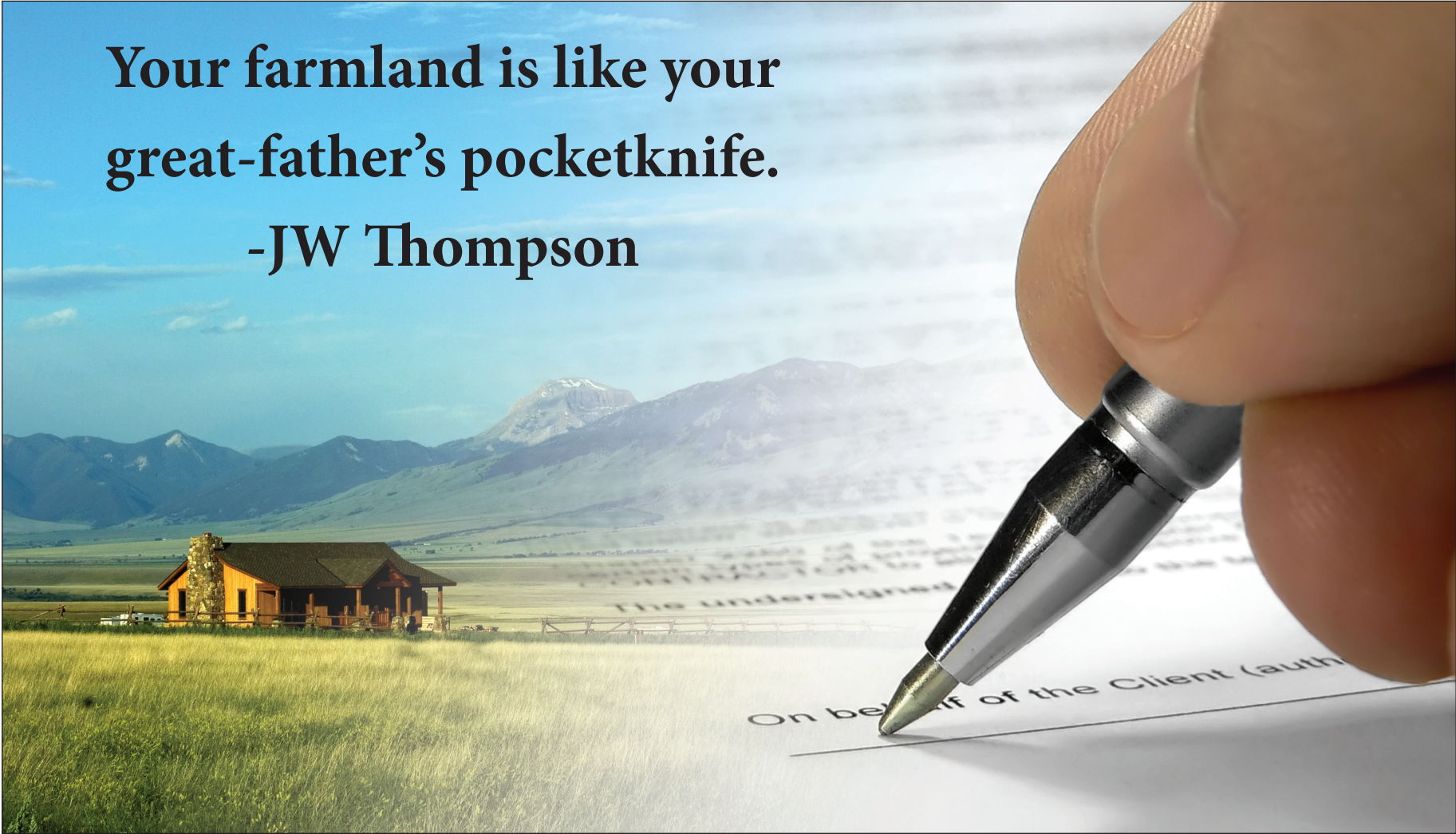


Farmland Is for Farming, Not Renewable Energy Experiments

Your farmland is like your great-father’s pocketknife.
-JW Thompson



Your farmland is like your great-father’s pocketknife. It’s reliable, versatile, and built to last. It’s been passed down, cared for, and always there when you need it. Now imagine someone walks up and says, “Let’s trade that knife for a shiny gadget that might work for a few years.” Sounds tempting, but is it worth it? Spoiler alert: It’s not.

When developers knock on your door with promises of lease payments for solar panels or wind turbines, it might seem like a good deal. But the truth is, sacrificing farmland for renewable energy developments brings long-term consequences that can disrupt your legacy, your livelihood, and your community. Let’s dig into why farmland should stay farmland

Is Farmland Worth More Than a Short-Term Lease?

Farmland isn’t just dirt—it’s your family’s story, your passion, your livelihood. It’s the field where your grandpa taught you how to plow, the rows where your kids learned the value of hard work, and the resource that feeds families across America. Handing it over for renewable energy developments is like trading in a steady workhorse for a flashy show pony. Sure, it looks good for a while, but it doesn’t pull its weight in the long run.

Here’s the reality: solar panels and wind turbines **might** operate for 10, 20 or maybe if you are lucky enough 30 years, but the damage they leave behind—compacted soil, buried infrastructure, and lost productivity—can last for generations. Perhaps even centuries. Future farmers deserve to inherit land they can work, not land that’s been paved over in the name of “progress.”

Stewardship Means Protecting What’s Irreplaceable

As a farmer, you’re not just growing crops—you’re a steward of the land. You’re like the caretaker of a family heirloom, making sure it’s in better shape for the next generation. Solar panels and wind farms don’t respect that mission. They treat your land like a short-term rental, leaving behind compacted soil, torn-up topsoil, and infrastructure that’s harder to remove than an old tree stump.

Farmland is finite. You can’t make more of it, and once it’s turned into an industrial site, it’s nearly impossible to bring back. Renewable energy generation development can coexist with traditional energy generation methods, just not on (or in) fields that feed people. After all, you can’t plant corn on concrete.

Renewable Energy Projects Invite Rural Sprawl

Here’s something most developers don’t tell you: once your farmland is zoned for renewable energy, it’s no longer just farmland—it’s commercial or industrial land use. And with that change comes rural sprawl.

Think about it: industries that support renewable energy—like maintenance facilities, equipment storage, and power infrastructure—will want to set up shop nearby. And once the door is open, other businesses follow, hoping to cash in on the new activity. Before you know it, that quiet stretch of farmland is surrounded by buildings, traffic, and noise.

Your fields become less about farming and more about fitting into a commercial landscape. The charm of rural life—the open spaces, the small-town character, the peace and quiet—gets replaced by something that looks more like the outskirts of a city.

Farmers Are the Backbone of Small Business

Here’s a fact that developers often ignore: farmers aren’t just stewards of the land—they’re small business owners. In fact, most farms are multi-million-dollar operations that fuel local economies. When farmland is taken out of production for renewables, the ripple effects hit the entire community.

Think about your local suppliers, equipment dealers, co-ops, and processors. They all depend on productive farmland to thrive. A field of solar panels might generate electricity, but it doesn’t create jobs for your neighbors or put money into your community like farming does. Your land isn’t just your livelihood—it’s the economic engine that keeps your town running.

Heritage Is About More Than Dollars

Developers love to pitch their leases as easy money, but let’s not lose sight of what farmland really represents. It’s more than an income source—it’s your heritage, it’s your legacy! It’s the same land your family worked to build a future, the same fields you want to pass on to your kids and grandkids.

When the turbines stop spinning and the solar panels lose their shine, what’s left? A field that’s been taken out of farming for decades and a legacy that’s been interrupted. Farmland isn’t just a paycheck—it’s a promise to future generations. Don’t trade that promise for something that doesn’t stand the test of time.

Farmland Feeds People—Solar Panels Don’t

At the end of the day, farmland serves a fundamental purpose: feeding people. It grows food, supports livestock, and sustains families. Solar panels and wind turbines? They don’t grow anything but weeds, dissension, and heartache.

With the world’s population growing, we need every acre of productive farmland we can get. Giving it up for renewable energy developments not only weakens our food supply but makes us more dependent on imports. Are we really going to trade homegrown corn, soybeans, and wheat and potentially replace them with foreign-grown crops because we decided solar panels looked better?

Protecting the Land Protects Our Heritage, Our Legacy, & Our Future

Farmland is more than land—it’s legacy, stewardship, and the backbone of rural America. Trading it for solar panels or wind turbines might seem like progress, but it’s a step backward for farmers, communities, and future generations.

Renewable energy has its place, but that place isn’t on the fertile fields that feed America. Solar panels can go on rooftops, and wind turbines can find other spaces, but farmland should remain farmland. Protect it, preserve it, and pass it on—because what you do with your land today determines what’s left for tomorrow.

After all, you wouldn’t trade a workhorse for a show pony. Let’s keep farmland doing what it does best: growing food, sustaining communities, and honoring the legacy of those who worked it before us.

JW Thompson is a stubbornly determined amateur who helped lead a grassroots movement to stop a utility-scale solar project in northwest Ohio—the first ever denied by the state’s regulatory board. Armed with 30+ years in civil engineering and surveying, an insatiable curiosity, and a knack for irritating his wife, JW spent countless hours researching renewable energy to support his cause. His efforts have since inspired and supported similar opposition groups across Ohio. Although confident in everything he writes, he readily admits he is human and prone to error, strongly encouraging everyone to perform their own due diligence and validate anything in his writing.

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