



**DE<sup>2</sup>**

**Distributed ENERGY**

**Distributed EQUITY**

**Krys Cail, Project Leader  
Stefan Minott, Shad Ryan**

**Presentation for  
Environmental Management Councils Conference  
10/16/15**

**DE<sup>2</sup>**

**Distributed ENERGY**

**Distributed EQUITY**

**Consumer Cooperative**

Responding to the opportunity created  
by the Public Service Commission's  
policy changes through REV  
(Reforming the Energy Vision)

**INSTITUTED** - shared renewable  
energy remote net metering options

# **NEWSFLASH! NY Finalizes Major Initiative to Expand Solar Access**

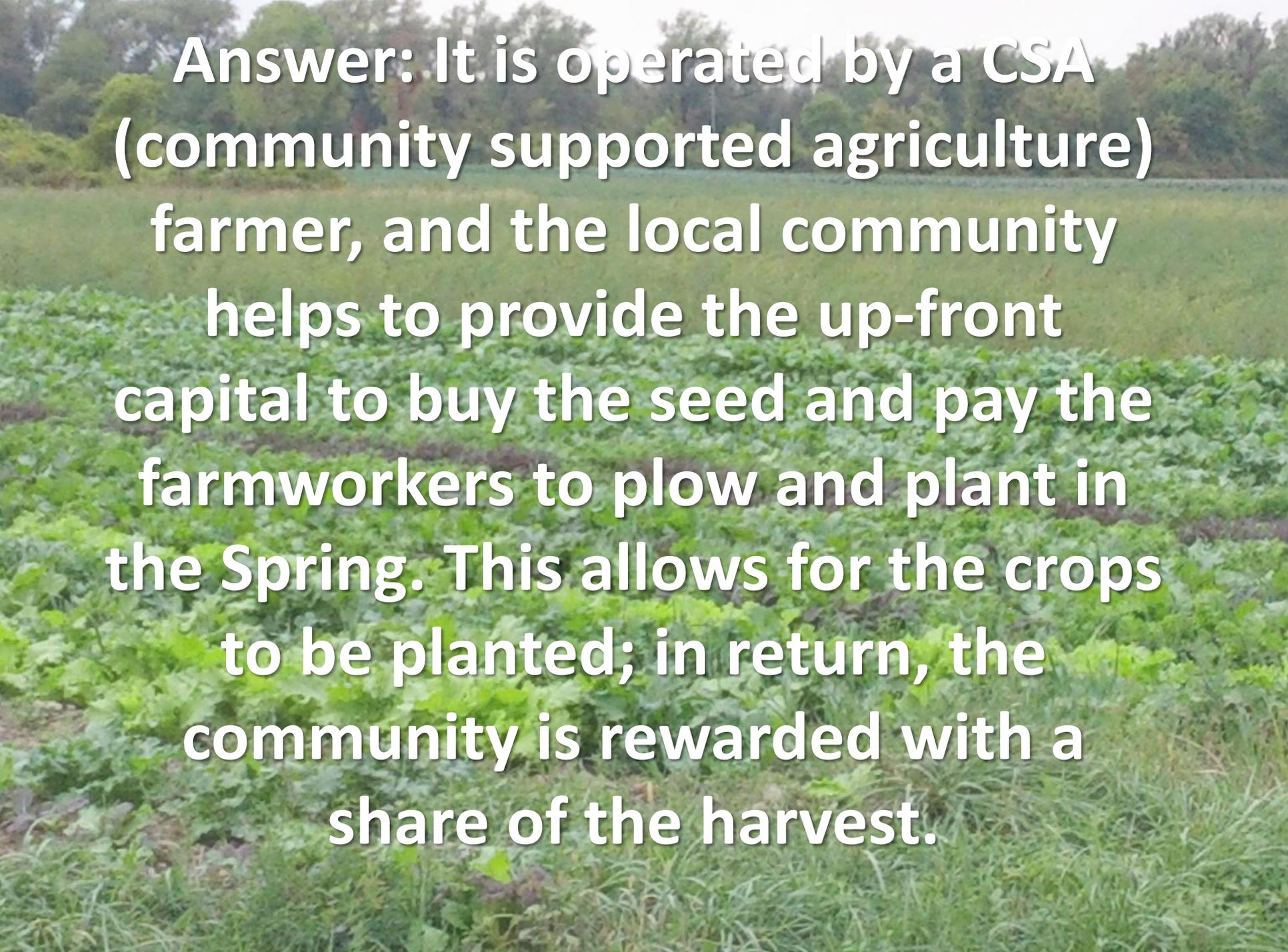
*Press release:*

## ***Diverse Coalition Applauds Cuomo Administration's Commitment to Improving Community Health, Resiliency, Opportunity through Clean Energy***

Albany, NY – July 16, 2015 – Today the New York Public Service Commission (PSC) established an innovative Shared Renewables program that will expand consumer access to local solar, wind and other clean energy resources, particularly among low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. More than 70 local and national organizations join together in applauding state leaders for their commitment to a healthier, more resilient clean energy system that creates opportunities for all New Yorkers to thrive.

**What is unusual about this farm field?**





**Answer: It is operated by a CSA (community supported agriculture) farmer, and the local community helps to provide the up-front capital to buy the seed and pay the farmworkers to plow and plant in the Spring. This allows for the crops to be planted; in return, the community is rewarded with a share of the harvest.**



**Vision: Could that same community  
help plant renewable energy?**



**Vision: Could that same community help plant renewable energy?**

# **Years ago, *Sustainable Agriculture* faced many of the same hurdles faced today by *Sustainable Energy***

- Strong market demand for localized product, but systems organized around centralized production coordinated by virtual monopoly players who crushed independent producers
- Governmental entities that defined sustainable producers as “niche” or “boutique” producers
- Lack of access to capital for investments in the new systems being developed for local foods

**We accelerated the growth of the Sustainable Agriculture sector by employing structures that allowed the CAPITAL of the people who wanted local natural foods to support the increased AVAILABILITY of these products.**

- Community Supported Agriculture farms.
- Food Cooperatives.
- “Slow Money” and other mission-driven investments in the local and regional foodshed.

# Energy visioning may seem harder

PSC

PV

CCA

kWh

REV

FIT

ESCO

You can end up swimming in the  
Alphabet Soup!

It can't be made as simple as ABC

...it is, unfortunately

**A** **Bit**Complex

But, that does not mean you can't remember what we can gain from the experience of the Sustainable Agriculture transformation. It is as easy to remember as....

**D E**

Distributed

Energy Equity

DE<sup>2</sup>

# Already underway.... In some of our neighboring states



**Co-op Power is only one model  
....we here in New York State can  
learn from co-ops in Minnesota,  
Vermont, California and Colorado.**

**MEMBERS SPEND LESS ON:**

- Renewable Energy Systems
- Solar Hot Water Equipment and Installation
- Energy Efficiency Products and Services
- Home Heating Oil and Propane

**AND WE GET MORE OF WHAT WE WANT.**

- Democratic ownership
- Good Green Jobs
- Community Shared Solar
- Renewable Energy

**BECOME A CO-OP POWER MEMBER TODAY**

# At this juncture, we have colliding trends, meeting without organization

- Those aware of climate threat and so opposed to additional extreme fossil fuel development are:
  - working hard to encourage a movement to divest from owning equity in fossil fuel companies... and succeeding in getting institutional investors and citizens interested in divestment.
  - interested in assuring that their own homes, businesses, nonprofit organizations and churches are powered by clean energy sources.
  - looking for ways to jump-start renewable power source industries to replace fossil fuels for everyone.

# **An envisioning/organizing response could be catalytic....**

With appropriate net-metering policy in place, we can create a cascade effect for community investment in DE<sup>2</sup>, as similar successful energy co-op programs are replicated from place to place.

# **“Solarize” projects leave out many people who want solar energy!**

- those who have too shady or crowded a site
- those who do not pay income tax, and so can't make use of income tax credits to make the energy cost-effective
- those who don't have good enough credit to qualify for loans needed to obtain up-front cash for panel installation
- those who rent rather than own their homes
- those who have such low energy costs that the PV installation would not be cost-effective

# **A consumer electric generation co-op can work for everyone!**

By placing distributed generation in a remote location, and sharing it over the grid, we bring these consumers into the group of people who are helping us transition to clean energy. And lower their electric bills, too. The trick in doing this is to **ORGANIZE** the conversation in a way that people can recognize the value of participation fairly easily.

**Can we get a little support for this approach?**

**It requires some planning work, outreach and community development in the early stages.**

# Expensive? No. Atypical? No.

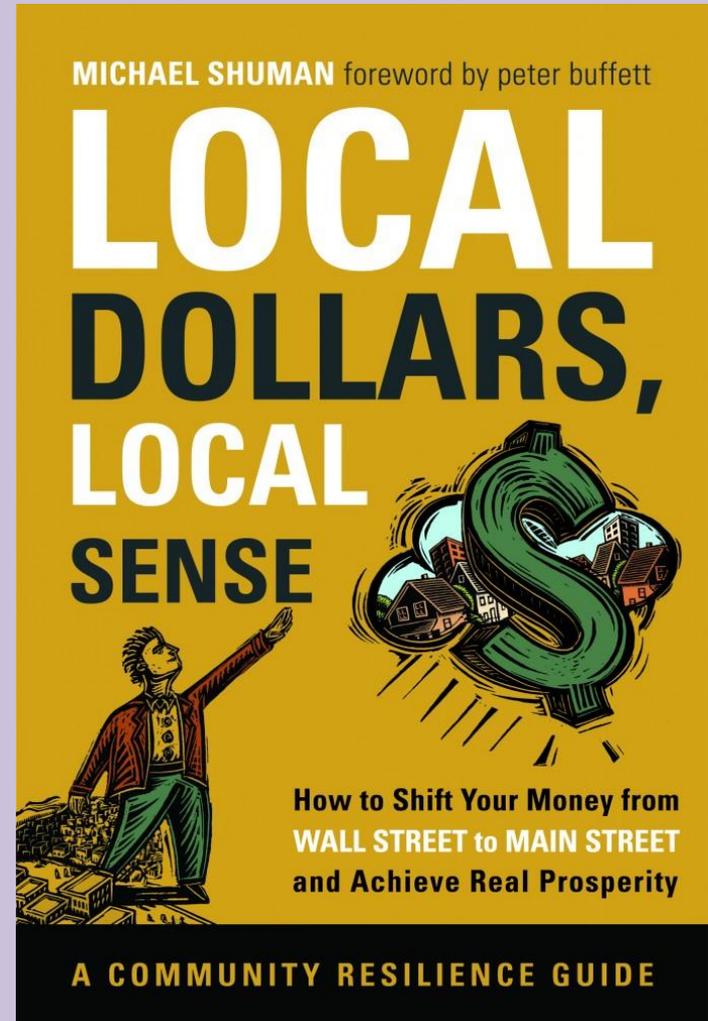
- Nebraska has a system of exclusively community-owned electric power, and one of the very lowest rates for electricity in the nation:
  - 121 publicly-owned utilities
  - 10 cooperatives
  - 30 public power districts
  - 1.8 million people
- Germany was able to accomplish its rapid adoption of renewable energy in part through its Office for Energy Cooperatives, distributing small solar and wind generation cooperatives across rural areas, especially in poorer South Germany.

# **Consumer co-ops have the right incentive structure to drive both rapid technology adoption AND equity**

Consumer cooperatives do not have the maximization of shareholder value as their main incentive. They exist to serve their consumer members' needs. To keep costs as low as possible. These incentives line up with what we need to rapidly decrease energy and gas/oil use. The co-op form also allows for direct member investment in the cooperative, through equity share ownership, nonvoting stock ownership, and member loans to the cooperative.

# The Hidden Power of Cooperatives

- Michael Shuman
- Co-ops can accept member investments even when investors are ordinary people— without a “public offering”
- How to Shift Your Money from WALL ST. to MAIN ST.
- <http://stirtoaction.com/the-hidden-power-of-cooperatives/>





**Vision:**

**DE<sup>2</sup>**

**Ask some questions, offer some help**