

50 years ago, the future of solar energy looked intense

Farming the sun's energy – *Science News*, April 8, 1972



More and more researchers and engineers are start to think that solar conversion will account for a substantial part of the world's future power requirements.... What has altered the environment recently is ... the possibility of putting together massive systems, solar-energy "farms" that would complete with power stations in the megawatt variety and greater.

Update

Solar energy production in the United States ramped up as solar panels endedupbeing lessexpensive to manufacture and more effective at producing electricalpower (*SN: 3/1/08, p. 133*). Since the veryfirst U.S. solar power plant opened in 1982, thousands more haveactually been constructed, taking the nation's solar capability today to more than 100 gigawatts. In 2021, solar energy made up almost 3 percent of the electricalpower produced in the United States. And the future is looking intense: Solar energy and storage is predicted to account for more than 60 percent of the U.S. power grid's brand-new getting capability from 2022 through 2023, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Source: [50 years ago, the future of solar energy looked intense.](#)