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## **Dual harvest: BayWa r.e. advances the use of agrophotovoltaics in Europe with five projects**

Solar modules over fields keep crops safe from extreme weather and contribute to climate protection

Munich, 30 July 2020 – BayWa r.e., a wholly owned subsidiary of BayWa AG, is enhancing its focus on the construction of agrophotovoltaic (AgriPV) systems in Europe. Following completion of the largest European AgriPV system at a raspberry farm in Babberich, Netherlands, the next four projects are already in planning. In cooperation with Wageningen University, Netherlands, the company plans to examine how the use of solar modules on cropland can be successfully combined with the cultivation of various types of berries. By “roofing over” agricultural land, farmers can protect their crops from the effects of extreme weather conditions due to climate change while also contributing to climate protection and decarbonisation by producing green electricity. The dual use of land for growing food and generating energy has tremendous potential, especially for permanent fruit and wine crops.

The AgriPV park in Babberich, which BayWa r.e. built in partnership with its Dutch affiliated company GroenLeven, has an output of 2.7 MWp and consists of 10,250 solar modules on a 3.2-hectare raspberry field. The modules

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generate enough energy to supply roughly 1,250 households with green electricity while raspberries grow beneath them, making dual use of the land. For the project, BayWa r.e. developed an innovative semi-transparent type of solar module that lets through enough light for the raspberry crops while protecting them from extreme weather, including hail, heavy rain and direct sun. Until recently, Piet Albers, the manager of the raspberry farm in Babberich, Netherlands, had relied on conventional tunnels made of protective films to keep his crops safe. The tunnels had to be regularly taken down and disposed of every six years. But thanks to the durability of the solar modules, AgriPV is now helping the farmer to save time and money while reducing waste.

The effect of solar modules on other types of berries – such as redcurrants, blueberries, blackberries or strawberries – is being investigated as part of four further AgriPV projects. The climate under the solar modules is being monitored using sensors, as are crop health and fruit growth. BayWa r.e. is also working with apple and pear producers to develop additional pilot projects. The aim is to further promote the use of AgriPV in Europe and to demonstrate that innovations such as these help to improve fruit quality, reduce water evaporation and lower production costs in fruit growing.

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Aerial view of Piet Albers fruit farm in Babberich, Netherlands: measuring 3.2 hectares, the AgriPV park in Babberich is currently the largest in Europe.

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While raspberries grow beneath them, 10,250 solar modules generate enough energy to supply nearly 1,250 households.

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