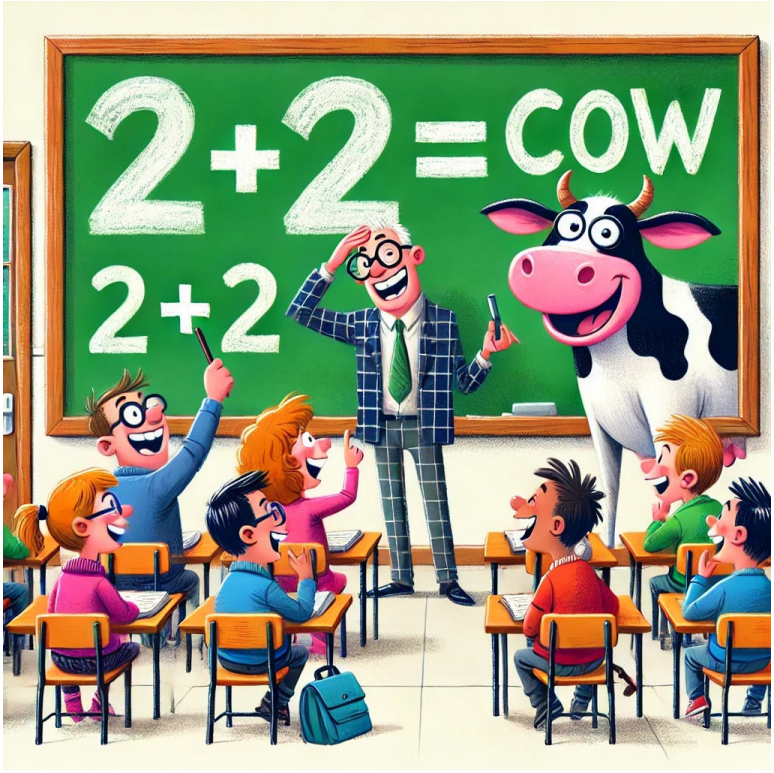
Would Your Marriage Survive 25% Reliability? Neither Will Our Energy Systems

Imagine sending your kids to a school where the teachers only show up 25% of the time. Math class? Not today. Science lab? Maybe next week, if you're lucky. Your kids grow up thinking two plus two equals cow because their education is as patchy as their teachers' attendance. It's absurd, right? Now, here's the real kicker: Why are so many seemingly OK with this level of inefficiency when it comes to renewable energy systems?

Renewable energy facilities, like solar and wind farms, operate at 25%-30% efficiency (in theory). That means they only work a fraction of the time, but we're expected to trust them as our main source of power. Let's explore this foolishness with some snarky comparisons to things we definitely wouldn't put up with in rural communities and farming life.



1. The Inefficient Tractor - A Farmer's Worst Nightmare

Picture this: You've got hay to bale, crops to plant, and a full day ahead. But your tractor—your lifeline in the field—won't start. Why? Because it only works 25% of the time.

So, what's the solution? A backup tractor, of course! You dust off "Bessie," the old relic parked behind the barn. For whatever reason, tractors always seem to end up with names. Some are logical—like calling an ancient, barely-working one "Old Reliable." Others, well… let's just say the names aren't suitable for polite company.

Bessie fires up with a cough and a puff of black smoke. She chugs along just long enough to get one small job done. But wait—she's running on fumes, and her best days are decades behind her. You finish one pass of the field before she sputters out, leaving you stranded with half a hayfield and a growing headache.

The real problem hasn't changed: Your main tractor still doesn't start, and now you're leaning on a backup that's just as unreliable. It's a temporary fix for a long-term issue—a Band-Aid on a broken bone.

That's the reality of relying on a backup system for renewable energy. A battery energy storage system might keep things running for a short while, but it can't support the grid indefinitely. The underlying issue of inefficiency remains.

2. The Lazy Employee - A Drain on the Farm

Now imagine hiring a farmhand who clocks in for just 2 hours of an 8-hour day. Of course, if you're a farmer, the thought of an 8-hour day probably made you laugh. An 8-hour workday is a luxury—more like a vacation—than reality on the farm. But let's pretend, for argument's sake, that farming could ever be confined to such a tidy little schedule.

This hypothetical farmhand still shows up late, leaves early, and only gets a small fraction of the work done. They happily take a full day's wages though (who wouldn't)! They claim they're doing their best, but their "best" leaves 70% of the work undone.

So, what do you do? You bring in a temp worker, because, let's face it—the work has to get done somehow! Maybe the temp can finish repairing the fence or handle feeding the livestock. And sure, the temp gets the job done… for now. But temp workers aren't cheap, they're not permanent, and you can't always depend on them to be available when you need them. When their contract ends, or they simply don't

show up, you're stuck right back where you started, still dealing with inefficiency and unfinished work.

It's the same story with renewable energy systems. Backup power might save the day occasionally, but it's not cheap, it's not permanent, and it doesn't fix the underlying inefficiency. Why should we put up with that when the stakes are so high?

3. The No-Show Teacher - A Disservice to Future Farmers

Let's say you send your kids to a school where the teachers show up only 25% of the time. Math class? Not today. Science lab? Try again next week, if you're lucky. Your kids grow up thinking two plus two equals cow because their education is as patchy as their teachers' attendance.

You bring in a tutor to fill in the gaps. For a while, it seems like a decent solution. But tutors are expensive, and they're not a permanent fix. Eventually, you're stuck with a school system that's still failing your kids—and the tutor can't do much when the structure itself is broken.

This is exactly what it feels like to rely on renewable energy systems that only work when the sun is shining or the wind is blowing. The frustration, the wasted effort, and the lack of reliability are all the same—you're stuck solving a problem that shouldn't exist in the first place.

4. The Teenage Chore Dodger - A Household Headache

Now picture this: You assign your teenage son or daughter a simple chore—say, taking out the trash. You remind them. You remind them again. You even leave a sticky note on the fridge. And yet, the trash is still sitting there three days later, overflowing like a small landfill.

In rural homes, respect and discipline are key character traits. These values are instilled from an early age, and most kids grow up understanding the importance of hard work and pulling their weight. That said, teenagers are still teenagers. No matter how well they've been raised, simple things like this will—and do—happen… on occasion, at least. Maybe they were distracted, forgot, or just decided it wasn't a priority.

You're left wondering how something as basic as taking out the trash could possibly slip through the cracks. Eventually, your patience runs out, and you step in to do it yourself because, let's face it, the job has to get done. It's frustrating, but you chalk it

up to one of those moments that come with raising kids, knowing they'll eventually grow out of it.

Sound familiar? It's the same kind of irritation you feel when dealing with unreliable energy systems. Just like you can't consistently count on your teenager to get their chores done without a reminder (or three), you can't rely on an energy source that only works 25%-30% of the time. And unlike your teenager, renewable energy systems won't "grow out of it" or suddenly become dependable. You're stuck dealing with the same inefficiency over and over again, and there's no real backup to step in when it matters most.

The Broader Absurdity

If we wouldn't tolerate these inefficiencies in our daily lives, why do we accept them in our energy systems? Every farmer knows the value of reliability. You wouldn't buy a tractor that only worked 30% of the time, rely on a school where teachers barely show up, or expect your teenager to take out the trash without constant reminders.

But that's exactly what we're doing with renewable energy. We're investing in systems that leave us high and dry—or, worse, cold and dark—at the moments we need them most. And while battery systems might help for a short while, they're nothing more than a temporary patch on a problem that requires real solutions.

A Common-Sense Solution?

Let's stop pretending this makes sense. Instead, let's demand energy systems that work as hard as we do. Systems that are dependable, efficient, and built to last. But for argument's sake, let's consider a sort-of common-sense solution to the problem.

If one tractor only works 25% of the time, why not just buy four tractors? That way, when one decides to take a break (which it inevitably will), you've got three more to pick up the slack. Problem solved, right? Well, not quite.

First off, tractors aren't cheap. Having four tractors on hand just to ensure you can rely on one at any given time would be outrageously expensive—enough to bankrupt most farming operations. But hey, maybe the government could step in and pay 40%-50% of the cost to make it feasible. Sound familiar? That's essentially how renewable energy projects are funded today—massive subsidies to prop up systems that don't work efficiently in the first place.

And even with four tractors, you're still left juggling inefficiencies. Maintenance, fuel, and storage for that many machines would be a logistical nightmare, not to

mention a drain on resources. The reality is, no farmer would ever consider this a "solution." It's a patchwork fix to a problem that requires real innovation, not just throwing more money (or tractors) at it.

What we really need is energy infrastructure that delivers consistent, reliable base load power. The kind of power you can count on every second of the day, no matter the weather or time of year. Base load power is the backbone of modern society—the energy equivalent of a tractor that starts every single time you need it. It's the foundation that allows homes, businesses, and farms to function without constant worry or costly backups.

Wrapping It All Up…

Next time someone tells you to embrace renewable energy, ask them this: If they had a tractor that only worked 25% of the time, would they buy two or three more just because the government would pay for them? When they inevitably hesitate, give them a snarky smile and remind them that backup solutions are just temporary crutches.

And while we're on the subject of reliability, I ask you: Would your wife be "OK" with you forgetting things like her birthday, Valentine's Day, Sweetest Day, or—heaven forbid—your anniversary three out of every four years? I think not. That kind of inefficiency wouldn't just strain your relationship—it might end it. On the bright side, though, missing those key dates might give you a chance to spend a few nights in the barn—just you, the critters, and that unreliable tractor you've been meaning to fix.

Because out here in the real world, 25% efficiency just doesn't cut it. And if we wouldn't tolerate it in our marriages, our farms, or our families, we sure shouldn't settle for it when it comes to powering our lives.