

# Customer Success Case Study

## Largest Solar Energy Solution in Boston, MA

**N**orth Coast Seafoods, one of New England's largest seafood processors and distributors, is optimizing the bounty of the ocean by drawing on the sun. Through a partnership with Spire Solar Systems, they took an important step toward reducing energy costs and helping the environment.

As a full-service solar company, Spire Solar Systems helped North Coast with all aspects of its implementation, from design to installation and commissioning. Additionally, the two companies united their efforts to obtain a government grant covering nearly half the system cost. "It's one-stop shopping with Spire Solar Systems," Stavis explained. "They visited our facility to see what could be done, had a structural engineer make sure the roof could hold whatever needed to be installed, provided a turnkey quote and even helped us with the government applications and paperwork."

At the time, solar system installations of North Coast's scale were unprecedented in New England. Therefore, it was imperative that Spire Solar Systems and North Coast form a close working relationship.

"When you're laying the groundwork for a renewable project that's never been done before, you face a lot of questions and a good deal of skepticism. You need an extremely knowledgeable, professional partner with you and Spire was that - very much so," said Norm Stavis, North Coast's President and CEO.

When your business relies on the sea, you naturally look toward the horizon. So when North Coast Seafoods of Boston, MA was contemplating its energy options in 2004, they set their sights on renewable resources. "As an industry leader, we always look for ways to be innovative," said Stavis, "We saw that energy was going to be an issue downstream, particularly because our buildings are refrigerated facilities. So we began exploring alternative forms of energy to see what would be best."

North Coast found its "best" in a solution from Spire Solar Systems. North Coast looked at many forms of renewable energy before choosing Solar. The decision was based on a number of factors, most importantly, incentives from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, solar's long-term ROI, and Spire's track record.

### Mapping out Boston's largest PV installation

"Spire Solar Systems was a tremendous partner," continued Stavis. "They were on their game about exactly what was going to happen, how we were going to get the system up and running, and what we needed to accomplish. And they held up their side of the equation perfectly."

Spire Solar Systems delivered a 118 kW photovoltaic (PV) system across the roof of North Coast's 110,000 square-foot processing and distribution center on Boston's waterfront. 672 self-ballasted PV modules were methodically installed around air vents, AC units and other obstructions, avoiding shadows and maximizing roof space. Completed in two months, North Coast's solar electric installation is the largest in Boston and the second largest in Massachusetts.

"The system will pay for itself in five years," said Jim Sweeney, President of Sustainable New Energy, North Coast's consultant on the project, "and it will generate more than \$750,000 in savings over its lifetime."

Added Stavis: "By partnering with Spire Solar Systems, we were able to realize a significant return on our investment while producing lower-cost electricity and strengthening our commitment to being green."



*Largest PV installation in Boston, MA (USA)*



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