

LPC TRADING: Switching to solar with the professionals

About LPC Trading

Based at Bendick Murrell near Young in NSW, LPC Trading is a poultry business comprising a rearing farm, cage and free range egg production and feed milling sites, and houses close to 500,000 hens.

It is a family run business, with the three Langfield brothers - Brett, Simon and Justin - taking over management of the facility from their parents. Together, they oversee the company's four sites, which includes managing the birds' care throughout their whole life cycle, supplying feed to customers in NSW and Victoria and running their own transport service for deliveries.

Describing their business as "vertically integrated", LPC Trading is known for its focus on quality, safety and efficiency, delivering exceptional standards of service across all areas of the business.

The business challenge

Brett Langfield, Managing Director of LPC Trading, is in charge of overseeing all poultry and administration operations. It is his responsibility to ensure the efficient running of the business and to look for opportunities for improvement in power and cost savings where possible.

Poultry farming is a highly energy intensive business, with constant power needed to maintain the controlled environments of the cage facilities, and to a lesser extent, the free range facilities also. Lighting and electric motors are required to operate the heating and ventilation systems essential to the survival of the birds, making power costs a substantial overhead.

After noticing a 25% increase in LPC Trading's power costs from 2014-2015 and with predictions that this would continue rising, Brett began seeking out alternative energy options for his "power crucial" business.

The challenge he found when researching solar was finding a solution that would make a big enough impact for the installation to be worthwhile; a feat proving difficult with limited immediate savings projected for a small site like the rearing farm.

Wanting to try solar but not willing to risk the capital of a solar installation with no guarantee of reward, Brett sought out a more flexible, long-term solution. More than cost and savings, his focus became finding a provider he could trust to see LPC Trading through a solar installation from start to finish, ensuring the best results for his operation were received.



Large-scale poultry facility LPC Trading makes the move to solar power

- 75KW solar power system installation (stage one)
- Reduced external energy consumption by 38% with equal reduction to carbon footprint
- End to end project management from Solar Professionals – from design to installation to ongoing management
- Utilises Solar Professionals flexible and transparent Electricity supply agreement
- Power costs reduced by 15% in the first year



Solar Professionals
Making the sun your asset



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Why Solar Professionals?

Solar Professionals had been on LPC Trading's radar long before they started seriously considering a solar installation. It was their reputation for reliability and responsibility that made them Brett's first point of call, and their willingness to work with him to develop the right kind of solution assured him that they were a company he could trust.

However, it was ultimately Solar Professional's Electricity Supply Agreement that sealed the deal.

When initially considering purchasing a solar system outright, projections showed limited immediate savings in power costs for a small site like LPC Trading's rearing farm, making Brett question whether the change was really worth it.

Solar Professionals' ESA changed all of this. With Solar Professionals retaining ownership of the solar system and responsibility for all ongoing maintenance, the risk of the installation disappeared for LPC Trading. They now buy back the power their system produces over an agreed contract term, allowing them to experience the improvements in savings and efficiency for the rearing farm firsthand.

"Everything else really became a non-issue with that ESA", said Brett. "We were able to take the step into solar with no upfront costs, and no risk."

At Solar Professionals the directors are also the project managers, meaning they oversee the process from design to installation to ongoing maintenance. With this, LPC Trading knew they would have the support they needed to see the project through from beginning to end.

Brett adds, "From the start they were people I felt like I could trust. They didn't try to oversell the system – they were upfront and honest about what results to expect, and made a point of explaining things clearly to us so that we understood what was going on at all times."

This level of transparency was something LPC Trading found unique to Solar Professionals, and made the whole process easy to work with. Monthly site visits from a Solar Professionals representative to monitor readings and ensure optimum functionality also assured LPC Trading that they were being well looked after.

"They worked incredibly hard to ensure that the solar system was running smoothly, and to make the process as smooth as possible for us," said Brett

The flexibility provided by the ESA was also a huge plus to LPC Trading, who value having the option to buy out their solar system for an agreed upon value at any point throughout their contract.

The solution

As part of their ESA, Solar Professionals have installed a 288 module solar system with a 75KW total registered capacity to three sheds within LPC Trading's rearing site. This has been designed to utilise all East, West and North facing roof orientations in order to optimise the solar yield to suit LPC Trading's daytime usage requirements.

The installation, featuring 288 Trina Solar Honey module and 3 x 27.6KW Aurora inverters, will serve as the pilot installation at LPC Trading. After witnessing the increased savings and efficiency of the solar system in the last twelve months, LPC Trading are looking at installing solar at their larger feed mill and cage sites, where the larger power demand will see a larger saving.

The benefits

For LPC Trading, the single biggest benefit has been the improvement in energy efficiency within their facility and the subsequent power savings. In the twelve months since Solar Professionals completed their installation, LPC Trading have seen a saving of close to \$10,000 compared to their previous year's costs when purchasing from a power company. This is a 15% reduction.

With initial estimates of a \$2000 saving, the final result far exceeded LPC Trading's expectations, which Brett attributes to Solar Professionals' careful approach to the project.

"They spent a lot of time working with us, getting to know our facility and its needs, and then they tailored a solution that would produce the best results."

Likewise, LPC Trading has seen a notable reduction in their carbon footprint, with their move to solar cutting external energy consumption by 38%.

"We are happy to be doing our part from a corporate social responsibility perspective," said Brett.

"Being able to reduce our environmental impact in this way and set a positive example in our industry is a great step forward for our company."

Looking back on the process, Brett added, "They offered a simple way to get into solar and made the whole process a really positive experience, in more ways than just savings. They were the ideal team to work with."



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