

Spider mower blitzes vegetation underneath PV panels

Controlling vegetation underneath PV panels is an ongoing challenge for solar farms. Having *some* grass around the modules prevents upwards heat radiation and soil erosion, while helping the soil to retain moisture and reduce dust around the panels. However, overgrowth causes shading, hot spots and equipment accessibility issues. The good news is that Inlon's Spider ILD02 remote-controlled mower is here to change the landscape for Australian solar farms, quite literally.

At the heart of the Spider's appeal is its ability to mow the vegetation *underneath* PV panels, fitting easily below frames up to 1 metre in height. It is operated with a remote control, so the user can stay in control while keeping a safe distance from the panels. Alternatives such as ride-on mowers are not practical in low height areas, and if using reach or swing arm mowers, a slight misjudgment can lead to thousands of dollars of damage.

The Spider's unique patented design means that one mower can maintain the entire farm between the rows of solar panels and below them, reducing the need for multiple machines. Traditionally, maintenance has involved a two-stage clearing process, using a mower for the large areas and a trimmer to go around frames and obstacles. Not only does it save time on the mowing process, the Spider ILD02 works fast too, clearing a highly productive 1.25 acres per hour.



Spider ILD02 Mower in action

Importantly for solar farms, the 4-wheel 360-degree steering makes it easy to manoeuvre and mow around awkward spaces. There's no time wasted having to turn the mower around. It can cut in any direction, going back and forth, side to side, scooting around posts and blitzing even wild, rough vegetation. For sloping land, the Spider has another card up its sleeve, mowing up to 40 degrees utilising 4-wheel drive lugged tyres and up to 55-degree slopes with its optional winch system.

Protection of PV assets is also helped with the Spider's ability to contain debris. Normal mowing can send stones and branches flying around, but the Spider mulches material with blades set well within the deck body to minimise the ejection of grass and debris during mowing.

'The Spider mower makes it easy to enjoy the benefits of low level grass around the PV panels,' said Glenn Dwyer, Inlon's Spider Product Manager. 'Other vegetation control methods such as sheep or chemicals introduce husbandry and environmental issues, the latter being counter-productive for "green energy" supporters. The Spider has low fuel consumption with low emissions and has previously won the CIVENEX Most Innovative Product award and a German Red Dot design award.'

For more information on Spider remote controlled mowers for solar farms, please visit www.spider-mower.com.au or call Inlon on 1800 772 407.



Spider ILD02 Mower