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CA Legislature Eyes Cap and Trade Revenue

CalCAN Sees Sustainable Ag Link

A key element of California's landmark climate change law, the cap-and-trade program, will be implemented this year and the California Legislature is moving toward consideration of ways to allocate the funds the new program will generate. The state will net between \$400 million and \$1 billion through the program, and indications are the funds will be used to address climate change and meet the objectives of the state's landmark climate change legislation, AB32.

CalCAN has made clear that it believes some of the revenue should be directed toward sustainable agriculture to support its contributions to solving



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contributions to easing climate change. CalCAN Policy Director Jeanne Merrill has an update on



the emerging legislative tussle in her piece "[Urge Your State Lawmakers to Support Sustainable Agricultural Solutions to Climate Change.](#)"

Recent CalCAN Blogs Reflect Increasing Activism on Farms and Food

We've been busy over the last month, traveling to national and regional sustainable agriculture events including the annual summit meeting of the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition in Davis, CA; the annual Ecofarm Conference in Pacific Grove, CA and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition winter meeting in Washington, D.C.

At the rangeland summit, our Executive Director, Renata Brillinger, found a group of visionaries working to preserve and enhance rangeland ecosystems. You can read her reflections on the meeting in her piece "[Rangeland Conservation Group Impresses with Leadership and Vision.](#)"

At Ecofarm, "Raising Ecofarmers' Voices" was the theme and much of the three-day event was dedicated to talking about ways to get involved in the political system to make positive change for sustainable agriculture. CalCAN Campaign Director Ted Quaday writes about the conference in his blog "[Ecofarm Conference is Call to Action.](#)"



Russ Lester of Dixon Ridge Farms presents at EcoFarm

CalCAN's Policy Director Jeanne Merrill traveled to the nation's capitol in early February to share ideas with folks from all over the country who are interested in elevating sustainable agriculture practices in the 2012



CalCAN, almond farmer Steve Koretoff and other sustainable ag reps meet with Congressman Jim Costa on Farm Bill issues

practices in the 2012

Farm Bill. Merrill joined many other representatives from the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition California Caucus and almond grower Steve Koretoff in visiting Congressional offices. Her thoughts on the trip are reported in the article "[Speaking Truth to Power.](#)"

Climate Leader: Hedgerow Farms

John Anderson, founder of [Hedgerow Farms](#), has been a leader in implementing and promoting farmland habitat restoration for the past 30 years. It started in 1974 when John was a practicing veterinarian at the UC Davis Primate Research Center. He and his wife Marsha purchased a 50-acre farm north of Winters as a place to live in the country.



John was, and still is, an avid bird hunter and naturalist. In the late 1970's he became aware of the decreasing numbers of wildlife and wildlife habitat on intensively managed farms. Clean farming practices were eliminating the plant biodiversity, essential for wildlife populations to survive. Realizing that, he began working with wildlife agencies, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Yolo County Resource Conservation District, Audubon California, and many others to learn and identify re-vegetation programs that use native plant materials. He saw plenty of opportunity to use the edges and unproductive areas in the farmscape to provide both ecological benefits and services to farmers.

John retired from the University in 1996. Since then he has grown Hedgerow Farms into a unique and vital source of native grasses, wildflowers, sedges and rushes. He has also become a well-respected consultant to landowners, agriculture professionals, Resource Conservation Districts and environmental groups that work



Conservation districts and environmental groups that work with producers. The canals, roadsides and field borders near his property are lined with vegetation that prevents erosion, increases water infiltration and groundwater recharge, provides habitat for beneficial insects, birds, reptiles, mammals, and beautifies the land. Hedgerow Farms grows, harvests and sells seed from over 70 California native species on 400 acres, mainly ecotypes from the California Central Valley, Valley Foothills and Central Inner Coast Range.

We are proud that John serves as a farmer advisor to CalCAN, bringing his knowledge of how biodiversity and native plantings on farms can potentially increase resilience to climate change, sequester carbon in woody plants and soils, and buffer against water shortages.

Farmland dominates huge acreage in the Central Valley and other areas in California. There is enormous potential to create corridors of habitat that can restore biodiversity and ecosystem services that can enhance the value of farms and the farm environment.

Funding Announcements



USDA Funding Available for Organic Research

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture has announced the release of its [2012 Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) for the [Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative \(OREI\)](#), which provides grants to academic, private, and non-profit research institutions to investigate research issues related to organic production.

OREI is USDA's flagship competitive research grants program dedicated to the investigation of organic systems. OREI funds research and extension projects that provide the information that producers and processors need to be successful, improve their farming systems, and grow and market high quality organic agricultural products. Applications are due on March 9th, 2012, and approximately \$10 million is available

2011, 2012, and approximately \$15 million is available.

Conservation Reserve Program Offers Four-Week Sign-up Window

The general sign-up period for the FY 2012 Conservation Reserve Program will run from March 12 to April 6, according to a recent [USDA press release](#). Contracts on an estimated 6.5 million acres will expire on Sept. 30, 2012, and this sign up will attempt to fill as many of those acres as possible. The announcement of the general sign-up will increase the projected CRP funding level over the course of the upcoming 2012 Farm Bill. It could therefore be of significant with respect to the crafting of the conservation title of the new farm bill.

Job Announcements

Ag Innovations Network Seeks Project Coordinator

The Sebastopol, CA based Ag Innovations Network (AIN) is now hiring a full-time Project Coordinator to join the AIN staff team and oversee projects. AIN designs, organizes, convenes, and facilitates multi-stakeholder collaborative processes and initiatives to improve outcomes from the food system. The [Project Coordinator](#) will serve as the lead staff coordinator of a number of these projects, implementing the projects' workplans as described in funding grants and AIN's internal planning documents. Candidates will be considered on rolling basis until the position is filled.

Food & Water Watch Seeks Campaign Organizer in LA

Food & Water Watch is seeking a [Los Angeles organizer](#) to work across all of Food & Water Watch's issues with a focus on improving the food system through a fair farm bill, preventing privatization of water, and protecting water supplies from the dangers of hydro-fracking. Food & Water Watch is a national consumer advocacy organization that runs campaigns challenging the corporate control and abuse of our food and water resources.

PolicyLink is Hiring in Oakland

PolicyLink, the national research and action institute advancing economic and social equity is seeking an [associate director in health](#) for its Oakland, CA office. PolicyLink works on policies to improve access to healthy foods in low-income

communities and communities of color. The institute is seeking an individual with deep knowledge of healthy food access and with demonstrated experience in food policy and advocacy on the local, state, or national level.

Supporting CalCAN

Here are some ways you can make a difference by supporting our work:

- [Make a donation to CalCAN](#). We rely on tax-deductable gifts — no amount is too small.
- Check out [our blog](#) with lots of reflections on climate change and agriculture.
- Friend us on [Facebook](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#).
- [Tell-a-Friend](#). Forward this email to introduce us to your colleagues, family and friends.

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