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## News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

*April 15, 2014*

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### **CalCAN Lobby Day a Success**

***Sustainable Ag Leaders Meet with Members of  
Assembly & Senate to Discuss Climate Change***

On April 9th, farmers and Resource Conservation District leaders gathered from across the state in Sacramento to

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CalCAN is a coalition of organic and sustainable agriculture organizations that advances policies to provide resources for climate-friendly farming practices.

discuss the challenges that climate change presents for California agriculture. They also described the resources needed to support sustainable agricultural solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing agriculture's resilience in the face of drought, unpredictable and extreme weather and other climate impacts.

The lobby day was co-organized by CalCAN and the [California Association of Resource Conservation Districts \(CARCD\)](#). Farmers, ranchers, and RCD leaders met with 26 legislative offices to highlight the need for investments in sustainable agricultural solutions to climate change.

One of CalCAN's central messages to California policymakers is that farmers and ranchers have a lot to offer when it comes to climate change solutions. But unless we re-invest in our agricultural resources, including agricultural research, grower technical assistance and financial incentives, farm-based solutions to climate change will be stymied.

As illustrated in the photo above, CalCAN and partners also used the gathering to present Assemblymember Talamantes Eggman with a gift recognizing her leadership on AB 1961 (see below).

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## **Sustainable Farmland Strategy Act (AB 1961) Passes Out of Assembly Committees**

In early April, AB 1961 (the Sustainable Farmland Strategy Act) passed out of the Assembly Agriculture Committee and the Local Government Committee despite heavy opposition from the California Building Industry Association (CBIA).

[AB 1961](#) requires that counties with significant farmland

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resources inventory their agriculturally-zoned land, describe their goals and policies to retain farmland and mitigate for its loss, and compile that information on the county website. It is a modest proposal that will lead to better protection of California's invaluable farmland.

Jean Okuye, a Merced County farmer and past president of the Merced Chapter of the Farm Bureau, spoke in favor of the bill at the April 9th Assembly Agriculture Committee hearing. Joining her were Dave Runsten of the Community Alliance with Family Farmers and John Gamper with the California Farm Bureau Federation.

The CBIA opposes the bill, calling it a "new zoning mandate" that will require permanent protection of farmland.

Supporters of the bill debunked the CBIA claims, stressing that AB 1961 does not impose new farmland conservation policies on counties. Rather, the bill simply requires that counties map their agricultural lands and leaves it up to the counties to determine what their farmland goals and policies are appropriate for their community.

AB 1961 is authored by Assemblymember Susan Talamantes Eggman (Dem-Stockton) and is supported by a diverse group of farm and conservation organizations. The bill is co-sponsored by the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, American Farmland Trust and the California Climate and Agriculture Network.

More information on AB 1961 and a list of supporters can be found [here](#). Sample letters of support are also available.



## **Progress on On-Farm Renewable Energy Policy**

California has an international reputation as a leader in renewable energy policy. Thanks to effective policy decisions and incentives, the state more than doubled its distributed

renewable energy production in 2013.

CalCAN is proud to have played an important role in helping safeguard California's renewable energy leadership in recent months, representing the interests of farmers and ranchers in removing barriers to on-farm clean energy production.

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## PG&E Webinar on Meter Aggregation

If you produce renewable energy on your farm under the Net Energy Metering (NEM) program and are a customer of PG&E, you may be interested in the newly approved meter aggregation option. Read more about meter aggregation and CalCAN's role [here](#).

PG&E is hosting a free online webinar on June 17th at 12:00pm that will describe NEM Aggregation and the requirements for taking part. The intended audience is contractors, developers, and architects, but it should be useful for anyone with an introductory knowledge of renewable energy systems and electrical metering.

No registration is required. At the scheduled time, go to [pge.conferencing.com](http://pge.conferencing.com) and enter the Participant Login code 4159730770. A call-in option is also available. Find out more details by clicking [here](#) and pressing the "Show Classes" button.

## Events

### 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Day at Hedgerow Farms: Climate and California Grasslands

April 25, 2014 · Winters, CA

For the 7th consecutive year, the California Native Grasslands

Association (CNGA) is teaming up with Hedgerow Farms to provide an excellent opportunity for practical, hands-on learning about native grasslands. The dry winter has presented a unique opportunity to observe drought reactions in our grasslands and sets an appropriate stage to discuss climate driven challenges in grassland restoration and management. The field day will also highlight the role of our native grassland species related to water and resource conservation in the built environment.

[For more information, click here.](#)

## Climate Change: Challenges to California's Agriculture and Natural Resources

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California Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics will bring together leading economists, analysts, scientists and policy makers from University of California, the state government, non-profits, and the private sector to discuss the potential impacts of climate change and the associated challenges to California's agriculture and natural resources. The speakers and panelists will provide comprehensive, objective, and up-to-date information of the likely impacts of climate change on California's rural economy.

The deadline for registration is May 12, 2014. For more information, click [here](#).

## Jobs

### University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

#### Climate Adaptation in Agriculture Cooperative Extension Specialist

Location: UC Merced

Closing Date: May 2, 2014

For more information and application instructions, click [here](#).

### National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition Policy Specialist (Farming Opportunities & Fair Competition)

Location: Washington, DC

NSAC is an alliance of grassroots organizations that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and rural communities. NSAC is currently seeking a Policy Specialist for family farm and sustainability issues, with specific reference to farm programs, crop insurance, livestock market competition issues, and federal agricultural research and extension policy.

For more information, click [here](#).

## **CCOF**

### **Policy Director**

Location: Santa Cruz

The Director of Policy leads, manages, and oversees all local, state, federal and international policy and regulatory activities of CCOF Inc. For more information, click [here](#).

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