



News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

May 27, 2014



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**Show your support for climate-friendly farming...
Call your Senator and
Assemblymember today!**

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

Governor Brown and the state legislature are deciding the future of state investments to address climate change and avoid its worst impacts.

On May 13th, Governor Brown released his revised budget for fiscal year 2014–15. We are pleased he continues to call for funding for sustainable agriculture and farmland conservation in the state's investments of cap-and-trade proceeds.

Next, the legislature weighs in. They must pass a budget by mid-June for the Governor's approval. There are several competing ideas about how to spend cap-and-trade proceeds, proposals that change daily and some of which may not include investments in agriculture.

Your elected representatives need to hear from you about the importance of including agriculture in the final budget.

Can you take two minutes to leave messages with the offices of your Assemblymember and Senator? It's quick, easy and it makes a difference.

[Click here for details.](#)



Farmland Protection Bill Dies in Committee, Developers Lead the Opposition

Last week, the Assembly Appropriations Committee "held over" the Farmland Conservation Strategy Act, AB 1961, essentially killing the bill. The bill was authored by Assemblymember Susan Talamantes-Eggman (D-Stockton) who chairs the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

AB 1961 was crafted after a public hearing, roundtable discussion and many months of talks with county government associations and the California Farm Bureau Federation. We appreciate their efforts to move farmland conservation

[Learn more...](#)

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policy forward.

However, AB 1961 came under heavy opposition from the California Building Industry Association (CBIA). In spite of the bill amendments the author took to address their stated concerns, CBIA continued to lobby actively to kill it. It seems anything that advances farmland conservation, however modest, is anathema to the developers' lobby.

We are grateful for the leadership Assemblymember Eggman demonstrated in championing the critical issue of farmland conservation in California. We also appreciate the support for the bill from a diverse spectrum of land trust, agriculture, planning and conservation organizations as well as the dozens of farmers from around the state.

[AB 1961](#) would have required that counties with significant farmland resources inventory their agricultural lands and describe their goals and policies to retain farmland and mitigate for its loss, compiling that information on the county website. The bill is co-sponsored by CalCAN, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers and American Farmland Trust. More information on AB 1961 and a list of supporters can be found [here](#).

CalCAN and our allies will continue to push for stronger state policies to support farmland conservation and mitigation.

Have a good farmland conservation story? Or comment on the bill and next steps? Please drop us a line: info@calclimateaq.org



Farming for Success in the 21st Century: Webinar Series for Agriculture Conservation Professionals

[Videos now available on line](#)

This three-part webinar series is geared to agricultural conservation professionals such as RCD, Extension and NRCS staff. Each webinar provides an overview of expected climate

Bruce Rominger and his father Rich are profiled [in this video](#) produced by CDFA's California Grown program.



A farm field day organized recently by the [California Rangeland Conservation Coalition](#) featured several pilot projects of the [Marin Carbon Project](#). At [Stemple Creek Ranch](#) in Tomales, rancher Loren Poncia had this to say:

"I want to grow as much forage, sequester as much carbon and keep water on the land so the grass stays green as long as possible and I can get as much food as possible from each animal. All while maintaining as much biodiversity as possible. Did I cover everything??"

impacts such as increased water scarcity, warming temperatures and unpredictable and extreme weather events, and tools for enhancing on-farm resilience and adaptation to changing climate conditions.

Soil Building for Climate Resilience

Video: <https://vimeo.com/94700176>

Click [here](#) to download Powerpoint slides from Dropbox

Speakers: Rex Dufour (ATTRA/NCAT) Jocelyn Gretz (Rio Farms), Jeff Creque (Marin Carbon Project)

Biodiversity for Climate Resilience

Video: <https://vimeo.com/90807898>

Click [here](#) to download Powerpoint slides from Dropbox

Speakers: Louise Jackson (UC Davis, Department of Land, Air, Water Resources), Sam Earnshaw (Hedgerows Unlimited), Judith Redmond (Full Belly Farm)

Water Use Efficiency & On-Farm Storage for Climate Resilience

Video: <https://vimeo.com/90889756>

Click [here](#) to download Powerpoint slides from Dropbox

Speakers: Brittany Heck and John Green (Gold Ridge RCD), Kevin Greer (Tehama RCD)

This webinar series was funded by Western SARE and offered in partnership with the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, California NRCS and UC Cooperative Extension.



Resources for Renewable Energy Producers

If you produce renewable energy on your farm or are considering installing a solar, wind, or bioenergy system, you may be interested in the newly approved meter aggregation option. CalCAN has just released a [fact sheet](#) on how this option can lower costs and improve the efficiency of your renewable energy system -- read more [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 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.



Governor’s Second Drought Declaration Strikes a Delicate Balance

With nearly all of California [unable to shake off](#) one of the most stubborn droughts [in its history](#), Governor Brown is taking steps to prepare the state for the long dry season that looms ahead.

On April 24th, he issued his second [proclamation of drought emergency](#) since the start of the year. In doing so, he called out the [likely connection](#) between the drought and climate change, stating, “We are playing Russian Roulette with our environment.”

In addressing the needs of water users across the state, it is clear the Governor faces some tough decisions for managing drought impacts on farms, cities, and the environment. Too timid a response could leave water users stranded; too heavy a hand could hurt regulatory authority and damage fragile ecosystems already crippled by drought.

[Read more...](#)

Funding

2014 Conservation Easement Applications for Agricultural Lands

Deadline: June 6

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is now accepting applications for Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) through the new Agricultural Conservation Easements Program (ACEP). ACEP, created through the 2014 Farm Bill, provides funding for conservation easements on agricultural land, including grasslands of special environmental significance.

ALE funds are provided to eligible entities to purchase conservation easements that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of privately owned land. Cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and nonindustrial private forestland are all eligible. Learn more about ACEP by visiting www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs.

Initiative will help growers chip woody debris in fallowed orchards and vineyards

Deadline: June 20, 2014

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in California will assist farmers to chip woody debris in fallowed orchards and vineyards impacted by California's ongoing drought. The conservation benefits associated with this practice include controlling erosion and protecting air quality. This funding is offered by the California Air Quality Chipping Initiative, through NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Farmers in Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare counties have until June 20, 2014, to apply. Click [here](#) for more information.

Western SARE Announces Grants in Sustainable Agriculture

Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program has issued a call for proposals for its four funding areas:

1. Research and Education Grants
2. Professional Development Grants
3. Farmer/Rancher Grants
4. Professional + Producer Grants

Full descriptions and grant deadlines are available [here](#).

Events

GMOs: Necessary in a Hot and Crowded World?

Wed, Jun 11 2014 – 6:00pm

San Francisco Commonwealth Club

With global population climbing toward 10 billion, food security is a growing concern. Extreme droughts and floods have slammed agricultural exports from the United States, Australia and Russia in recent years. Future severe weather is expected to put upward pressure on crop prices. That prospect raises thorny questions. Is there a role for seeds that are genetically modified to be drought resistant? Can 10 billion people be fed without GMO crops? Can organics feed a growing and hungry world? Speakers: **Robert Fraley**, Monsanto; **Andrew Kimbrell**, Center for Food Safety; **Nathanael Johnson**, *Grist*; **Jessica Lundberg**, Lundberg Family Farms

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

California Adaptation Forum

August 19–20, 2014

Sacramento

This event includes over 40 plenaries and breakout sessions, and will attract and engage a diverse mix of over 600 policymakers, practitioners and leaders. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Jobs

Project Manager – Land and Water Resources

Ag Innovations Network, Sebastopol, CA

The Project Manager will serve as team leader in the areas of land and water stewardship and ecosystem services and payments to identify project opportunities, assess their feasibility, and shepherd projects through the development phase into implementation. The Project Manager will work in partnership with a facilitation team to create and lead these coalitions, assuring that they are responsive to the challenges being faced, fulfilling the expectations of funders, and advancing a sustainable food system.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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