

For Immediate Release:  
January 7, 2016

Contacts: Jeanne Merrill, 916-600-0083  
[jmerrill@calclimateag.org](mailto:jmerrill@calclimateag.org)  
Renata Brillinger, 707-536-7619 or  
[renata@calclimateag.org](mailto:renata@calclimateag.org)

**Governor Brown Invests in Climate-Smart Agriculture**  
***Budget includes over \$100 million for farm solutions to climate change***

At a time when California's farmers are still feeling the brunt of the state's severe drought, today Governor Brown proposed expanding the opportunities for climate-smart agriculture that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

The Governor's budget includes \$20 million for the Healthy Soils Initiative, \$20 million for agricultural water conservation projects, \$35 million dairy digesters, and ongoing annual funding for farmland conservation (currently \$40 million) through the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program.

"Our farms and ranches offer some of the best opportunities to store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Russ Lester, owner of Dixon Ridge Farms, an organic walnut producer and processor in Solano County. "Governor Brown's budget will make climate-smart agriculture a reality in California." Dixon Ridge Farms produces renewable energy through a bioenergy project fueled by walnut shells, a by-product of their organic farm and processing business.

Among the Governor's proposals is the Healthy Soils Initiative, a new state effort aiming to increase carbon sequestration on farms and ranches. Working and natural lands offer the only carbon sinks available in California. Enhanced on-farm management of soils, including use of compost, cover crops, mulch, crop rotations and more, can increase carbon storage and reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions.

"Governor Brown's budget acknowledges that we cannot have healthy air and water without healthy soils," said Jeanne Merrill, Policy Director with the California Climate and Agriculture Network. "Under the Governor's leadership California can lead the country in innovative, sustainable agriculture that provides climate protection and greater resilience to weather extremes."

# # #

*The California Climate and Agriculture Network is a coalition of sustainable and organic agriculture organizations and farmer members. We work to advance agricultural solutions to climate change. More here: [www.calclimateag.org](http://www.calclimateag.org)*