



News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

August 20, 2014



Water Bond Includes Funding for Ag Water Conservation

California farmers and ranchers have something to celebrate in the new water bond, approved last week by the legislature and Governor Brown for the November ballot. The water bond includes \$100 million for water use efficiency projects in agricultural and urban areas. CalCAN advocated for the inclusion of funding to support on-farm water use efficiency projects, which past bonds had failed to adequately include.

“California has a lot to gain by investing in on-farm water use efficiency projects,” said Jeanne Merrill, CalCAN Policy

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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.

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Director. “The new water bond will bring us closer to realizing important water savings while keeping farmers on the land.”

At a time of severe drought, the water bond will bring an important infusion of funding for conservation, water recycling, groundwater and safe drinking water projects. The \$7.45 billion water bond is not without controversial elements, including \$2.7 billion for new dams and reservoirs.

“We need to support innovations in water use efficiency on the farm and across the state,” said Craig McNamara, President of the State Board of Food and Agriculture and owner of Sierra Orchards. “The new water bond will support a 21st century California.”

A recent analysis of past state water bonds conducted by the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) found that few dollars went toward supporting farmers in improving water use efficiency on their land. For example, of the \$37 million from Proposition 50 that funded agricultural water use efficiency since 2005, nearly three-quarters of the funding has gone to infrastructure and engineering projects such as pipelines, canals and pumps. Only eight percent of those funds have helped farmers implement proven, inexpensive on-farm water conservation practices such as irrigation scheduling, soil moisture monitoring, or keyline design.

“With Governor Brown’s leadership, California will be able to work with family farmers to achieve real water savings by modernizing irrigation districts, optimizing on-farm water use and managing groundwater recharge,” said Dave Runsten, CAFF Policy Director. “The new water bond will allow us to realize significant benefits for farmers and the state.”

A summary and full report on the CAFF water bond analysis can be found at <http://www.caff.org/programs/policy/water>

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Agriculture Front and Center in State Adaptation Planning

While funds for aggressive greenhouse gas emissions reductions have begun to be made [available](#) through the cap-and-trade program under [AB 32](#), we have yet to see any significant actions taken to address the challenge of adapting to climate change impacts.

But in recent weeks, state agencies have begun laying the groundwork for their efforts to help gird California’s businesses, residents, and environment from the impacts of

extreme weather and shifting climate trends.

In a series of reports, plans, and research initiatives being launched in the coming months, the vulnerability of the agriculture sector is being discussed front and center.

CalCAN has been closely tracking these efforts and sharing our input with the relevant state agencies. This is a crucial time to help shape the conversations about agricultural adaptation planning in California.

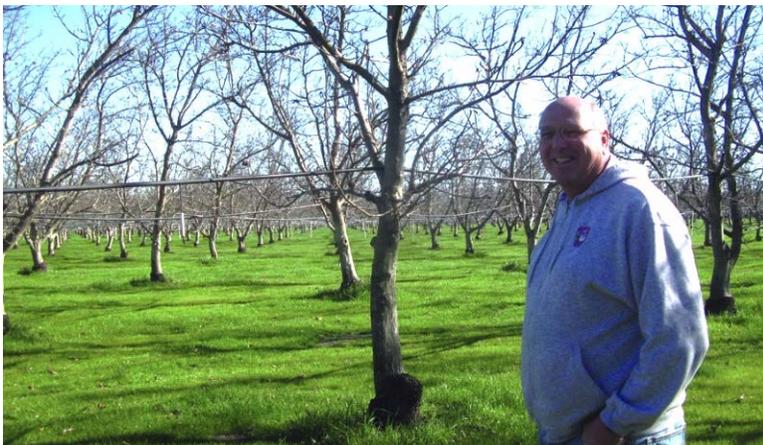
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Fruit Growers Adapt to Warmer Winters, Drought

Recent studies suggest that warmer temperatures, and the associated reduced winter chilling period, could render California's climate unsuitable for growing a variety of fruits and nuts. Insufficient winter 'chill hours,' defined as the cumulative number of hours below 45 degrees Fahrenheit, can disrupt pollination, delay flowering, lower yield, and reduce fruit quality. California orchards are predicted to experience less than 500 chill hours per winter by the end of the 21st century, which will impact the yields of walnuts, pistachios, apples, pears, and stone fruits like cherries, apricots, nectarines, peaches, and plums.

[Read more...](#)



Cover Crops & Water Infiltration

A video from the USDA's Natural Resources

Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has produced a video that does an excellent job in less than five minutes describing the relationship between cover crop planting and improved water infiltration. It features Russ Lester, owner of [Dixon Ridge Farms](#) and a CalCAN advisor, who discusses the importance of cover crops on his organic walnut orchard near Winters, California.

Click [here](#) to view the video.

Resources & Funding

Conservation Stewardship Program Renewal Process Starting

Farmers and ranchers who enrolled in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in 2010 can re-enroll their farms for another five years by submitting a renewal application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS). The window to apply to re-enroll extends from July 11 to September 12. Click [here](#) for more information.

USDA Announces Organic Certification Cost-Share Funding

USDA has announced that Farm Bill funding is now available for organic certification cost-share assistance. The National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program has \$11.5 million, available to all states. Through the Agricultural Management Assistance Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, an additional \$1.5 million is available to organic operations in specified states. Click [here](#) for more information.

Free Listings with California FarmLink

California FarmLink (CFL) is currently seeking landowners with agricultural property available for lease, sale, or partnership. Landowners interested in finding a farmer or rancher for their land are encouraged to list their property on the website. California FarmLink is offering free listings through August 31. For more details, please contact Liya Schwartzman, Central Valley Regional Coordinator, at liya@cafarmlink.org.

Events

Hoes Down Harvest Celebration
October 4th and 5th, 2014

Two fun-filled days of events and seminars for all ages at Full Belly Farm in rural Capay Valley — a region of many small farms that supply Northern California's neighborhood grocery stores and eateries with fresh organic produce. This 27th annual event offers the public a special opportunity to connect with rural life and deepen understanding of the local food system.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Keyline® Practice: Soil Health and Drought-Resilience for 21st Century Farms and Landscapes
October 3–5, 2014**

Join us in Chico for an important and informative three-day workshop focusing on the Keyline Design® process as a potential solution for dealing with drought. The workshop will include classroom as well as outdoor exercises and practicums—including a demonstration of the Yeomans' Keyline sub-soiler. The workshop is taught by Owen Hablutzel, a Keyline Design® instructor, Holistic Management® Certified Educator, and full-time consultant who works across the globe. It is sponsored by Jackrabbit Farms and Sweet Grass Organics.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Jobs

Berkeley Food Institute Policy Coordinator

The Policy Coordinator at the Berkeley Food Institute will be responsible for implementing BFI's policy program activities that are aimed to increase the usefulness, application, and impact of research (and education) at UC Berkeley that can inform or support policies for sustainable food and agriculture systems. The Policy Coordinator will serve as a liaison between BFI and relevant policy organizations, government agencies, and legislators who deal with food systems. She/he will help facilitate effective multi-directional exchange of information on key policy issues, by communicating research needs that are identified by policy-makers, and summarizing and disseminating findings of BFI/UC Berkeley studies that can inform policy making or effect change in this field. Click [here](#) for information.

Internships with the Ecological Farming Association

EFA is looking for a Program Intern and Communications Intern, both to support the planning and production of the 35th annual EcoFarm Conference on January 21–25, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

Farm to School Coordinator, North Coast CAFF Office (Sebastopol)

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate for California family farms and sustainable agriculture. The North Coast Farm to School Coordinator will be primarily responsible for overseeing and expanding CAFF's Farm to School programs — primarily coordinating the Harvest of the Month (HOTM) Tasting Kit program and supervising the FoodCorps member. The primary goal of the position is to coordinate the HOTM Tasting Kit program by providing at least 250 K-12 classrooms with monthly tasting kits of local produce, nutrition education, and agriculture information. Click [here](#) for more information.

Junior Specialist in Agriculture, Resources, and the Environment

UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (UC SAREP), UC Davis

This position will function as a member of the Agriculture, Resources, and the Environment (ARE) team within the UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (UC SAREP), one of the programs of the Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI) at UC Davis. Under general supervision of the Communications Coordinator and UC SAREP Academic Coordinator for ARE, the incumbent will translate scientific information about sustainable agricultural practices into multiple communications products, develop and implement targeted outreach and stakeholder engagement strategies, and assist with stakeholder interviews and data management for research projects.

To apply: Send cover letter summarizing relevant background and interest, resume/curriculum vitae, and short science writing sample (1-3 pp preferred) to Bev Ransom at baransom@ucdavis.edu. Applications submitted by August 11, 2014 will be considered first. For more information about the position, contact Sonja Brodt, Academic Coordinator, at sbrodt@ucdavis.edu.

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