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News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

November 19, 2014



CalCAN Summit Program Taking Shape

On March 24th and 25th, 2015, CalCAN will host the [4th California Climate and Agriculture Summit](#) at the UC Davis Conference Center. The Summit begins with a farm tour in the Yolo County area on March 24th, followed by a full day of plenary, workshop,

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and poster presentations on the 25th.

The Summit explores the science, policy and practice of climate change and sustainable agriculture in California. Participants include farmers and ranchers, agency staff, technical service providers, policymakers and advocates concerned with climate change challenges and opportunities for California agriculture.

Invited keynote speakers include Assemblymember Susan Talamantes-Eggman, chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, and Craig McNamara, owner of Sierra Orchards and chair of the State Board of Food and Agriculture.

Some workshop titles include:

- Practical Solutions for Dealing with the Drought
- Strategies for Building Soil Carbon
- Conserving Working Lands as a Climate Protection Strategy
- Water Policy & What it Means for California Growers
- Progress in Assessing GHG Emissions on Farms
- The Science of Rangeland Management and Climate Protection

A final program will be available early in December [on our website](#). Registration opens on January 7, 2015.

Summit Sponsorship Opportunities - Act Now!

We invite you to show your support for CalCAN by becoming a Summit sponsor. This partnering opportunity gives your business or organization recognition and visibility as a leader.

To learn more, contact Renata at renata@calclimateag.org or 707-823-8278.



California Legislative Round-Up 2014



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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In this Issue:

Climate & Agriculture Summit 2015: Program Update and Call for Sponsors

California Legislative Round-Up 2014

CalCAN Out & About

CalCAN is Awesome!

Partner Profile: Gold Ridge RCD

Funding

Events

This year saw considerable legislative action on issues relevant to climate change and agriculture in California. Click [here](#) to read a recap.

CalCAN "Out & About"

CalCAN staff have had a busy few months making presentations at events and conferences around the state. Here are a few highlights:

Bioneers

CalCAN recently participated in a day-long climate leadership workshop for the annual [Bioneers](#) Conference, featuring [speakers](#) that included Former California State Senator Tom Hayden and Social Entrepreneur Paul Hawken. Topics spanned a wide range, including the connection between poverty and pollution, the successes and challenges of solar energy, and opportunities for rainwater catchment.

Although agriculture was not the main topic of the day, several speakers specifically noted the importance of including agriculture in the climate change discussion. On the *Natural Systems, Working Lands and Carbon Sinks* panel, CalCAN Policy Director Jeanne Merrill described some of the climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies being pursued in California. In particular, she noted California farmers' enthusiastic adoption of on-farm renewable energy, which tripled in the state between 2009 and 2012. She emphasized that transitioning to more sustainable farming systems overall is the way forward, calling out the co-benefits of adopting a more holistic approach to agricultural production.

State Board of Food and Agriculture

CalCAN's Policy Director Jeanne Merrill was invited to speak at a meeting of the Board to share ideas about agricultural adaptation to climate change impacts.

California Adaptation Forum

In late August, the Local Government Commission and the State of California organized the first California Adaptation Forum. CalCAN organized a panel focused on resilience in agriculture. Speakers included Adam Kotin (CalCAN), David Runsten (Community Alliance with Family Farmers), Kelly Nelson (San Mateo County Resource Conservation District) and Paul Muller (Full Belly Farm).

Roundtable on Food, Farming & Faith

In late October, CalCAN helped organize this event in Stockton along with **Catholic Charities of Stockton and California Interfaith Power & Light**. Members of the

Stockton faith community met to discuss the impacts of global warming on our region from the drought to extreme weather, as well as the constructive role agriculture can play in providing climate change solutions. Speakers included Elvira Ramirez (member of the Board of Directors of Catholic Rural Life, Renata Brillinger (CalCAN), Jeanne Okuye (Okuye Farm) and Dan O'Connell (American Farmland Trust).

Annual Meeting of the California Association of RCDs

In mid-November, CalCAN's Renata Brillinger made two presentations at the CARCD conference focused on the climate mitigation contributions that agricultural conservation practices and farmland protection can offer.



CalCAN is Awesome!

Food Tank and the James Beard Foundation recently teamed up to produce their first annual [Good Food Org Guide](#), which highlights non-profit groups doing "exemplary work" on food, agriculture, health, and hunger issues. CalCAN was honored to make the cut!

We were called out as one of '[14 Awesome Food Organizations in California](#)' alongside our friends at [CAFF](#), [Roots of Change](#), the [Center for Land-Based Learning](#), and others. The full guide can be found online by clicking [here](#).

Partner Profile: Gold Ridge RCD

CalCAN is pleased to consider the [Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District](#) (RCD) a partner in the effort to support farmers and ranchers in adapting to climate change. Gold Ridge RCD is a leader in on-farm and residential water catchment projects, a critical strategy as the region copes with a historic drought and an increasingly water-scarce future.

Most landowners in West Sonoma County, located in the Russian River water basin, rely on shallow wells and surface water. Gold Ridge RCD helps growers establish water catchment and storage projects to ensure the long-term viability of farming and ranching and respond to the increasing water scarcity.

[Read more...](#)

Funding

Western SARE Grants

Deadline: Dec. 3, 2014

The USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program is accepting proposals for two of its grant categories. The [Farmer/Rancher Research & Education](#) program provides up to \$15,000 for single producer-proposals to \$25,000 for proposals by three or more producers. The [Professional + Producer](#) program offers up to \$50,000 in funding for an agricultural professional – including an extension coordinator, government agency field staff, or nonprofit staff member – working with five producers on a sustainable agriculture research project.

Specialty Crop Block Grants

Deadline: Dec. 5, 2014

CDFA conducts a two-phase competitive solicitation process to award funds to projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Grant awards will range from \$50,000 to \$450,000 per project and projects may last for up to two years and nine months. Non-profit and for-profit organizations; local, state, federal, and tribal government entities; and public and private colleges and universities are eligible to apply.

Phase I of the competitive process begins with the submission of concept proposals. Successful applicants will be invited to submit detailed grant proposals in Phase II of the process. Application instructions are available at www.cdfa.ca.gov/grants. Applicants must apply online by registering for a FFAST account at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov>. For more information, contact CDFA's Federal Funds Management Office at (916) 657-3231 or grants@cdfa.ca.gov.

Events

Preventing Drought on Sonoma County's Rangelands Nov. 22, 2014, 9:30am– 1:00pm

Scott Ranch, Petaluma

Hosted by the Sonoma Resource Conservation District, the field day will include a discussion with local land managers Richard King and Scott Ranch's Scott Gerber will focus on understanding grazing management as a tool for soil health, grassland enhancement and how new approaches can benefit the land during drought. Participants will see the effects of some new ideas used by the Scott Ranch on land health, productivity and livestock performance.

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

Soil Health & Drought Adaption Workshop Dec. 9, 2014, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Hopland Research and Extension Center

The MCRCD, NRCS, UCCE, and the Hopland Research and Extension Center have joined forces to bring new research and information on soil water holding capacity, long-term drought adaptation and carbon sequestration to Mendocino County. This forum will offer perspectives on time-tested soil management techniques in order to increase environmental and financial benefits, stimulate discussions about current local approaches to soil management, and gather feedback on the potential for local collaborative demonstration efforts. In the afternoon, we will have discussion groups to gain your insight in order to shape a program for Mendocino County.

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

Grazing for Change Feb. 27 – March 1, 2015

Chico State College of Agriculture

Join leading holistic management practitioners and scientists to learn how to use livestock to improve soil, decrease dependence on water, grow more grass and improve profits. This is a practical, results-oriented event. Speakers include Alan Savory, Christine Jones, Bill Burrows and more.

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

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Thank you for your interest in the California Climate and Agriculture Network.*

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