

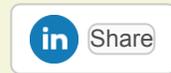
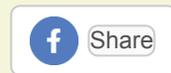


News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

November 16, 2015



Agriculture Coalition & State Legislators Unite



to Defend On-Farm Renewable Energy Program

A diverse group of California's leading agricultural trade groups and advocacy organizations is collaborating to protect the future of on-farm renewable energy in California.

This coalition of 35 organizations, mobilized by CalCAN alongside the California Farm Bureau Federation, Agricultural Energy Consumers Association, and the Wine Institute, delivered a [letter](#) to the state's Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in San Francisco.

We call on Commissioners to preserve a key feature of the state's renewable energy program, [Net Energy Metering Aggregation](#) (NEMA). NEMA, a critical tool for growers who wish to generate their own renewable energy, became a reality after CalCAN and partners [supported the passage](#) of Senate Bill 594 (Wolk) in 2012 and ushered it through a drawn-out implementation process.

[Read more...](#)



Legislative Roundup 2015

The 2015 legislative year in California started off with a bang, climate policy-wise.

Speaking before the assembled members of the Legislature at his January inaugural address, Governor Jerry Brown outlined several bold objectives for the year 2030, including goals to produce 50 percent of our electricity from renewable sources, reduce petroleum use by 50 percent, and double the energy efficiency of existing buildings.

Perhaps most radical was the [Governor's declaration](#) that "we must manage farm and rangelands, forests and wetlands so they can store carbon." By this he meant agricultural



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:

Renewable Energy Program Update

Legislative Roundup 2015

Climate Change Investment Plan

CalCAN in the News

Funding Gap for Agroecology

Funding

Events

Job Opening

practices—including many in the organic toolkit—that can draw down and hold atmospheric carbon in soils, perennial crops and conservation plantings.

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Climate Change Investment Plan to Include Agricultural Strategies

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) recently released its draft [Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds Second Investment Plan](#), which lays out the how the state will focus its investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next three years. The investment plan is intended to inform California state budget-makers in their annual decisions on how to focus climate investments.



This is the second ARB investment plan since the start of the California cap-and-trade program. Fortunately, there is a lot to be encouraged by in this draft document. As we discuss below, ARB has put significant emphasis on farmland conservation strategies and other 'climate-smart' agricultural activities.

There are opportunities to weigh in on the draft plan at public workshops or by sending in a [letter](#). The discussion of the draft plan presents an important opportunity to highlight how sustainable agricultural solutions offer some of the best opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions while supporting a resilient food and farm system.

[Read more...](#)

CalCAN in the News

In the past couple of months, CalCAN staff and advisors have been quoted in media articles focused on climate and agriculture. Here is a short list of recent stories:

[Legislators aim to save renewable-energy program](#) (Davis Enterprise, Nov. 12) — *See the first story in this newsletter for more background.*

[Conserving farms is good investment](#) (Sacramento Bee, Oct. 14) — *Opinion piece by Rich Rominger, CalCAN farmer advisor.*

[How to drought-proof California farms](#) (High Country News, Sept. 24)

[Farms harvest cuts in carbon dioxide via soil](#) (Scientific American, Sept. 22)

New Study Quantifies the Funding Gap for Agroecology

Ecological impacts of industrial agriculture include significant greenhouse gas emissions, loss of biodiversity, widespread pollution by fertilizers and pesticides, soil loss and degradation, declining pollinators, and human health risks, among many others. A rapidly growing body of scientific research, however, suggests that farming systems designed and managed according to ecological principles can meet the food needs of society while addressing these pressing environmental and social issues.

The promise of such systems implies an urgent need for increasing the scope and scale of this area of research – agroecology. Notably, agroecological systems have been shown to reduce input dependency and therefore related research is unlikely to be supported by the private sector. This study shows that federal funding has failed to fill the gap.

Researchers analyzed research projects funded in 2014 by the USDA Research, Extension, and Economics program and found that, while the majority of projects had at least one component relevant to agroecology (e.g., reduced use of chemical inputs), less than 2% of the budget funded projects with an emphasis on agroecology.

Results indicate that increased funding within the Research, Extension, and Economics program is needed for systems-based research in biologically diversified farming and ranching systems.

Read the full study [here](#).

Funding

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is soliciting grants totaling \$18 million to fund new farmer training and education programs across the country. These federal grants are made available to non-profit and community-based organizations, as well as academic institutions and government entities. BFRDP is the only national program that explicitly provides funding to train the next generation of farmers. Projects that are submitted for funding must aim to train, educate or provide other resources for beginning farmers or ranchers, which are defined as those farmers who have been farming for 10 years or less. Evidence of farmer input on the proposed project is very important and will be used as an evaluation criteria in selecting grant applications to be funded.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the RFP.

More information about the program is available in a [Grassroots Guide](#) produced by the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

Also, interested applicants can learn more at an [upcoming webinar](#) on Dec. 2nd at 1:00pm ET.

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Workshops Concept proposals due Dec. 4th

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is now accepting proposals for the 2016 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Each year, CDFA conducts a two-phase competitive solicitation process to award funds to projects that solely enhance the competitiveness of California specialty crops. Specialty crops include fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops.

Phase I of the competitive process begins with the submission of concept proposals. Concept proposals undergo both an administrative review conducted by CDFA as well as a technical review conducted by a volunteer panel of subject matter experts. Successful applicants will be invited to submit a detailed grant proposal in Phase II of the process.

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

CDFA is also seeking technical reviewers for this round of grant applications. To learn more and for instructions on applying, click [here](#).

Events

EcoFarm Conference January 20 – 23, 2016 Pacific Grove, CA

Earlybird registration for the 36th annual EcoFarm Conference ends on December 6th. The conference will highlight answers to big issues that all farms face: drought, climate change, soil health, and so much more. EcoFarmers will walk away from the conference empowered with tools, resources, and knowledge. From technical discussions on biological methods, to the business of farming, the conference is a roll-up-your sleeves affair. With over 70 sessions to choose from, the conference will inspire and frame our shared mission to grow and shape a healthy, safe, and just food and farming system.

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

Regional Funding, Regional Action Bay Area Open Space Council November 19, 9:30am – 1:00pm David Brower Center, Berkeley, CA

Do you want to hear the latest news and future outlook for public funding opportunities for open space protection? We have convened a panel who will provide an update and answer your questions. And they're taking it one step further by giving you tools to help ensure these funding sources are sustainable.

At our Gathering, we will discuss the latest on the Restoration Authority, Bay Program of the Coastal Conservancy, Strategic Growth Council's agricultural lands program, and the Bay Area's Priority Conservation Areas. Speakers include:

- Sara Fain, Greenbelt Alliance, to talk about ABAG's Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs)
- Amy Hutzler, Coastal Conservancy, to talk about the Bay Program of the Coastal Conservancy
- David Lewis, Save the Bay, to talk about the Restoration Authority
- Kathryn Lyddan, Bay Area Agriculture Conservationists, to talk about Strategic Growth Council's agriculture program
- Andrea Mackenzie, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, to moderate

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

Job Opening

**Assistant Professor – Agroecology/Sustainable
Agricultural Systems
Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and
Management, UC Berkeley**

The Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management (ESPM) in the College of Natural Resources at UC Berkeley is recruiting for a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the field of agroecology/ sustainable agricultural systems, with an expected start date of July 1, 2016. The position includes a joint appointment in the California Agricultural Experiment Station. We are looking for a scientist who studies environmental issues in agriculture within an interdisciplinary, whole-systems framework. ESPM is a large, diverse department with strong natural and social science contingents, and we encourage multi-disciplinary approaches to environmental problem-solving. The successful candidate will embrace ESPM's mission and contribute to programs of the new [Berkeley Food Institute](#), by conducting agricultural research and teaching that is sensitive to rapidly changing social, political, and environmental contexts and oriented toward finding solutions to environmental problems.

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

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

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