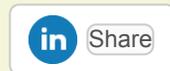
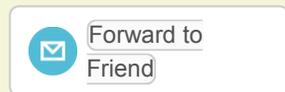




News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

March 14, 2016



Farmers and Ag Professionals Meet at Capitol for CalCAN Lobby Day

On March 9th, more than 30 farmers, ranchers and non-profit agriculture organizations met with 40 state legislative and administrative offices to discuss agriculture's solutions to climate change.

These CalCAN partners shared their stories about how climate change is impacting California's farms and ranches, and also what they are doing to build soil, conserve water, produce renewable energy, increase biodiversity and stay economically viable. They spoke of the need for incentives, research and technical assistance to encourage climate smart agriculture, and talked about the importance of [Governor Brown's budget proposals](#).

The day ended with a Climate Smart Agriculture reception attended by more than 65 people. CDFA Deputy Secretary Jenny Lester-Moffitt spoke about the department's [incentives programs](#) for water conservation, reducing methane on dairies, and healthy soils. Dave Bunn, Director of the Department of Conservation, talked about the [Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program](#) and coordination with CDFA on other innovative approaches to climate change on working lands.

Many thanks to the CalCAN partners who attended! Your experiences, perspectives and insights are critical as California continues to grapple with the best ways to support agriculture's climate solutions and resilience.



Healthy Soils Taking Climate Center Stage in 2016

As we've [mentioned before](#), the Governor has proposed \$20 million for a Healthy Soils Initiative. Various state programs are increasingly funding healthy soils as well. We [recently outlined](#) the Department of Water Resources Proposition 1-funded program, which has recognized improved soil organic matter as a strategy for enhancing the water holding capacity of soils. Similarly, in their most recent granting round, the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) [Statewide Energy and Efficiency Enhancement Program](#)



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

[Learn more...](#)

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([SWEEP](#))—currently funded at \$40 million—considers beneficial soil management practices as valuable water savings and greenhouse gas reduction activities.

Unsurprisingly, there has been a flurry of activity around the topic of healthy soils in California.

[Read more...](#)



CDFA's New Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) recently announced the formation of a new office—the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation—where their [climate smart agriculture initiatives](#) will be coordinated. This includes the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) and the new Healthy Soils Initiative.

The Office has a position open for a Limited-Term Environmental Scientist position. Under supervision of the Special Assistant, the incumbent will perform a variety of scientific, technical and professional duties associated with developing, managing and monitoring all SWEEP projects. The incumbent will serve as the Central Valley Regional Coordinator. The incumbent must establish and maintain effective working relationships with farmers, ranchers, and other stakeholders.

For more information about this job opportunity, please view the following link: [JC-8593 Environmental Scientist - Kern County](#). Electronic applications will be accepted until March 18, 2016.

Funding

On-Farm Water Conservation Grants Due March 30, 2016

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is now accepting grant proposals for up to \$300,000 for on-farm water use efficiency training and technical assistance programs. These funds are well-suited for outreach, training, and educational efforts that work directly with growers to maximize the efficient on-farm use of irrigation equipment.

Importantly, the guidelines explicitly state that technical assistance grants can be designed to complement CDFA SWEEP grants by assisting growers with project design and efficiency potential for SWEEP applications and to provide training and education for SWEEP recipients to maximize operation of SWEEP-funded technologies/equipment.

CalCAN and CAFF advocated to ensure that the final granting guidelines encourage these types of projects. DWR has made a significant effort to open the solicitation to training and technical assistance projects for on-farm water use efficiencies that may benefit Resource Conservation Districts, UC Cooperative Extension and some nonprofit organizations. More context on the connection between the DWR and CDFA granting programs is available in a recent CalCAN blog by [clicking here](#).

For more information and to apply:

<http://www.water.ca.gov/wuegrants/SolicitationsProp1AG.cfm>

Financial Assistance for Conservation Buffers on Organic Farms

Financial assistance is now available to assist with the cost of establishing new conservation buffers and other practices on and near farms that produce organic crops. The funds come from the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits.

CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. For conservation buffers, funds are available for establishing shrubs and trees, or supporting pollinating species, and can be planted in blocks or strips. Interested organic producers can offer eligible land for enrollment in this initiative at any time.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



Sustainable Agriculture Leader in Philanthropy Honored

Susan Clark Wins Annual Sustie Award

At the annual [EcoFarm Conference](#) earlier this year, Susan Clark—a long-time funder of CalCAN and many other sustainable agriculture and food systems projects—was honored with the "Sustie" award for lifetime achievements in sustainable agriculture.

For 40 years, Susan has been a pioneer and thought leader in sustainable agriculture philanthropy. She was a program officer of the Columbia Foundation for 35 years and now works with Gaia Fund. She has overseen funding for hundreds of organizations and projects, helped establish academic programs and centers, and launched several funder collaborations. Early on, she recognized the critical importance of linking agricultural stewardship with environmental protection, and has been a bridge between these communities for decades.

It was a great honor for CalCAN's Executive Director, Renata Brillinger, to nominate Susan and present the award.



New Report

HomeGrown: Tools for Local Farms and Ranches

Check out Greenbelt Alliance's new report, *HomeGrown: Tools for Local Farms and Ranches*. This report explores creative tools and strategies that are working around the Bay Area and beyond to support local agriculture, and compiles innovative tools and best practices to help farmers and ranchers stay in business.

[Click here](#) to download the report.

Events

Holistic Management and Regenerative Agriculture Design Course

Ridgewood Ranch, Willits, CA

March 18–20, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm each day

For the first time, Spencer Smith from the Jefferson Center for Holistic Management and Mark Shepard of New Forrest Farm will be teaming up to teach a combined Holistic Management and Regenerative Ag Design course. The three-day intensive course will cover a variety of tools for the farm that will increase production and profitability while improving the soil and protecting your landscape from drought, flood and fire. At this workshop we will teach you how to create a land plan that will transform your landscape into a biologically active, income producing, regenerative farming operation.

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

Soil Carbon and Water: Possibilities for Change

Storrs Vineyard, Corralitos, CA

April 9, 2016 — 9 am – 3 pm

What can soil surfaces tell us about water infiltration, carbon cycling, policies, and practices? A participatory workshop for farmers, ranchers, land trusts and citizens. Learn the surprising role of soils and plants in reducing excess CO₂ in the air. By attending this workshop, you will be able to make informed decisions about how land can be better managed. You will become skilled at monitoring soil for water infiltration by using specific tools, including a simple-to-use app. You will get connected with your local Resource Conservation District and National Resources Conservation Service and learn about financial incentives for your healthy soils. Instructors are Peter Donovan (Soil Carbon Coalition) and Kelly Mulville (Paicines Ranch).

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

USDA Webinar: NRCS and Rural Development Memorandum of Understanding, Coordination of Programs, and the Ability to Stack REAP and EQIP Funding for Energy Programs

March 22, 11:00am

This webinar is a review of the new USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU provides a framework for collaboration of resources, uniformity of standards,

and prevention of potential duplication of technical and financial assistance, while strengthening outreach to clients. The webinar will look at on-farm energy efficiency projects from both NRCS and RD and the use of funding sources from both the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP, NRCS) and Rural Energy for America Program (REAP, RD) to leverage on-farm projects.

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

It's All About the Soil: Farming on a Hot Planet
Green String Farm, Petaluma
March 20, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Slow Food Russian River is excited to present best-selling author and educator Anna Lappé and leading climate and food policy activists Diana Donlon and Michael Dimock for a stimulating, thought-provoking event that explores the connection of soil, farming and climate change.

Climate change is forcing us to rethink farming methods. Globally, more than twice as much carbon is stored in our soil as in our living vegetation. Maintaining that soil and getting more carbon sequestered in the land is a key part of mitigating the crisis. The farmer is a great, untapped resource in the fight against climate change. Hear about solutions emerging from the land: from the soil, the crops, and the farmers who are employing climate-friendly methods to restore and regenerate the soil. Learn how your informed choices about your diet and your garden have an impact. And how Sonoma County and California are leading the way.

[Click here](#) to register.

Jobs

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition Internships

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) is seeking a Policy Intern and a Grassroots Intern for the summer term beginning in mid-to-late May 2016 and lasting until mid-to-late August 2016. Both positions are paid, full time, and located at NSAC's DC office on Capitol Hill. Please view the position descriptions for more information and instructions on how to apply:

- [Policy Intern Position Description](#)
- [Grassroots Intern Position Description](#)

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

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