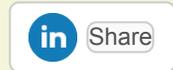
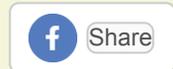




News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

April 18, 2016



Healthy Soils Initiative: Recommendations from CalCAN Partners

Nearly thirty agriculture and conservation organizations recently delivered [a set of recommendations](#) on Governor Brown's [Healthy Soils Initiative](#).

California is proposing the first program of its kind in the country – a soils initiative aimed reducing greenhouse gas emissions and storing more carbon in our agricultural lands. How best to do this? The group grappled with this question by reviewing past and present agricultural conservation programs to see what works best and how these programs may inform the soils program.

[Read more...](#)



Climate and Agriculture Bills to Watch in 2016

It's that time of year when CalCAN reviews legislation that may help, or hinder, farmers and ranchers in addressing climate change. We are pleased to support a slate of sensible policy measures that will each in their own way help to unlock sustainable agricultural solutions to climate change. This blog includes summaries of:

- **SB 1350** — Would create a Healthy Soils program at the California Department of Food and Agriculture. More information about this bill, which has some similarities to a CalCAN-sponsored bill in 2015, is available [here](#).
- **SB 1386** — Would make it the policy of the state of California that the protection and management of natural and working lands are a key strategy in meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals.
- **SB 1257** – Would create Agricultural Innovation Zones and a voluntary incentive program to support climate-smart agricultural farming practices on fields located near sensitive areas, such as schools and childcare centers.
- **SB 1317** — Would tighten the local issuance of well permits, providing a sensible follow-up to SGMA in the near-term.
- **AB 1826** — Would streamline paperwork and reducing fees



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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associated with the State Organic Program. Additionally, it would update the role of the Organic Program to focus on education and outreach as well as support for organic transition.

- **AB 2725** — Would standardize food date labels to reduce consumer confusion and prevent the unnecessary and premature disposal of many food products.
- **AB 1850**— Would make technical assistance funds available to work with potential Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) recipients in disadvantaged communities, we help level the playing field and achieve the multiple benefits of GGRF investment throughout our communities.
- **AB 2715** — Would create a new program to improve the energy efficiency of farmworker housing, provide related energy savings, and foster greater resilience to heat waves and other extreme weather events.
- **AB 2339** — Would allow more farmers and ranchers to generate on-farm renewable energy by expanding access to the Net Energy Metering (NEM) program within irrigation districts and other publicly-owned utility (POU) territories.

[Read more...](#)



What is Climate Smart Agriculture?

You may have been hearing the phrase “climate smart agriculture” more lately. Governor Brown embraced the term in his 2016–17 budget proposal. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a climate smart agriculture initiative. And international climate efforts include the UN’s work on support climate smart agricultural practices.

So what is climate smart agriculture? Like the phrase “sustainable agriculture,” it is not universally defined, and it is used to mean many things to many people.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations takes credit for first coining the term in the lead up to the 2010 Hague Conference on Food Security, Agriculture and Climate Change. The FAO defines climate smart agriculture as “a means of identifying which production systems and enabling institutions are best suited to respond to the challenges of climate change for

specific locations, to maintain and enhance the capacity of agriculture to support food security in a sustainable way.”

[Read more...](#)

On-Farm Solar Energy Fact Sheets

The Ohio State University has issued a series of fact sheets that cover key aspects of on-farm solar energy development. The series includes "An Introduction to On-Farm Solar Electric Systems," "On-Farm Solar Site Assessment," "Estimating the Size of Your Solar Electric System," "Financial Considerations of On-Farm Renewable Energy" and "On-Farm Solar Electric System Safety."

[Click here](#) to download the fact sheets.



The Role of Ruminants in Reducing Agriculture’s Carbon Footprint

In the current issue of the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, the researchers conclude that "with appropriate regenerative crop and grazing management, ruminants not only reduce overall GHG emissions, but also facilitate provision of essential ecosystem services, increase soil carbon sequestration, and reduce environmental damage." The recommend that policies and practices that address the lon-term sustainability of agricultural systems should include ruminant grazing as a strategy.

[Click here](#) to read the full paper.

CalCAN Partners Recognized

Two CalCAN partners were recognized this month for their leadership in agriculture and conservation. We have benefitted from their expertise and advice on policy papers, comment letters and recommendations, and for connecting us with others in the field.

- San Mateo RCD received the 2016 Sustainability Award for their services in San Mateo County. [Click here](#) for a video

describing their work supporting landowners in managing natural resources.

- Daniel Mountjoy received the UC Davis Eric Bradford & Charlie Rominger Agricultural Sustainability Leadership Award for his leadership in agricultural sustainability. Daniel is currently the Director of Stewardship at Sustainable Conservation after serving for 17 years as Assistant State Conservationist with NRCS.

Congratulations to both Daniel Mountjoy and to Kellyx Nelson and her team at San Mateo RCD!

Events

Grazing Academy to Highlight Soil Health

April 29 & 30

UC Sierra Research and Extension Center, Browns Valley

This course, offered by UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, will cover principles of controlled grazing, pasture and range ecology, soil health, working with temporary electric fencing, cell design, range nutrition and supplementation, feed budgeting, grazing planning, and monitoring. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Regenerative Water Harvesting and Land Restoration Training, with Craig Sponholtz

April 29 – May 1, 2016

Heartwood Institute, Garberville, CA

This course is designed to expand your water harvesting and land restoration toolbox to create site-specific solutions while developing a holistic design approach to water harvesting, erosion control and land restoration projects. You will learn the steps required to design projects that are truly resilient and restore abundance to the land. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Changing Season Book Tour

"Changing Season" is a compilation of essays that capture the questions and ruminations of two farmers in transition: a young farmer learning from her mentor/dad, and her father who was once a young farmer too, now considering what it means to pass something on. David Mas and Nikiko are a father-daughter team at the Masumoto Family Farm who work together every day. They grow organic peaches, nectarines, and grapes for raisins on a small farm in the Central Valley of California. They believe that stories are most powerful when they are shared, and have written a new manuscript, "Changing Season."

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Jobs

Community Water Center Positions

The Community Water Center (CWC) acts as a catalyst for community-driven water solutions through organizing, education, and advocacy. We seek to build and enhance leadership capacity and local community power around water issues, create a regional movement for water justice in the San Joaquin Valley, and enable every community to access safe, clean, and affordable drinking water. CWC is looking for three new team members; links to each position are below:

- [Director of Organizing](#)
- [Organizing Coordinator](#)
- [Policy Director](#)

National Organic Standards Board

USDA is [inviting nominees](#) to serve on the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) from 2017 – 2022. The Board consists of 15 members from across the organic community, and provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary on the implementation of the Organic Foods Production Act. The USDA is seeking nominations for the following five seats:

- Organic producer
- Environmentalist/ resource conservationist
- Representative of a public or consumer interest group
- Organic handler or processor
- Scientist (toxicology, ecology, or biochemistry)

More information is available on the [NOSB Nominations Webpage](#). Applications are due by June 3, 2016.

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

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