



# News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

September 19, 2016

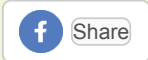
### Good News!

In the final days of session, California legislators passed a flurry of bills to establish new climate goals and fund new programs. We are very pleased to report on several victories. Here is a snapshot:

- California's ambitious GHG reduction goals are extended through 2030.
- On the last day of session, the legislature approved \$105 million in funding for climate smart agriculture programs for fiscal year 2016-17.
- The Healthy Soils Program is launched and funded with \$7.5 million, the culmination of two years' effort on the part of CalCAN and a wide network of partners.
- The legislature approved language stating that a diversity of dairy methane management practices can effectively reduce GHG emissions.

Several of the following articles get into greater detail on these successes.

Many of you have been involved and supportive of these efforts over the years, and that made a big difference. CalCAN will continue to count on you as we move into the phase of advocating for effective implementation of



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

these burgeoning climate smart programs, continuous improvement, and adequate funding in the coming years.

Thank you for all that you do to advance sustainable and organic agricultural solutions to climate change—there is a lot to celebrate!



### State Lawmakers Create Healthy Soils Program, Pass Historic Climate Bills

*[from a CalCAN press release on Sept. 1st, the day after the legislature recessed for the year]*

Farmers and ranchers throughout California commend the legislature for its recent actions on climate change. The passage of key climate bills, alongside the appropriation of more than \$65 million for climate-smart agriculture programs, will provide needed resources for farmers and ranchers to address a changing climate.

“Farmers have a lot at stake in a changing climate as our extreme drought reminds us,” said Tom Willey at T&D Willey Farms in Madera. “We experience the impacts of climate change on our farm every day. I commend the California legislature for continuing down the path of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing in the continued success of California agriculture.

Yesterday, legislators passed a pair of budget bills ([AB 1613](#) and [SB 859](#)) which include \$65 million for programs that provide resources for growers to lower greenhouse gas emissions, store carbon in soils and offer multiple benefits to agricultural producers and the environment. The budget allocation includes \$7.5 million for the new [Healthy Soils Program](#); \$7.5 million for the [State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program](#); and \$50 million for the Dairy Methane Program. Also funded separately with a continuous appropriation is the [Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program](#), a farmland conservation and climate change program.

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practices. [Learn more...](#)

### Save the Date!

CalCAN's 5th California Climate & Agriculture Summit will be on Feb. 28th & March 1st, 2017 at UC Davis. Registration opens Dec. 1st. [Learn more...](#)

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## Healthy Soils Initiative Funded

### *New Climate Smart Agriculture Program to Launch this Year*

In the final hours of the legislative session in August, the Legislature passed a funding package for the state's climate change programs. Among the funded programs was the Healthy Soils Initiative, a CalCAN supported effort to provide resources for farmers and ranchers to increase carbon stores in agricultural soils and reduce greenhouse gas emissions overall.

Central to the funding decisions of last week was the fate of California's comprehensive [climate change law](#), AB 32. Passed ten years ago, AB 32 requires that California reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Last year, [SB 32](#) was introduced by Senator Fran Pavley to extend the state's climate change law to the year 2030 with a new target of a 40 percent reduction in greenhouse gases below the 1990 level. CalCAN supported the bill. However, with significant industry opposition the bill did not pass out of the legislature last year and instead was held over until this year.

The fate of SB 32 seemed uncertain in the final weeks of session until a coalition of environmental and business groups rallied behind it and its new companion bill, [AB 197](#). Also in the final weeks of session, Governor Brown announced a new political action committee (PAC) to explore putting the extension of the cap-and-trade program, a key component to the state's climate change law, on the ballot in 2018. This seemed to shake loose the stalled talks on the climate bills as well as negotiations on the fate of funding for climate change programs like Healthy Soils.

[Read more...](#)



## Progress on Dairy Methane Comes With Strings Attached

As the California legislature took up the future of the state's climate change laws this year, special attention was paid to enacting policy aimed at reducing methane emissions in the dairy sector. Dairies are one of the largest emitters of methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

Legislators approved \$50 million in FY 2016-17 to tackle the dairy methane issue, and passed SB 1383 and SB 859 to guide these efforts - including explicit authority for the state to regulate dairy methane emissions starting in 2024. These discussions also take on added significance as California ups the ante on its climate commitments, pledging to reduce GHGs to 40% below 1990 levels by the year 2020.

1990 levels by the year 2050.

Below we discuss the outcomes of this legislative session, and what they could mean for the road ahead.

[Read more...](#)



### **SWEEP Grants: Update on Round 4**

CalCAN recently reviewed data from the fourth round of on-farm grants made through the [State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program \(SWEEP\)](#), one of California's climate-smart agriculture programs. CalCAN's [SWEEP Progress Report](#), released in May, examined how SWEEP is working for farmers and the climate, and offered recommendations for program improvement. Our [Round 4 Update](#) is previewed below.

SWEEP, funded by cap-and-trade auction proceeds, equips agricultural producers to reduce their carbon footprint, save water and energy resources, and increase their resilience to a changing climate. While this two-year-old program has steadily evolved, our analysis still shows room for improvement.

[Read more...](#)



### **Climate Leader Profile: Peter Donovan and the Soil Carbon Challenge**

The [Soil Carbon Challenge](#) digs directly into the ground with the farmers, ranchers, and landowners who can manage land to improve soil health. Peter Donovan, a leader in demonstrating the connection between land management practices and increased soil carbon, founded the Soil Carbon Challenge—"an international prize competition to see how fast land managers can turn atmospheric carbon into water-holding, fertility-enhancing soil organic matter." Peter has established an approach to

scientifically showing (not just telling) the nexus of appropriate land management, soils, and carbon sequestration.

When managed correctly, soil can become a “sink” for atmospheric carbon while also providing benefits such as increased water holding capacity, decreased erosion and runoff, and improved health, productivity, and resilience due to enhanced populations and diversity of soil microorganisms.

Peter believes in showing possibility by measuring change over time, and recognizing actual results. As such, The Soil Carbon Coalition supports “a different kind of science”, believing science is “based on shared evidence, open participation, specific locations and situations, and on learning to manage wholes more than parts.”

With these guiding principles, the Soil Carbon Challenge is based in participatory research motivated by healthy competition among landowners to cultivate healthy soils capable of capturing and storing carbon from the atmosphere. To implement this “citizen science,” Peter travels around the United States (in an old school bus) helping landowners set up monitoring plots to measure how soil carbon changes both over time and with different management practices.

The program has established over 290 baseline plots on farms, ranches and other private lands in North America alone. With increased attention on healthy soils from the UN, the Paris Climate Summit, and California policy, to name a few, presently, there is more demand than the Soil Carbon Coalition is able to fill.

Peter believes his participatory (and competitive) approach shifts people from asking the skeptical question about storing carbon in soil, “Can it be done?” to instead asking, “How well, and how fast?”

Tackling climate change requires multiple approaches from multiple actors. Peter Donovan’s participatory, citizen-led soil carbon research plays an important piece of the climate solution.

## Events

### **Soil Microbes: A Powerful Influence in Agroecosystems**

**Sept. 29, 5:30–7:00 pm**

**Chico State University, Bell Memorial Union, Room 203**

**Hosted by the [Regenerative Agriculture Initiative \(RAI\)](#) at CSU**

David Johnson, PhD, is a molecular biologist conducting research at the Institute for Energy and Environment in the New Mexico State University College of Engineering. His work provides insight into the potential of regenerative agricultural practices to enhance biological processes and store carbon in soil. This event is free and open to the public.

[Click here](#) for more information.

### **Hoes Down Harvest Celebration**

**Oct. 1 and 2**

**Full Belly Farm, Guinda**

Put your hoes down, learn, dance, and get farmy at this popular annual festival at [Full Belly Farm](#) in beautiful Capay Valley! Two fun-filled days of events and seminars for all ages, and a truly special opportunity to connect with rural life. There is something for everyone—a children’s area,



farm tours, workshops, glowing carved pumpkins, camping, live music and wagon rides are annual favorites, as well as an all organic farmers' market with a bounty of seasonal foods including a huge variety of pumpkins, melons, apples, fresh-picked almonds and walnuts. The festival is a fundraiser for several sustainable agriculture organizations.

[Click here](#) for more information and to buy advance tickets.

### **Quivira Coalition Conference: Lights, Soil, Action!**

**Nov. 9-11**

#### **Albuquerque, New Mexico**

Quivira Coalition's 15th conference will tackle the urgent question: How can we transform our world by getting regenerative solutions implemented widely and quickly? What are the obstacles? The opportunities? What are we doing wrong? Right? Speakers will offer their answers from diverse perspectives, including agriculture, conservation, policy, science, and advocacy, emphasizing leaders who are making a difference and real-world projects that are scaling up to effective levels. In the wake of the Paris Agreement on climate, the need for action is real and immediate. Please join us at this important event.

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

### **Sustainable Ag Expo**

**Nov. 14-16**

#### **San Luis Obispo**

The Sustainable Ag Expo is a multi-day educational seminar bringing the latest scientific and technical information to growers, pest control advisors, and other agricultural professionals interested in and committed to sustainable farming across a range of crops. Sustainable farming exists in a complicated landscape of practical, social, economic, and regulatory forces.

The educational content of the Sustainable Ag Expo is designed to produce insights and foster conversations on the most pressing issues in the field including pests and diseases, natural resource conservation, technology adoption, and regulatory compliance.

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

## **Jobs**

### **Program Division Director**

#### **CA Department of Conservation**

The Division Director is responsible for overseeing and directing the Division of Land Resource Protection's (DLRP) land conservation programs to meet statutory program requirements as well as the goals of the Department, the Natural Resources Agency and the Governor's Office. These programs include the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) Program, High-Speed Authority Land Mitigation Program, Agricultural Conservation Easements, Conservation Program Support, Williamson Act Program, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), Administration, Grants and Contracts Program and the Resource Conservation District Assistance (RCD) Program.

[Click here](#) for more information.

### **Executive Director**

#### **Ecological Farming Association**

### **Ecological Farming Association**

EcoFarm is pleased to announce an exciting opportunity to join our vibrant team as its next Executive Director. We seek a skilled, dynamic and passionate individual to lead our organization in its next phase of growth and development. Our ideal candidate is a seasoned leader and an ideas-generator with a demonstrated track record of success leveraging their skills and experience in strategic planning, fundraising and organizational and financial management.

[Click here](#) for a full description of this opportunity.

#### **Executive Director**

##### **Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)**

The ideal Executive Director candidate will have experience in organizational management and a foundation in sustainable agriculture or food systems. He/She will have a proven track record in managing an organization on a growth trajectory with at least 15 employees and 1 layer of senior management. Effective communication, team building, day-to-day management skills, and proficiency with modern work tools are essential for this position. The application deadline is September 30.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

#### **Executive Director**

##### **Agriculture and Land Based Training Association (ALBA)**

ALBA is searching for a visionary leader and chief executive officer to manage its educational, farming, and produce distribution operations. Located in the bountiful Salinas Valley of Monterey County, California, ALBA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help aspiring individuals improve their skills and livelihoods through the agricultural industry. It fulfills this mission through the provision of training and technical assistance. ALBA provides bi-lingual courses (English and Spanish) in agronomy; and offers hands-on farming experience at its farm incubator located near Salinas, California.

Qualified candidates can submit a cover letter and résumé to [efmoncrief@gmail.com](mailto:efmoncrief@gmail.com). [Click here](#) to learn more about ALBA.

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