



News from the California Climate & Agriculture Network

October 17, 2016

2017 CalCAN Summit Taking Shape

CalCAN's 5th Climate and Agriculture Summit—set to take place on Feb. 28th and March 1st, 2017 in Davis, CA— is already in motion.

We are excited and honored to announce our two keynote speakers Karen Ross, Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and Glenda Humiston, Vice President of UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR). They will discuss their vision for a viable, resilient and ecologically sustainable California agriculture in the face



and ecologically sustainable California agriculture in the face of climate change.



Karen Ross (left), Secretary of CDFA, and Dr. Glenda Humiston (right), VP of UCANR, will be keynote speakers at the 5th CalCAN Summit.

Below is a sample of the topics that will be covered at the Summit:

- Farmland Conservation as a Climate Strategy
- California's New Healthy Soils Program
- Water We Going to Do? Navigating California Water Policy in a Changing Climate
- Integrated Crop–Livestock Systems: Prospects, tradeoffs, and research needs
- The Potential of Biochar as a Climate Tool
- To Till or Not to Till, That is the Question
- Net Energy Metering & What it Means for Farmers
- Ecology and Justice: Integrating social equity into the transition to climate–smart agriculture
- Farmer–to– Farmer Soil Health Networks

Interested in joining us to explore the latest climate and agriculture science, policy, and practice? Mark your calendars: **Earlybird Registration opens Dec. 1st.**

Want to show your support for this unique event? Contact [Brian Shobe](#), CalCAN's Program and Operations Coordinator, for information about sponsorship opportunities.

CalCAN is Growing!

We are excited to announce the arrival of a new CalCAN staff person, Brian Shobe, who is serving in the new position of Program and Operations Coordinator. Brian comes most recently from the Farmer Veteran Coalition where he served as the Program Coordinator and Government Resources Advisor. He has also completed fellowships with the



CalCAN is a statewide coalition that advances state and federal policy to realize the powerful climate solutions offered by sustainable and organic agriculture. [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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In this Issue:

2017 CalCAN Summit

CalCAN is Growing!

Organic Farmers Celebrate Update to State's Organic Law

Partner Profile: RCDs

Biodiversity Guide for Organic Farmers and Certifiers

Climate Explorer Tool

Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, of which CalCAN is a member. Brian comes from a North Dakota farm family, and has farming experience himself in three states. He adds important new capacity to CalCAN's work on outreach, network cultivation and communications. Brian can be reached at brian@calclimateag.org or (707) 329-6374.

*CDFA 2017 Specialty
Crop Block Grants*

*SARE Grants, Events,
and Jobs*

Two new organizations have also recently joined the [CalCAN coalition leadership team](#). We are pleased to welcome Jo Ann Baumgartner, Executive Director of [Wild Farm Alliance](#) and Reggie Knox, Executive Director of [California FarmLink](#).



CalCAN staff and coalition partners – October, 2016

Guest Blog: Organic Farmers Celebrate Historic Update to California's Organic Law

By Kelly Damewood, Policy Director, CCOF (and CalCAN Coalition Member)

On September 21st, Governor Jerry Brown ushered in the next chapter of organic agriculture in California by signing into law the California Organic Food and Farming Act (COFFA). The law marks the first update to California's organic law and program in over a decade, bringing about much needed reform to support the growing demand for organic agricultural products.

CCOF sponsored and Assemblymember Mark Stone (D-Monterey Bay) authored COFFA to reduce outdated paperwork and fees for the state's over 2,500 organic farms and also to increase support for organic agriculture through the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the California Organic Products Advisory Committee (COPAC).

[Read more...](#)



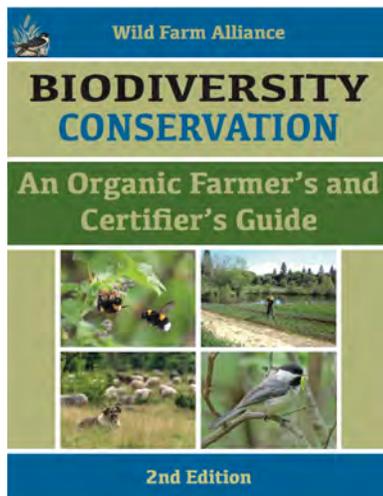
Partner Profile: Resource Conservation Districts

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are special districts throughout California established to work at the local level to conserve natural resources, including agriculture. RCDs work directly with landowners whom voluntarily seek their assistance for a multitude of projects, ranging from water conservation, erosion control, grazing management and nutrient management on their properties, to name a few. Assistance can come in many forms, such as education through workshops, hands-on training, and technical support for projects, including planning and design services, site assessments to discuss issue areas and solutions, construction oversight and monitoring. In some cases, RCDs can provide financial support to landowners through grants, permits, or partnering with USDA's [Natural Resource Conservation Services](#) programs.

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD), a long-time partner of CalCAN, serves a vital role in agricultural conservation and subsequent climate change mitigation in the state. With 97 locally-governed RCDs throughout the state, the CARCD, serves as an important coordinating body for RCD efforts, as well as working to ensure continued assistance (e.g., funding) to RCDs, while also representing them to state and federal agencies and on policy issues.

RCDs, which have built years of trust and relationships with their local growers, are well positioned to provide outreach and hands-on technical assistance for California's new 'Climate-Smart' Agriculture Programs.

[Read more...](#)



Guide to Biodiversity Conservation for Organic Farmers and Certifiers

Wild Farm Alliance, a CalCAN coalition member, released its *Biodiversity Conservation: An Organic Farmer's and*

Certifier's Guide earlier this month. The Guide clarifies the National Organic Program's (NOP) new Natural Resources and Biodiversity Conservation Guidance and gives farmers and certifiers practical and effective information to be in compliance. The Guide also advises farmers on how to take advantage of the ecosystem benefits related to biodiversity, which include enhanced pollination, improved pest control, and decreased dependence on outside pest and fertility inputs.

The Guide specifically recognizes reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building climate change resilience as one of eight core biodiversity principles. On pages 44–45 and 60–61, the Guide lists crop and livestock production practices that result in climate and biodiversity benefits and comply with NOP's new Guidance.

CalCAN served as a technical advisor during the Guide's development, and we are delighted to share the final product.

[Read more...](#)



Climate Explorer Tool Helps Farmers Visualize Climate Changes in Their County

An updated tool from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) shows how climate change will affect the likelihood of extreme weather events on a localized basis. For every county, the Climate Explorer compares historical temperature and precipitation data with projected trends based on downscaled climate models. The easy-to-read charts and maps can help farmers and others visualize how future temperature and precipitation will change from current conditions. For [Sacramento County](#), for example, the tool shows a significant increase in both day and nighttime temperatures, fewer days below 32F, and a variable increase in precipitation during the winter and spring.

[Try out Climate Explorer for yourself...](#)

CDFA 2017 Specialty Crop Block Grants

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has released a call for proposals for its Specialty Crops Block Grants program that provides funding for a range of projects geared to projects that enhance the competitiveness of

California specialty crops (fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops). Grant awards range from \$50,000 to \$450,000 for projects up to two-and-a-half years in length. Non-profit and for-profit organizations; local, state, federal, and tribal government entities; and public and private colleges and universities are eligible to apply.

One of the funding priorities is for research on environmental stewardship and conservation that is essentially focused on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Projects must address at least one of the following program priorities:

1. Developing strategies and tools to enable specialty crop growers to adapt to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon.
2. Developing innovations in water use efficiency and drought resilience.
3. Improving soil health by identifying specific specialty crop management practices that build the soil organic matter content.
4. Research to develop new methods to expand organic and/or sustainable production practices.

Also, under another priority entitled "Training and Education: Equipping Current and Next Generation Specialty Crop Farmers," funds will be available for training that supports "specialty crop producers in adopting environmentally responsible farming methods."

CDFA is offering workshops for interested applicants. [Click here](#) for more information on the workshops and criteria.

CDFA is also seeking representatives from government and non-government organizations to serve as members of the Technical Review Committee. Committee members will attend one webinar and two in-person meetings between December 2016 and April 2017 to make recommendations on concept and grant proposals. Applications are due November 18 by 5 p.m. PST. [Click here for more information](#) about applying.

Western SARE Grants

Producers and agriculture professional in the West are eligible to apply for a share of more than \$1 million in available grants to study, demonstrate, and improve sustainable agricultural practices on their land. Applications for the *Farmer/Rancher Grants* and the *Professional + Producer Grants* are due December 7th. Applications for *Professional Development Grants*, which focus on training agricultural professionals to help them spread knowledge about sustainable agriculture concepts and practices, are due November 2nd.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Events

Climate Beneficial Vineyard Management Symposium

Nov. 4, 9:00am-3:00 pm

Shone Farms - Forestville, CA

Farming for carbon sequestration and reduced greenhouse gas emissions is an emerging opportunity for farmers interested in addressing climate change. This symposium will serve as a forum for researchers and professionals to discuss the latest information on climate change mitigation in vineyards. The goals of the meeting are to:

- Identify vineyard management practices that maximize climate benefit.
- Understand models used to estimate management effects on climate.
- Increase knowledge and preparedness to respond to government initiatives.
- Initiate collaboration among researchers, growers and natural resource professionals.
- Identify local questions and challenges.

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

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts Annual Conference

Nov. 16-19

Ontario, CA

Resource Conservation Districts have to make critical connections between rural and urban communities to create smart solutions for the next generation of agriculture and conservation. CARCD's annual conference will feature people who are already making it happen, including speakers from Friends of the LA River, Santa Clara Open Space Authority, University of California, and the California Strategic Growth Council and Sustainable Conservation.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Jobs

Associate Vice President, Agricultural Sustainability Environmental Defense Fund

The AVP, Agricultural Sustainability will provide the overall vision, strategy, and leadership on agricultural sustainability initiatives, identifying opportunities, developing and implementing projects, and managing advocacy efforts relating to the initiative. The AVP will directly manage EDF's teams working on several core programs including the Sustainable Sourcing Initiative and Agriculture Greenhouse Gas Markets. The AVP will work closely with EDF's Corporate Partnership Program on agriculture initiatives that pertain to the supply chain. This position will be located in Washington, DC, (preferred) or San Francisco, CA.