

# Farmer & Rancher Climate Leaders

## State Water Efficiency & Enhancement Program Participants

*SWEEP, administered by the California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA), provides grants to farmers and ranchers for irrigation management improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save water.*

*More info is available on CDFA's website: [www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/sweep/](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/sweep/)*

### SHARYNE MERRITT FARM

**Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County**

**Award Amount: \$54,808**

“This new system cuts costs for electricity and labor because now I can fine-tune our system from my computer. And on cold nights, not only does it prevent frost damage to the trees by alerting me to turn on the irrigation, but I don’t have to wake up every two hours to check thermometers.”

- Sharyne Merritt



*solar-powered weather station  
in the avocado orchards*

Water availability is one of several climate-related challenges facing California’s avocado industry, along with higher temperatures, new invasive pests and wildfires and mudslides. Making the most of scarce water resources motivated Sharyne Merritt to apply for a SWEEP grant for her avocado orchard near Carpinteria. She purchased solar-powered weather stations to monitor soil moisture, temperature, humidity, evapotranspiration, and wind speed. She can hone irrigation timing and amounts by tracking data online, eliminating over-watering and using less energy to pump water. She also applied mulch in the orchards to cut down on moisture loss due to evaporation.

The California Climate & Agriculture Network (CalCAN) is a statewide coalition that advances state and federal policy to realize the powerful climate solutions offered by sustainable and organic agriculture.



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