Funding Available for Climate-Smart Water Projects

Another application period for the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) is expected to open on October 21.

SWEEP provides cost-share grants of up to $100,000 to growers to install more efficient irrigation systems, including subsurface drip irrigation, solar-powered pumps, and remote soil moisture monitoring equipment. These irrigation system improvements can increase farmers’ yields while reducing their energy and water costs. They can also improve fertilizer and weed management by helping farmers apply water more precisely when and where their crops need it.

According to a presentation by the California Department of Food
Wildfire Smoke Protection Protocol

On December 13, 2018, after the Camp Fire became the deadliest and most costly wildfire in California history, blanketing Sacramento and much of the Central Valley in smoke, the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board (OSHSB) received a joint submission from Mitch Steiger, California Labor Federation; Douglas Parker, Worksafe; and Anne Katten, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, seeking emergency regulatory protection of outdoor workers from the harmful effects of wildfire smoke.

After months of advisory meetings, regulation §5141.1 “Protection from Wildfire Smoke,” went into effect on July 29, 2019. The newly adopted regulation uses the local air quality index (AQI) for PM2.5 to determine when worker protections are needed and includes mandatory activities for employers of outdoor workers who “reasonably anticipate that employees may be exposed to wildfire smoke”.

For example, employers must:

- Monitor the Air Quality Index (AQI) for PM2.5
- Provide training to workers, including how to determine AQI, identify health effects of wildfire smoke exposure, and how to use NIOSH-approved respirators
- Establish worker protection procedures, including a plan to reduce worker exposure to wildfire smoke
- Communicate the above workplace procedures to staff and employees

The Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety (WCAHS) at UC Davis has developed resources in English and Spanish, including an employer checklist, training poster, and accompanying discussion guide, to assist agricultural employers with meeting the requirements outlined in the newly adopted regulation and communicating the required topics to employees.

In the Field with Climate Farmer Leaders
Recently CalCAN helped to organize two farm tours to demonstrate climate solutions offered through sustainable agricultural practices. We work to bridge our network of producers with legislators and the greater community in order to amplify their work as climate leaders. On these most recent tours we discussed the challenges and opportunities of transitioning to climate-smart agriculture practices and how these farmers maintain viability in the face of climate change.

On the first tour with the Environmental Grantmakers Association, we visited Kristyn Leach of Namu Farm, she grows two acres of heritage Korean vegetables in Winters. We also visited Craig McNamara with Sierra Orchards and Judith Redmond from Full Belly Farm. The two farms manage similar farm acreage, implement similar regenerative practices, and are located in similar regions, with a similar focus on soil health as a way to sink carbon and increase water-holding capacity of the soil.

The second farm tour was organized with the office of Assemblymember Robert Rivas (D-30, Salinas) who coordinated the tour in his district for other legislators on the agricultural committees in the Assembly and Senate.

We worked with Linda Chu of Benito Valley Farms to host the policymakers along with a number of our partners from the region and UC Cooperative Extension Climate Smart Outreach Specialists. The focus was on the state’s Climate Smart Agriculture programs and, in particular, the Healthy Soils Program.

We believe that farmers and ranchers have powerful stories to tell and that their experiences are important for policymakers to hear so they understand how to support growers in delivering climate solutions.

Read the full post on our blog.
October 22 • 6-8pm • Davis, CA
Demystifying on Farm Beneficial Microbes
UC Cooperative Extension
More information

October 24 • 3-6pm • Woodland, CA
More information

Food-Tech and Ag-Tech Meetup
The Vine Food and Ag Innovation
October 30 • 4-6:30pm • Chico, CA
More information

The Organic Grower Summit
CCOF & OPN
December 4-5 • Monterey, CA
More information

Small Farm Tech Expo
CAFF & The Farmers Guild
December 9 • Forestville, CA
More information

Regenerative Agriculture Field Day
Swanton Pacific Ranch
January 21 • 8-5:30pm • Davenport, CA
More information

Biologically Integrated Farming Systems
California Department of Food and Agriculture
Eligibility: colleges or universities, local and federal government entities, tribal governments and non-profit organizations
Proposals due October 31, 2019
See details.

Farmer/Rancher Research and Education Grants
Western SARE
$20,000 for one producer or $25,000 for 3 or more producers
Proposals due November 11, 2019
See details.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Eligibility: Organizations interested in partnering with NRCS
Applications due December 3, 2019
See details.

Grants for Livestock and Poultry Farmers
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)
Eligibility: livestock and poultry farmers who wish to attain humane certification, build capacity, or improve pasture for their animals.
Applications due December 2, 2019
See details.

Jobs

Greenbelt Alliance
Director of Climate and Resilience
San Francisco, CA
See details.

Climate and Land Use Alliance
Associate Director of Programs
San Francisco, CA
See details.

Sonoma County Resource Conservation District
Project Manager
Santa Rosa, CA
See details.

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