The Honorable Laura Friedman, Chair
Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

January 6, 2020

Re: AB 1071 (Limón) - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Friedman,

We write in support of AB 1071 (Limón), a bill to develop climate adaptation planning and decision-support tools for farmers and ranchers. AB 1071 will soon be amended to build on AB 409 from earlier this year, which received all unanimous votes in the Assembly (76-0 on the floor, 18-0 in appropriations, and 11-0 in natural resources) and Senate policy committees (9-0 in natural resources and water and 5-0 in agriculture), before being held in Senate Appropriations at the request of the Governor’s office. We are reaching out to the Governor’s office to discuss AB 1071 as part of the state's larger effort on climate change adaptation and resilience.

Farmers in our state are on the frontlines of unprecedented weather extremes and need resources to help them adapt to the reality of a changing climate. California farmers and ranchers are critical to our state’s economy, food security, and environment, producing nearly $60 billion worth of crops, supporting 2.5 million jobs, and stewarding 25 million acres of land.

They consistently provide these services to our state despite the inherent risks in the agricultural business. Every season, farmers have to manage the dynamic interactions between weather, soils, crops, livestock, markets, and regulations. But as a recent scientific review paper on climate change trends in California agriculture wrote: “While California farmers and ranchers have
always been affected by the natural variability of weather from year to year, the increased rate and scale of climate change is beyond the realm of experience for the agricultural community.”

Farmers and ranchers are hard-working, independent, and practical problem-solvers. With the tools and trainings proposed in this bill, they can remain competitive and resilient through adaptive, climate-smart agricultural management practices and business planning.

The state and its world-class agricultural schools have made significant investments in research to better understand specific crops’ and regions’ unique climate risks and to develop better agricultural risk management practices. But not enough has been done to translate those studies, models, and strategies into tools and trainings to educate producers and help them make more strategic management decisions and long-term investments.

For these reasons, we support AB 1071’s effort to bring together the state’s leading agricultural and climate researchers with farmers, ranchers, technical assistance providers and the agricultural industry to develop farmer-centered tools and trainings on climate risk management and adaptation. We urge your support for AB 1071.

Sincerely,

Brian Shobe
Associate Policy Director
California Climate and Agriculture Network (Sponsor)

Patricia Carillo
Executive Director
Agriculture & Land-Based Training Association

Kara Heckert
California State Director
American Farmland Trust

Michael Miiller
Director of Government Relations
California Association of Winegrape Growers

Jane Sooby
Senior Policy Specialist
California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)

Beth Smoker
Policy Director
California Food & Farming Network

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Reggie Knox  
Executive Director  
California Farm Link

Laurel Marcus  
Executive Director  
California Land Stewardship Institute

Karen Sweet  
Executive Director  
California Rangeland Conservation Coalition, Inc.

Rebecca Spector  
West Coast Director  
Center for Food Safety

Mary Kimball  
Executive Director  
Center for Land-Based Learning

Dave Runsten  
Policy Director  
Community Alliance with Family Farmers

Sigrid Wright  
Executive Director  
Community Environmental Council

Jan Derecho  
Executive Director  
Ecological Farming Association

Lauren Tucker  
Executive Director  
Kiss the Ground

Dave Henson  
Executive Director  
Occidental Arts & Ecology Center

Paul Mason  
V.P., Policy & Incentives  
Pacific Forest Trust

Margaret Reeves  
Senior Scientist  
Pesticide Action Network

Matthew C.G. Marsom  
Vice President, Public Policy & Programs  
Public Health Institute
Michael Dimock  
Director  
Roots of Change

Andrea Mackenzie  
General Manager  
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

Sibella Kraus  
Director  
Sustainable Agriculture Education  
(SAGE)

Adam Livingston  
Director of Planning and Policy  
Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Kris Beal  
Executive Director  
Vineyard Team

Jo Ann Baumgartner  
Executive Director  
Wild Farm Alliance

Mel Lions  
Director  
Wild Willow Farm and Education Center