

Farmer & Rancher Climate Leaders Healthy Soils Program Participants

The Healthy Soils Program, administered by the California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA), provides grants to farmers and ranchers who adopt management practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration in soil and plants.

More info is available on CDFA's website: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/>

ROBLES FARM

Modesto, Stanislaus County
Award Amount: \$21,704



“The most immediate benefit we get is to our health. Now, we can pick nuts right from the trees without worrying about getting sick from pesticides.”

- José Robles

José Robles lives next to his almond orchards, which he has farmed since 2005. Due to degraded soil, almond yields declined, and José lost a section of trees to soil-borne pests called nematodes. He discovered that applying mulch and compost eliminated the nematodes and the need to fumigate with pesticides, which killed

both helpful and harmful soil microorganisms. He noticed that healthier soils work like a sponge, holding more water and supporting more productive trees. With application assistance from the National Center for Appropriate Technology, José was awarded a Healthy Soils grant to apply compost and plant cover crops (non-commercial crops used to improve soil health) as well as a hedgerow to attract insects and improve orchard pollination.

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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