

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/healthysouils/>

ROCK FRONT RANCH

Cuyama Valley, Santa Barbara
County

Award Amount: \$16,248.60



Alisha Taff is a first-generation farmer who owns and operates Rock Front Ranch, a 320-acre property in Santa Barbara County, where she grows a thriving jujube orchard and keeps bees for honey. As a Chinese American, she grew up eating jujubes and quickly learned to care for these extremely drought-tolerant trees when she acquired the property in 2014.

In 2017, Alisha received a Healthy Soils grant that enabled her to apply a cover crop and mulch to 15 acres of the orchard. She also reduced tillage between the orchard rows. After three years, these practices have increased soil carbon sequestration on her farm, built the mycorrhizae in her soils that direct nutrients to the trees, and created habitat for biodiversity throughout the farm.

Alisha strives for a net positive impact on her farm through additional practices like water-saving drip irrigation, experimenting with innovative compost techniques and mentoring other farmers.

"There are so many other farms that have also benefited financially and ecologically from these grants. Farmers without a cushion need this kind of public support."

- Alisha Taff

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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