



SOCIAL JUSTICE & CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE:

A Strategic Framework
for CalCAN's Role



JANUARY 2022



CalCAN
CALIFORNIA CLIMATE &
AGRICULTURE NETWORK

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

Putting this framework into action is an evolving progress, and we want to hear what you think.

- What can we do better?
- What is missing?
- Do you see a role for yourself?
- Please let us know —
drop us a line at info@calclimateag.org.

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OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Climate change is having increasingly profound impacts on California farms and ranches, farmers and farmworkers, and the nation's food supply, disproportionately harming low-income communities of color. Policy change can encourage much-needed innovation and can deliver the system-wide resources needed to scale up agricultural practices that safeguard our food supply, keep family farmers on the land, and improve working and living conditions for farmworkers, people of color, and the rural poor.



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OUR MISSION

CalCAN is a statewide coalition that advances state and federal policy to catalyze the powerful climate solutions offered by sustainable and organic agriculture. We use policy to move California agriculture towards a system that is increasingly resilient and just.



WHO WE ARE

A PROGRESSIVE FARMING VOICE FOR CLIMATE POLICY SOLUTIONS

CalCAN is a coalition of agriculture organizations that serve organic and sustainable farmers and ranchers.

We amplify farmer and rancher leadership to influence state and federal policy that scales up agricultural solutions to the climate crisis. We work in partnership with a diverse network of advocates, scientists and agriculture professionals, building bridges across sectors.

We strive to balance the interconnected goals of achieving both ecological resilience and social justice in agriculture. Economic, racial, and gender equity are essential to the realization of these goals.

COALITION MEMBERS



CENTER FOR
FOOD SAFETY



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FOR POLICY INITIATIVES



Climate-friendly agriculture benefits all Californians

Organic and sustainable agriculture practices offer environmental and public health benefits for all Californians, urban and rural.

There is power in structural change

Policy change can drive a widespread transition to sustainable and organic agricultural practices that achieve economic justice and health equity.

Farmer experience must lead

Farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and other agriculture experts must be meaningfully consulted and engaged in leadership roles in order to develop and implement policy that leads to change on California's farms and ranches.

All producers can contribute

Agricultural sustainability is a continuum, and improvements can be made on all farms.

Policy must redress racial and economic injustice

Agriculture and climate policy must explicitly address the needs of small and medium-scale farmers and those who are low-income/low wealth, people of color and women, as well as farmworkers and other marginalized populations that have been systematically disenfranchised by generations of injustices and health inequities.

Public resources can advance equity

Public funding and technical assistance must be prioritized for small and medium-scale, diversified, and systematically disenfranchised farmers.



OUR VISION



We envision a California agriculture system that is resilient, is a sink for greenhouse gases rather than a source, and that supports **wildlife habitat** and **biological diversity**.

Sustainable and organic farming and ranching practices rooted in **ecological principles** are widespread, readily **accessible** to all farmers, and supported by a robust network of **technical advisors and researchers**.

The people who grow our food have **safe working conditions** and agricultural communities have **clean air and water, access to healthy food, and thriving rural economies**.

To ensure our food security, abundant productive **agricultural land is permanently protected**, and new farmers have **access to the land, capital, and technical resources** they need to be successful.

OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE GOALS

2022-2024

Accountability

Develop staff and coalition processes for ongoing reflection, learning, and strengthening our commitment to farmers and our work on issues of racial and economic justice.



Farmworker Partnerships

Provide resources and support policy campaigns that address climate impacts on farmworkers such as housing, reducing pesticides, and mitigating extreme weather events.



Coordination with Environmental Justice Advocates

Be transparent and engage proactively with environmental justice leaders working on climate and agriculture issues to build trust and deepen collaboration.

Organizational Culture

Cultivate an organizational culture that is inclusive and supports collaborative relationships with farmers of color, farmworkers, and environmental justice leaders.

Diversity & Representation


Develop and implement an action plan to ensure our advisors and farmer leaders accurately represent California agriculture demographics.

Communications & Metrics

Establish mechanisms to monitor, evaluate, and communicate our impact and to reflect on how to more strategically tackle the root causes of the harms caused by industrial agriculture to farmworkers, farmers of color, women farmers, and small and beginning farmers.

CRITERIA FOR TAKING ACTION

OUR POLICY POSITIONS MUST...

- 
- ...be informed by CalCAN advisors and partners from the communities most impacted by the initiative
 - ...be consistent with CalCAN's role in representing organic and sustainable farmers
 - ...represent a net gain for building power and influence
 - ...align with our vision and guiding principles
 - ...explicitly account for the needs of small and medium-scale farmers as well as people of color, women, low-income/low wealth, farmworkers, and other marginalized populations
 - ...address issues within the expertise of CalCAN and our trusted partners and advisors
 - ...enable CalCAN to have an impact on the outcome and/or be an important expression of solidarity and reciprocity
 - ...have clearly articulated goals and outcomes

NETWORK STRUCTURE

ACTION INFORMED BY THE FIELD

CalCAN's coalition member organizations decide on our policy positions, and we are accountable to the farmers and ranchers they serve.

Two advisory councils ground our work in sound science, best practice, and the experience of California's farmers and ranchers.

To address agricultural harms and injustice, we listen to and consult on policy strategies with farmworker and environmental justice advocates.

We work in alliance on specific policy campaigns with environmental, farmworker, environmental justice, and food systems advocates to build our collective power and make systemic change.

