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December 13, 2010

Former Secretary of Agriculture Highlights Climate Change Challenges & Opportunities

In a recent [opinion column of the Sacramento Bee](#), Rich Rominger, former Secretary of CDFA and Deputy Secretary of USDA, outlined how the challenges and opportunities facing California agriculture will require Governor-elect Jerry Brown's leadership.



Central to Mr. Rominger's message is the importance of agriculture to the California economy and its the vulnerability to a changing climate.

Mr. Rominger laid out a challenging context - diminishing farmland, dependence on an outdated water supply system, climate change impacts ranging from decreased water supply to extreme weather events and increased pest pressures, and susceptibility to energy price shocks and cost increases.

He also offered some hope and encouragement for innovation. There is great potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions on California's farm and rangeland, producing renewable energy on farms, and supporting water conservation and efficiency. He called for more resources to support the many challenges faced by agriculture, and for bold leadership from the new Governor on both climate and agricultural policy.

CalCAN developed a [set of policy recommendations](#) that

provide specific proposals for responding to many of the challenges and opportunities that the former Secretary describes. We hope you will join us in working to realize these initiatives.

CalCAN Climate & Agriculture Summit

- Save the Date -



March 31, 2011
UC Davis Conference Center

A program and registration information
will be available in January.

Climate Bill's Death Ends Carbon Credit Program

Des Moines Register · November 23, 2010
By Philip Brasher

Washington, D.C. -- Programs that paid farmers for not tilling their land and taking other carbon-conserving measures are shutting down with the death of a climate bill that would have imposed limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and the North Dakota Farmers Union enrolled some 8,000 producers and 11 million acres of land nationwide in the projects to demonstrate that farmers could profit by earning and selling carbon credits and that the farming practices could be adequately policed.

The credits were sold via a Chicago-based exchange to buyers who needed or wanted to reduce their carbon footprint.

Such credits were supposed to be the centerpiece of a mandatory cap-and-trade system for reducing U.S. carbon emissions. But the bill needed to set up the system stalled in the Senate and is given no chance of passing the next Congress. The offsets that farmers earned under the Iowa and North Dakota projects are now almost worthless.

[Read more...](#)

New Protocol for Agriculture

The American Carbon Registry has approved a protocol to quantify agriculture sector emissions reductions through changes in fertilizer management. The protocol details requirements for quantifying GHG emissions reductions resulting from changes in how fertilizer is applied and used (e.g., changes in fertilizer rate, type, placement, timing, use of timed-release fertilizers, use of nitrification inhibitors, etc.). Growers complying with the protocol and registering with ACR are eligible for selling carbon credit on the voluntary carbon market.



For more information:

[American Carbon Registry fertilizer protocol](#)

Funding Opportunities

USDA Organic Agriculture Research & Extension Initiative (OREI)

The USDA has issued a request for applications for its competitive grants program for organic agriculture research, education, and extension. It expects to distribute \$19 million in grants. Applications are due Feb. 10, 2011.

For more information:

[USDA OREI](#)

CDFA by USDA's National Organic Program

Producers and handlers who are certified as organic through a USDA certifier can apply for funds from the CDFA to help partially offset the cost of organic certification. Producers and handlers can receive up to 75% of the certification cost, not to exceed \$750, per year for a new organic certification or a renewal of certification. Funds are available until they run out, so qualified producers and handlers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

For more information:

[Cost Share Program](#)

Call David Carlson, CDFA · (916) 445-2180 ext. 3462 or dcarlson@cdfa.ca.gov

Conservation Innovation Grants

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has announced the availability of the Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) for 2011 to foster the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications are accepted from eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals for projects between 1 and 3 years in duration. Only pre-proposals are being solicited at this time and are due December 28.

For more information:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/index.html>

Upcoming Events



CCOF Annual Meeting
"Growing the Organic Market"

February 18 - 20, 2011
Ventura Beach, CA

For more information and to register:
<http://www.ccof.org/educationconference.php>

EcoFarm Conference

January 26 - 29, 2011
Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove, CA
<http://www.eco-farm.org/programs/efc/>

California Small Farm Conference

March 6 - 8, 2011 · San Jose, CA
<http://www.californiafarmconference.com/>

California Rangeland Conservation Coalition Summit

January 19, 2011 · Modesto, CA
<http://www.carangeland.org/home/2011summit.html>

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