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## On-Farm Renewable Energy Bill Gets Unanimous Support in First Assembly Hearing

On June 27th, a CalCAN-sponsored bill, which has already made it through the Senate with strong bipartisan support, was passed unanimously by its first committee in the Assembly. The Renewable Energy Equity Act (SB 489) is authored by Senator Lois Wolk, and it was passed by the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee on a 13-to-0 vote.

SB 489 would allow all renewable energy types, including biomass and biogas, to participate in the state's Net Energy Metering (NEM) program, making it easier for farmers and food processors to get connected to the grid and turn agricultural and food waste, such as walnut and almond shells, orchard prunings and wine crush residue, into green energy.

SB 489 will be heard in the Assembly Natural Resources Committee on July 5th, and then by the whole Assembly in August. We urge you to contact your state Assemblymember to express your support for SB 489. Click [here](#) for more information and directions to call.

**SENATOR LOIS WOLK**  
Representing the 5th Senate District



**National Day of Action to Protect Federal  
Farm Conservation Programs**

**- June 28th -**

With the Senate now deliberating on their version of the bill, your Senator needs to hear from you **today** that the federal budget shouldn't be balanced on the back of conservation programs. This national day of action will generate thousands of calls from across the country coordinated for high impact on Senate representatives.

The agriculture appropriations bill passed last week by the House slashes \$1 billion from mandatory farm bill conservation funding and kills the USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative (KYF, KYF). The House measure would slash programs that support farmers protecting the soil and water on which our nation's future productivity depends. A provision denying any funding for the KYF, KYF initiative is a direct attack on new farm and market opportunities, rural job growth and public health.

**It's easy to call:** To find out the Senators that represent you, go to [Govtrack.us](http://Govtrack.us) and enter your zip code to get phone numbers for both of your Senators. Call and ask to speak to the staff member responsible for agriculture. If the staff member is unavailable leave a message with the receptionist or a voice mail message. Be sure to identify yourself as a constituent and a farmer or a consumer and to leave a call back number.

**Message: Tell them the Senate needs to protect farm bill conservation program spending and programs essential to promoting local and regional farm and food systems. Tell them the House agriculture spending bill is extreme and unfair.**

### **CalCAN at the Commonwealth Club**

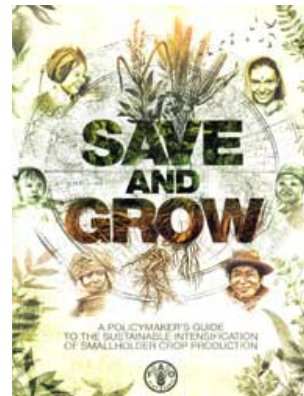
On June 14th Jeanne Merrill, CalCAN's Policy Director, spoke at the Commonwealth Club as part of their ClimateOne series.

Speakers on the program entitled [Crops, Cattle and Carbon](#) also featured Karen Ross, Secretary of CDFA, Paul Martin of United Western Dairywomen and Cynthia Corey from the

## FAO Report

In mid-June, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization released a report entitled [Save and Grow: A policymaker's guide to the sustainable intensification of smallholder crop production](#). The following is excerpted from the report release:

*The Green Revolution in agriculture saved an estimated one billion people from famine. Thanks to high-yielding crop varieties, irrigation, agrochemicals and modern management techniques, farmers in developing countries increased food production from 800 million tonnes to more than 2.2 billion tonnes between 1961 and 2000. Intensive crop production helped to reduce the number of undernourished, drive rural development and prevent the destruction of natural ecosystems to make way for extensive farming. Those achievements came at a cost. In many countries, decades of intensive cropping have degraded fertile land and depleted groundwater, provoked pest upsurges, eroded biodiversity, and polluted air, soil and water.*



*The present paradigm of intensive crop production cannot meet the challenges of the new millennium. In order to grow, agriculture must learn to save.*

*This new paradigm of agriculture is sustainable crop production intensification (SCPI), which can be summed up in the words "save and grow". Sustainable intensification means a productive agriculture that conserves and enhances natural resources. It uses an ecosystem approach that draws on nature's contribution to crop growth - soil organic matter, water flow regulation, pollination and natural predation of pests - and applies appropriate external inputs at the right time, in the right amount. "Save and grow" farming systems offer proven productivity, economic and environmental*

*benefits.*

*A review of agricultural development in 57 low-income countries found that ecosystem farming led to average yield increases of almost 80 percent. Conservation agriculture, which is practiced on more than 100 million hectares worldwide, contributes to climate change mitigation by sequestering in soil millions of tonnes of carbon a year.*

### **USDA Announces \$7 Million for Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative for 2011**

The USDA's Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) supports special local and regional conservation projects that involve groups of farmers or ranchers in partnership with USDA, farm, conservation and other non-governmental organizations, state and tribal agencies, and/or other entities.

Farmers, ranchers and forest-owners can use CCPI funding to:

- Address conservation priorities
- Meet federal, state, and local regulatory requirements related to production
- Cooperate to install and maintain conservation practices
- Develop and demonstrate innovative conservation practices and delivery methods

More information, including about eligibility and how to apply, can be found at your [local or county NRCS office](#) .

### **CalCAN Ranch Field Day: "The Climate Benefits of Sustainable Ranching"**



**July 29, 2011 · 10:30am - 3:30pm  
TomKat Ranch in Pescadero, CA**

You are invited to visit TomKat Ranch, producers of Leftcoast Grassfed beef. Ranch staff will provide a tour and discuss their grassland management practices. Researchers will discuss the benefits of rangeland conservation for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon.

To Register: Pre-registration is required - space is limited and no drop in guests will be accommodated. Please register by emailing [renata@calclimateag.org](mailto:renata@calclimateag.org) with your name, organization or farm, phone and email. Lunch will be provided if registered by July 20th.

**Welcome CalCAN Interns!**

At CalCAN, we're pleased to have two very capable and dedicated summer interns working with us this year.

Adria Arko received her B.A. from Pitzer College, double majoring in Art and Environmental Studies. She has worked as an intern for many CalCAN allies including the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, the Organic Farming Research Foundation and CCOF.



Adam Kotin is currently finishing his master's degree in Environmental Studies



at Brown University. He has worked for the Multinational Exchange for Sustainable Agriculture (MESA) and Plug in America. This summer he is also doing an internship with the Apollo Alliance.



### Farm & Garden Apprenticeship Positions Open

The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz offers the [Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture](#), a full-time, 6-month program that trains adults in the concepts and practices of organic gardening and small-scale sustainable farming. The apprenticeship blends the virtues of experiential learning with traditional classroom studies on topics that include soil management, composting, pest control, crop planning, irrigation, farm equipment, and direct marketing techniques.

Although the program does not begin until April 2012, the application deadline is September 30, 2011.

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