News Release
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
Media Contact: Jay Van Rein (CDFA), 916-654-0462, officeofpublicaffairs@cdfa.ca.gov

California launches new strategy to protect the agriculture and food sectors from climate change

Building Climate Resilience in California Agriculture

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SACRAMENTO, April 2, 2026 - The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announces the release of the Climate Resilience Strategy for California Agriculture (Strategy). The document provides a comprehensive overview of state actions designed to help the agricultural community prepare for, respond to, and thrive under the many conditions imposed by climate change, from uncertainty about water supply and drought to extreme weather events, wildfires, flooding and more.

“The Strategy celebrates the importance of what agriculture does for California every day and also acknowledges the tremendous challenges that California agriculture is facing today,” said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross. “This Strategy focuses on how we bring together all that we've learned about climate smart agriculture and the ability for agriculture to be a part of the climate solution.”

California farmers and ranchers are facing an increasingly difficult landscape, including climate change effects as well as perennial challenges like the cost of inputs and other economic uncertainties. The state is dedicated to supporting our agricultural industry and food systems, and the Climate Resilience Strategy for California Agriculture is a key step in ensuring that the state is fostering resilience in the agricultural sector.

Californians might be most aware of climate impacts on agriculture like the historic drought of 2020-2023 that led to the fallowing of over 750,000 acres and estimated economic losses of $3 billion. But other effects critical to agriculture are also compounded by our changing climate: extreme weather events such as flooding, freezes and heat waves can spell disaster for crops and livestock across the state; and wildfires – whether in urban regions like Los Angeles or rural areas like California’s valleys and foothills – can imperil farms outright, while the smoke and wind can pose a threat to workers and even damage crops, as it did with grapes in Wine

Country in 2020. Less obvious but still impactful are climate-driven increases in pest pressure that cost growers and the state millions to combat.

The sheer scale of California agriculture means there's a lot at risk – but it also means this sector can meaningfully contribute to curbing climate change. The Strategy builds upon California's Ag Vision 2030, which prioritizes "fostering climate smart, resilient, and regenerative food systems" that can help mitigate climate change, improve soil health, restore biodiversity, enhance ecosystems, and contribute to human health.

This strategy highlights climate-related agricultural challenges, policies, and actions across State government; lays out areas of opportunity for further action; explores connections with local, statewide, federal, and private-sector initiatives; and provides Equity Principles that help state agencies ensure that their programs are accessible to California farmers.

It includes important context, strategies and actions, and implementation plans to support California farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and agricultural communities and ensure California agriculture thrives in the faces of climate change and is an integral part of the solution.

The Strategy is organized under three pillars:

- **Support a Thriving and Resilient Food Sector**
- **Protect Natural Systems Critical to Agriculture**
- **Encourage Resilient Agriculture Practices**

Each pillar has Key Objectives representing a unique aspect in the agricultural system, such as animal health, pest management, or supporting agricultural workforce. These Key Objective have associated strategies and actions that align under one or more of the four overarching goals:

- Provide Health and Environmental Benefits
- Improve the Bottom Line for Farmers
- Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Support Economic Development

The Strategy was developed with input from farmers and ranchers, nonprofits, technical experts, state agencies, and more to ensure that the key objectives, goals, strategies, and actions reflect stakeholder input and needs.

Visit our website to learn more about the Strategy at https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/climate/.

CDFA's Mission: To safeguard a resilient food system and promote an equitable marketplace, cultivating a California grown food supply that is globally recognized for innovation, quality and sustainability.