



Bay Area-System Change not Climate Change (BA-SCnCC)



CLEAN WATER ACTION



FIBERSHED



OCCIDENTAL ARTS & ECOLOGY CENTER





June 7, 2021

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Sustainable Pest Management & Farmworker Protection Budget Items

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the 50 undersigned farmworker, labor, environmental justice, environmental, public health and sustainable agriculture organizations, we write to express our strong support and appreciation for the Governor's and Legislature's prioritization of sustainable pest management and farmworker protections in the 2021-2022 budget.

1. **We support \$90 million for Sustainable Pest Management** as proposed by the Legislature, but request clear parameters be written into trailer bill language that ensure the following specific funding:
 - \$20 million for Community Support Fund
 - \$44 million for ecological restoration
 - \$6 million for enhanced air monitoring and oversight, linked to enforcement actions
 - \$20 million for enhanced implementation of Integrated Pest Management
2. **We support \$10 million for a Pesticide Notification Network** in the Governor's May Revise, which should ensure information about upcoming pesticides applications is available to the general public in appropriate languages. A notification regulation should build upon and expand beyond public web posting of Notices of Intent to use pesticides classified as

Restricted Materials.¹ With agricultural pesticide use having increased over the last few years to more than 200 million pounds each year, it's urgent this information be provided to the public as soon as possible. We urge the Administration to set a goal for implementation by the beginning of 2023 rather than 2024.

3. We support the Legislature's \$125 million proposal for Farmworker Protections, and request an additional \$5 million for a personal protective equipment stockpile:

- \$100 million in one-time General Fund resources to the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program for grants to construct multi-unit, family housing for farmworker families and households.
- \$25 million for Farmworker Housing Low-Income Weatherization, including improved indoor air quality measures, as detailed in the Senate budget proposal.
- An additional \$5 million one-time allocation to support the creation of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) stockpiles for farmworkers.

4. We urge the Administration to explicitly prioritize organic farming

There are a number of budget proposals we believe should be amended to incorporate incentives for organic farming. We lose an incredibly important opportunity to protect the health of children, communities and the environment when we fail to include organic incentives:

- We support the Governor's and Legislature's proposals to fund **universal breakfast and lunch meals for all children, and urge inclusion of additional incentives for school procurement that supports organic farming**, which, among other co-benefits, eliminates synthetic chemical food residues, protects children's and community health, results in greater nutrition², provides greater climate benefits³, and can cost the same as or even less than conventional school meals.⁴
- We support \$100 million in the Governor's budget to increase funding for **CDFA's Healthy Soils Program, but urge inclusion of incentives that explicitly support adoption of organic farming and reduction of synthetic pesticide use**. The Healthy Soils Program provides critical support for farmers to adopt practices beneficial to building healthy soils, but it does not currently offer any incentives dedicated to protecting soil health by reducing synthetic chemical use.

¹ Although County Agricultural Commissioners have access to this public information, they do not currently share it with the public in advance of pesticide applications, preventing community members from taking their own safety precautions.

² Barański, Marcin et al. "Higher Antioxidant and Lower Cadmium Concentrations and Lower Incidence of Pesticide Residues in Organically Grown Crops: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analyses." *The British Journal of Nutrition* 112, no. 5 (September 14, 2014): 794–811, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007114514001366>.

³ Ghabbour E., Davies G., Misiewicz T., Alami R., Askounis E., Cuozzo N., Filice A., Haskell J., Moy A., Roach A., and Shade J. 2017. Chapter One - National Comparison of the Total and Sequestered Organic Matter Contents of Conventional and Organic Farm Soils. *Advances in Agronomy* 146: 1-35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.agron.2017.07.003>.
and Sanders, J, Hess J (Eds), 2019. *Leistungen des ökologischen Landbaus für Umwelt und Gesellschaft*. Braunschweig: Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institut, p. 364, Thünen Report 65. https://www.thuenen.de/media/publikationen/thuenen-report/Thuenen_Report_65.pdf.

⁴ Hammerschlag K., Arndt S., and Klein K. 2020. Organic, Plant-Forward, Scratch Cooked School Meals: A California Case Study. https://1bps6437gg8c169i0yl1drtgz-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CAM_Feeding_Schools_Report-final-just-report_alt.pdf

- We support the Governor’s and Legislature’s funding for Technical Assistance (TA) and farmer training,⁵ **but request greater TA and training allocations that prioritize assistance for organic farmers and those transitioning to organic farming, especially among socially-disadvantaged farmers.** We request an additional \$26 million to hire staff with organic expertise within UC Cooperative Extension, Regional Conservation Districts and Tribal Conservation Districts; an additional \$7 million for an Organic Transition Program to help farmers through the three-year transition to certified organic operations, and an additional \$15 million to support Regional Farmer Training Centers to train farmworkers to become the next generation of organic farmers and agricultural professionals.

We appreciate your consideration and would be happy to work with you and your staff in answering any questions or supporting the development of trailer bill language in these final moments of this year's budget process. Many of our organizations work with frontline communities and essential workers in the food system, and these budget recommendations would be equitable investments for both people and the planet.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Institute of Marin
 Alianza Ecologista
 Alianza Nacional De Campesinas
 Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments (ANHE)
 Bay Area-System Change Not Climate Change (BA-SCnCC)
 California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)
 California River Watch
 California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation (CRLAF)
 Californians for Pesticide Reform
 Center for Biological Diversity
 Center for Environmental Health
 Center for Food Safety
 Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE)
 Central California Asthma Collaborative (CCAC)
 Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN)
 Central Coast United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)
 Central Valley Partnership
 Centro Binacional Para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO)
 Children Now
 Clean Water Action
 Clean Water and Air Matter (CWAM)
 Endangered Habitats League
 Environmental Health Trust

⁵ \$20 million for Technical Assistance and Conservation Management Plans as outlined in the May Revise; \$8.7 million for Technical Assistance (TA) Programs for Underserved Farmers as outlined in the Governor’s budget; \$10 million for a New and Beginning Farmer Training and Farm Manager Apprenticeships in the May Revise; and \$32.133 million in ongoing General Funds for UC ANR.

Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Environmental Working Group (EWG)
Families Advocating for Chemical & Toxics Safety (FACTS)
Fresno Building Healthy Communities
Friends of the Earth
Fibershed
GMO Science
Klamath Forest Alliance
Líderes Campesinas en California
Little Manila Rising
Monterey Bay Central Labor Council (MBCLC)
Non-Toxic Neighborhoods
Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (OAEC)
Pesticide Action Network (PAN)
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles (PSR-LA)
Preserve Rural Sonoma County
Promotores Comunitarios del Desierto
Safe Ag Safe Schools -- Monterey Bay
Safe Agriculture Safe Schools of Sonoma County
San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility
SIREN (Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network)
Sunflower Alliance
Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE)
Teamsters Local 890
Tulare County Coalition Advocating for Pesticide Safety (TC CAPS)
Wine & Water Watch
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) - Santa Cruz Branch

cc: Angie Wei, Office of the Governor, Legislative Affairs Secretary
Angela Pontes, Office of the Governor, Deputy Legislative Secretary