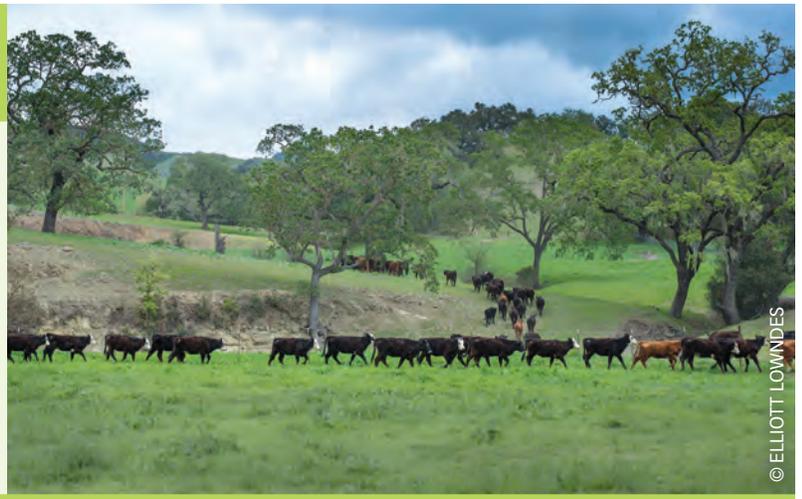


CARBON FARMING CREATING HEALTHIER SOILS



WHAT IS CARBON FARMING?

It is a way to manage agricultural land that improves soil health by restoring its carbon content. Through carbon farming, farmers and ranchers have the opportunity to restore balance within the carbon cycle and increase soil health. Carbon farming is increasingly being seen as an answer to common agricultural problems: thin profit margins, extreme weather events, and degradation of natural resources.

HOW DOES CARBON FARMING HELP YOUR LAND?

Boosting soil health is one of the most effective ways to increase productivity and profitability while improving the environment and your land.

Increase profits - healthy soils increase profit margins by reducing labor and fuel costs, optimizing inputs, and improving productivity.

Enhance production - more soil organic matter improves soil structure, water retention, and nutrient availability. It also helps plants grow roots that are stronger and longer, and able to store more carbon.

Protect natural resources - healthy soils have greater water-holding capacity, reduce runoff and erosion, and increase the water available to plants during drought.

Cultivate resiliency - healthy soil decreases the effects of flooding and drought, improves the health of water and wildlife on the land, and makes crop production more resilient to weather extremes.



Examining new root growth after compost application.

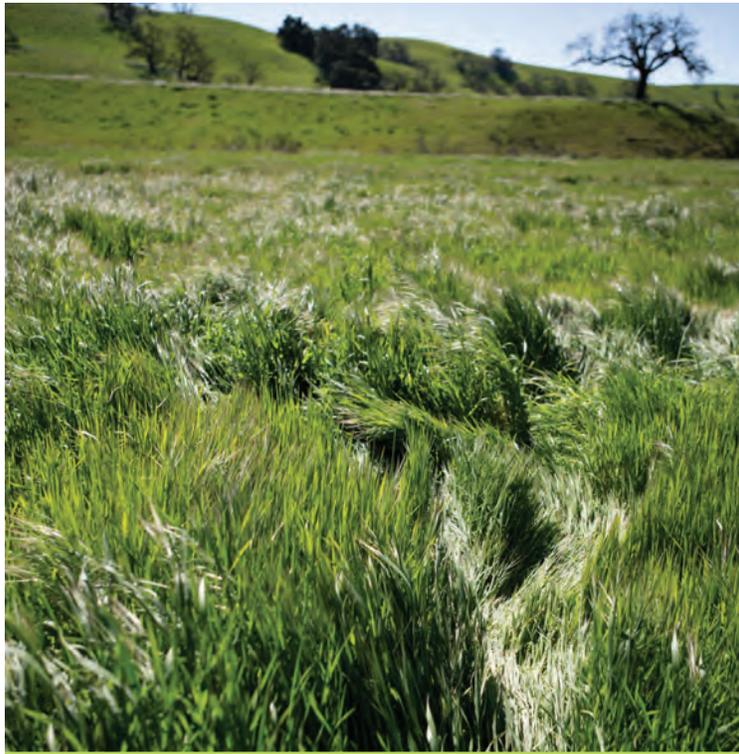


READY TO GET STARTED?

1. Create a Plan

Carbon farming begins with creating a plan that is similar to a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation plan, but uses carbon as the organizing principle. A carbon farm plan includes:

- An inventory of natural resource conditions, including opportunities for plants and soils to capture more carbon.
- A map of the land, with potential carbon practices and their locations.
- A list of suitable practices, prioritized by the needs and goals of the landowners and funding sources.



2. Apply for Funding

Once the carbon farming plan is complete, farmers and ranchers can apply for funding to implement it. Here are a few potential funding sources:

- The California Department of Food and Agriculture set aside \$7.5 million to develop and administer a new incentive and demonstration program through the Healthy Soils Program, which covers carbon farming practices. Notice of funding availability will be released in June 2017. Updates can be found here: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/oefi/healthysoils/>.
- NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program provides financial and technical assistance to implement many carbon farming practices. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>
- Private foundations support carbon farming through grants.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

California is looking to link carbon farm plan implementation with a newly developing marketplace where people can buy and sell carbon credits. Once this marketplace is established, ranchers and farmers who use carbon farming methods will be able to sell credits there.

To learn more, please contact:



Community
Environmental
Council

Emily Miller

Food Program Associate
Community Environmental Council

emiller@cecmail.org

805.963.0583



Anna Olsen

District Director
Cachuma Resource
Conservation District

aolsen@rcdsantabarbara.org

805.868.4013