PULSE
OF THE FOOD MOVEMENT

Is the Agriculture Industry Actually Moving in the Direction We've Always Wanted?

Greetings!

Last week's huge fire north of Los Angeles that has caused 100,000 people to evacuate, the typhoon that smashed large swaths of Japan, and the fire-prevention power outages in Northern California once again make it clear how massive climate action is needed and needed now. Luckily, important action appears to be in the air and agricultural industry leaders may be leading the way. This is not to say that food and farming change advocates

are not playing a huge part by posing the hard questions, organizing challenges to the status quo and raising up alternative models of how we should be producing our food. The successes in this year's legislative campaigns in California, although more modest than in past years, reflect the continuing evolution in the desired direction set by the good food movement. *(Photo source: Wikimedia)*

As today's Flipping the Table podcast reveals, elements of industrial agriculture seem to be altering course to focus on combating climate change and embracing regenerative approaches in an effort to become resilient and to remind the public of the central role of agriculture in our lives. This is critically important because if agriculture were to move as it appears it might, rapid scaling of needed changes could occur. We might not even be able to call it industrial agriculture any more. It could become a biologically integrated agriculture, the outcome we've long sought. Our assessment of the potentially massive shift underway come from numerous company and commodity group statements and initiatives that have caught our attention. This is especially true of the previously highlighted "30 Harvests," video put out by the US Farmers and Ranchers Alliance.

Today's Podcast Conversation with Erin Fitzgerald, the CEO of U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance

We like what Erin is saying and we hope time will prove that her welcome words are matched by industry commitments and actions that do make the vast majority of our nation's farmers and ranchers the climate healers we desperately need.

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Final Policy Update for 2019 Legislative Session

Thank you to those who responded to our action alert asking to let the Governor know our movement's support for **AB 842** Hunger-Free Preschool. This bill authored by Assemblymembers Monique Lemon (Santa Barbara) and Susan Eggman (Stockton) would have ensured that all low-income, public preK students could access a free- or reduced-price meal and all childcare providers utilizing the ChildCare Food Program would

receive supplemental state funding. Sadly, Governor Newsom vetoed the bill citing fiscal concerns.

All in all, we achieved less than hoped this year, but there were three big wins to celebrate: the state committed over $1.3 billion in the next decade to providing safe and affordable drinking water to communities in need; the Healthy Soils Program received $28 million for the coming year and the highly toxic pesticide, chlorpyrifos, was banned in California. It took a movement and many years, but all three are very welcome developments.

On the flip side, our efforts to reduce sugary beverage consumption were all killed as were other more transformative bills. On January 15, 2020, we will join our partners from the California Food and Farming Network (CFFN) in releasing the annual report card on the performance of our legislators and Governor related to food and farm policy. Look for more info on that in November.

Climate Impacts on Food

Finally, to see how climate change is impacting our food supply in worrisome ways, check out this CNN Video. Even nutritional quality is being degraded by high levels of CO_2.

(photo credit: Bob Nichols)

Thank you for your support!

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