

Policy Platform



Overview

Roots of Change (ROC) supports a food system rooted in biological health, stewardship, fairness, and long-term resilience. We believe California and the nation need food and farming systems that are healthy and accessible for all eaters, safe and fair for workers, and resilient and profitable for producers and communities. We support a wide diversity of farm sizes and enterprise within the food system because diversity is itself a strategy for resilience, innovation, and the ongoing evolution of systems across the food chain.

This platform is intended to guide how ROC takes positions on specific legislation, budgets, and executive actions at the local, state, and federal levels.

In **2026**, Roots of Change will back policies and public investments that move California and the United States toward a food system that is healthy, fair, affordable, and resilient. At the core of ROC's work is a commitment to advancing good, clean, and fair food and to supporting the policies, systems, and public frameworks that allow farmers, ranchers, and food enterprises aligned with these values to thrive.

The goal of these policies is lasting change: shifting the rules, incentives, and public investments so the food system rewards health, fairness, stewardship, and regenerative enterprise, rather than short-term approaches that undermine ecological integrity and community well-being.

Priorities

1) Regenerative Farming and Ranching and Healthy Soils

Supporting policies that help growers build healthy soils by increasing soil life and organic matter, improving water holding, reducing harmful inputs, supporting well-managed grazing and integrated crop-livestock systems.

2) Local and Regional Food Infrastructure, Shaped by Communities

Investing in regional food infrastructure to give rural and urban communities dependable supply chains, reduce food loss and waste, and keep systems operating during heat, wildfire, floods, and other disruptions.

NOTE - numbering does not imply priority

CATALYZING FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION

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3) Fair and Diverse Markets and Real Competition

Curbing consolidation and strengthening competition through stronger transparency and oversight that protects farmers, ranchers, workers, and small businesses giving consumers real choice.

4) Protect Water, Farmland, and Nature

Safeguarding clean water and reducing pollution especially where communities face the greatest burdens by supporting stewardship that is durable under extreme conditions, protects nearby towns and downstream neighborhoods, and keeps productive farmland in farming.

5) Safety, Dignity, and Stability for Food-System Workers

Strengthening enforceable protections for safety, pay, and working conditions, including heat and wildfire smoke risks, with real enforcement and accountability across rural and urban worksites as climate impacts worsen.

6) Public Purchasing that Strengthens Health and Local Economies

Using school, health system, public agency, and other institutional purchasing to create steady demand for nutritious, regeneratively produced food.

7) Affordable, Nutritious Food and the Knowledge to Use It

Protecting and strengthening programs that help families access and afford healthy food, with benefits and incentives that keep up with real costs and that improve health in rural and urban communities.

8) Healthy Food Incentives and Food as Medicine

Protecting and expanding healthy food incentives and Food as Medicine programs that increase access to fruits and vegetables while directing more dollars to local and regional producers, markets, and businesses.

9) Transparency and Trustworthy Decision-Making

Supporting clear, workable transparency and traceability so people know where food comes from and how it was produced, including credible claims about climate and environmental impacts, without creating burdens that shut out smaller businesses.

10) Land Access and Diverse Ownership

Expanding access to land, capital, and technical support for small, midsize, and beginning farmers and ranchers and for communities long excluded from ownership, and build pathways that strengthen rural economies and long-term opportunity, growing the next generation of locally owned food.

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