



Ag Innovations Network / 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Mission

The mission of Ag Innovations Network is to create a food system that works better for everyone. We lead forums for diverse stakeholders to come together and solve problems. We combine deep knowledge about food system issues with cutting-edge process design and facilitation to drive change democratically.

Program Snapshot

Ag Innovations Network is building a better food system by engaging diverse leaders in creative and effective problem solving. Our programs are based on the premise that the answers to the crises of the global food system can be found in the democratic struggle to balance competing needs and interests. What is missing today are the institutions to house these critical conversations. We build those institutions.

California Food System Alliance Network

The Alliance program focuses on creating county-level collaborations between food producers, consumers, environmentalists, and representatives of labor, public health, and local economic development to build vibrant local and regional food systems. The Alliances focus both on policy and food system change projects.

California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE)

CRAE brings together major California agricultural and environmental interests to identify common ground and take action together to improve the environmental and economic performance of agriculture in the state. The Roundtable is a critical venue for averting conflict between these interests and focuses primarily on policy changes at the state and national level.

California Roundtable on Water and Food Supply

The Water Roundtable brings together a diverse collaboration of food producers, irrigation districts, regulators, environmentalists, and advocates to identify and recommend long-term solutions to assure adequate water in California for agriculture and the environment. The Roundtable tackles both policy and perception issues as it seeks answers that balance competing demands for life-giving water.

Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops

The Stewardship Index is building the first consensus-based set of metrics for measuring resource stewardship in the fruit and vegetable supply chain. The Index is a collaboration of food producer, environmental, and food buyer stakeholders.

Food System Capacity Building

Ag Innovations Network offers a variety of services to other organizations designed to improve their capacity to make change in the food system. These services include strategic planning, training in systems thinking, conference moderation and presentation, and the design and facilitation of meetings, retreats, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Board of Directors

NICOLE MASON, Veritable Vegetable, *President*
PAUL MARTIN, Western United Dairymen, *Secretary*
MARISSA GUGGIANA, Sonoma Direct Sustainable Meats, *Treasurer*
MARTHA GUZMAN ACEVES, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
JOSEPH MCINTYRE, Ag Innovations Network

Ag Innovations Network
101 Morris Street, Suite 212 • Sebastopol, CA 95472
t) 707.823.6111 • f) 707.823.6113
<http://aginnovations.org>

Staff

JOSEPH MCINTYRE, *President*
DAN SCHURMAN, *CEO*
SERENA COLTRANE-BRISCOE, *Program Assistant*

Roundtable Program

KATY MAMEN, *Program Director*

Alliance Program

MIRIAM VOLAT, *Program Director*

Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops

JESSICA SIEGAL, *Program Director*

From the President

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT WE PUBLISH this first-ever annual report for Ag Innovations Network. The past decade has been an exciting period of growth and service for the organization. Over that period we have:

- Launched seven Food System and Ag Futures Alliances. Annually, these Alliances each generate more than 600 volunteer hours working on critical local food system issues ranging from farmworker housing to siting local meat processing facilities.
- Built the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE) into California's preeminent forum for agriculture and environmental interests to collaborate on consensus-based solutions to improving farm, environmental, and economic viability. The group has influenced policy at the state and federal levels, including increasing funding for conservation programs in the 2008 Farm Bill, and raising awareness of the unintended environmental impacts of food safety practices.
- Helped launch the Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops. This landmark program is designing the first-ever consensus supported metrics for measuring resource stewardship throughout the fruit and vegetable supply chain, from producer to consumer.
- Created the California Roundtable on Water and Food Supply, where we have applied everything we've learned in a decade of work with diverse coalitions to break the logjam in thinking about water in the West. The group began by reframing the concept of ag water conservation into the broader context of ag water stewardship, resulting in a 2011 publication on the topic.
- Facilitated hundreds of hours of dialogues and debates on the future of agriculture including California Ag Vision 2030, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service West Coast Direct Marketing Summit, Market Mechanisms For Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, and the San Diego County Food System Working Group.



Our work is focused on a few simple principles:

- People solve problems that platforms, media blitzes, or polarizing debate cannot solve.
- People will solve problems if given the right environment to build trust, share experiences, and find common ground.
- Changing something as big and complex as the food system takes patience and perseverance. There are no short cuts.
- Our role is clear: to hold a vision of what is possible—a food system that serves everyone—while remaining neutral to the thousands of potential pathways that the groups we serve will elect to explore and implement.

The real credit for our success goes to the groups we serve, whose commitment to change and good process is a model for us all. An incredibly skilled and diligent team at Ag Innovations Network has supported their work. Thanks to each of them. I sincerely believe that the future for change in the food system and for us all is very bright. That belief is grounded in the thousands of hours of dialogues we have been privileged to witness. The last six years have been great. The best is still to come!

- Joseph McIntyre

California Food System Alliance Network



Pescadero farmer Jered Lawson and Half Moon Bay Harbor Master Pietro Parravano (San Mateo FSA).

AG INNOVATIONS NETWORK LEADS the California Food System Alliance Network, with Alliances in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Yolo, San Mateo, Sonoma, and new in 2010, Santa Clara and Fresno Counties. Stakeholders include farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, conservationists, civic leaders, public health and food security advocates, chefs, community and school gardeners, and consumers.

With a total of 106 members in the five Alliances active in 2010, the Alliance Network generated more than 3,180 volunteer hours, valued at \$159,000, towards strengthening farms, improving access to good foods, and improving the infrastructure to support regional food distribution.

The Alliances continue to set and work on priority actions and policies in their counties. Networking among the Alliances and with other community-based food and agriculture organizations as well as statewide institutions is an important new emphasis for the program.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Farm-to-Institution

San Mateo Food System Alliance partnered with two local schools to implement a model Farm-to-Institution program, and is now facilitating produce deliveries from local growers to schools and hospitals. In November, San Mateo produced *A Garden in Every School*, a call-to-action encouraging school gardens and Farm-to-Institution efforts.

Land Use

Land use efforts have been focused primarily on policy change within local government. The agricultural land buffer ordinance proposed by the Santa Barbara Ag Futures Alliance became the basis of the county's ordinance and will create 100-foot minimum buffer zones between new developments and existing agricultural lands. San Mateo and Sonoma have been sharing ideas for making county land available to aspiring farmers, emphasizing access for new farmers who would sell directly to schools. In Ventura, members established regular meetings with county officials to promote agricultural land conservation strategies.

Regional Food Systems

Yolo Ag and Food Alliance held a regional food forum in July, resulting in a deal with Superior Meats for a slaughterhouse dedicated to local meat, as well as the agreement to seek a regulatory ombudsman for Yolo and Solano Counties. San Mateo Food System Alliance focused on the use of existing commercial kitchens and warehouses to serve institutional and commercial customers. In Sonoma, Alliance members worked with the county to conduct a review of the environmental health code to make the sale of locally grown or processed foods easier.

More information on the California Food System Alliance Network can be found at <http://aginnovations.org/alliances/>.

Alliance Action Areas						
County Alliances	Farm-to-Institution	Land Use	Invasive Species	Food Security	Regional Food Systems	Labor
Fresno	●	●		●	●	●
San Mateo	●	●		●	●	
Santa Barbara		●			●	
Santa Clara	●	●		●	●	●
Sonoma	●	●		●	●	
Ventura		●	●		●	●
Yolo		●	●		●	

California Roundtable on Agriculture & the Environment

THE CALIFORNIA ROUNDTABLE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT (CRAE), is a broad coalition of agriculture, conservation, labor, and regulatory agency leaders working to promote an agriculture that is economically viable, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible. In 2010, the Roundtable comprised 42 members from 31 organizations, who contributed 930 hours of their time, valued at \$46,500. In addition to volunteering their time, members donated \$11,500 to support program efforts.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Regulatory Coordination

In 2010, CRAE focused much of its attention on efforts to remove barriers to beneficial environmental restoration and enhancement projects on the agricultural land of California. The Roundtable completed a consensus-based white paper on the topic to identify key barriers and recommendations, and has used the paper to raise the profile of this issue among relevant agencies and stakeholder groups. CRAE members continue to collaborate with agencies to advance its recommended solution steps.

Climate Policy

CRAE members collaborated to produce a set of consensus-based principles to guide agricultural elements of federal climate policy. The principles were circulated to Senator Barbara Boxer and other key federal leaders in the House and Senate, and also served to build common ground among agricultural and environmental actors.

Food Safety

CRAE played a key role in efforts to develop food safety standards and guidelines, aiming to ensure the co-equal goals of food safety and environmental quality. CRAE developed *10 Principles for Safe and Sustainable Produce*, a guiding document that contributed to a range of federal and industry efforts, including Food & Drug Administration guidelines, the President's food safety working group, the National Leafy Greens Food Marketing Agreement, and several industry-led guidelines.

More information on CRAE can be found at <http://aginnovations.org/roundtables/crae/>.



Restored wetland on agricultural land (courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service).

California Roundtable on Water & Food Supply

IN 2010, AG INNOVATIONS NETWORK LAUNCHED A NEW INITIATIVE, the California Roundtable on Water and Food Supply. This program was originally proposed by CRAE members as a parallel process. The Water Roundtable brings together leading thinkers and actors at the intersection of water supply and agriculture in an off-the-record process aimed at generating new approaches to unstick the thorny issues surrounding water in California. The 28 original members met several times in the latter half of 2010, donating 420 hours, valued at \$21,000 to the first module on agricultural water stewardship.

More information on the Water Roundtable can be found at <http://aginnovations.org/roundtables/crwfs/>.



Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops



THE STEWARDSHIP INDEX FOR SPECIALTY CROPS is a multi-stakeholder collaboration convened for the purpose of measuring and reporting sustainability in the fruit and vegetable sector. Founding partners Western Growers, Natural Resources Defense Council, SureHarvest, Markon Cooperative, and Ag Innovations Network, along with a governing council of 30 representatives of leading grower, buyer and nonprofit institutions, are responding to the need for a set of metrics that can be used by any grower, processor, wholesaler, retailer, or other actor along the fruit and vegetable supply chain to benchmark, compare and communicate their sustainability performance. The ultimate goal is to provide producers, buyers and the public with useful information about the impacts of specialty crop production on the environment and society.

During the 2010 growing season, eight of 15 proposed metrics were piloted at 38 farms and facilities across the country. The data derived from this pilot have been analyzed, the metrics have been evaluated and revised, and metrics for energy use, water use, soil health and nutrient use efficiency have been vetted and approved by the leadership body of the Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops for another round of widespread piloting throughout the sector during 2011-2012. The goal of the pilot phase is to determine if the metrics are workable, the data accessible, and the collection process sufficiently user-friendly.

The Stewardship Index creates potential for operators to become engaged in sustainability work regardless of current levels of performance, and to demonstrate improved environmental and social impacts within their operation. It also gives users the freedom to be innovative in how they increase their own performance, rather than fulfilling prescribed processes or standards. In turn, these benefits could lead to identification of efficiency potential within farming operations and increased consumer confidence in the origins of their fruits and vegetables.

The Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops creates opportunities for robust dialogue among stakeholders who often can't, or won't, work together in other contexts. New questions are generated at every turn, but those involved are keenly aware that with agricultural sustainability, we stand to accomplish far more working collaboratively than we would otherwise. To learn more about the project, or to become involved, visit our website at <http://www.stewardshipindex.org>.

Capacity Building



2010 WAS A PARTICULARLY BUSY YEAR for our Food System Capacity Building efforts, in which we combine our deep knowledge of the food system with expert processes for getting people to work together. We led or supported 15 different projects over the year, ranging from serving as the lead facilitator for California Ag Vision 2030, an effort to create a strategic plan for the long-term viability of farming and ranching in the state, to designing and leading the James Beard Foundation's Washington D.C. conference on sustainability in the food service industry.

Additionally Ag Innovations Network served as fiscal sponsor for the Sustainable Food Lab, House Farm Workers!, and the California Agricultural Water Stewardship Initiative (CAWSI). In each case we served as both a legal home and as a programmatic partner. In 2010, we took over the convening role for CAWSI, a collaborative effort advocating for sound approaches to agricultural water management, which produced an online resource center of agricultural water management practices, available at <http://agwaterstewards.org/>. Our partnership with the Sustainable Food Lab is a particularly fruitful one in that it allows us to work with the supply chain partners (buyers) for many of the producers we deal with every day in California.

Publications

IN 2010, AG INNOVATIONS NETWORK programs published several white papers, calls-to-action, and policy briefs. Publications may be downloaded from the AIN Resources page: <http://aginnovations.org/resources/>.

California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE) Publications

10 Principles for Safe & Sustainable Produce

Climate Principles

Permitting Restoration: Helping Agricultural Land Stewards Succeed in Meeting California Regulatory Requirements for Environmental Restoration Projects

Resources for Change: Case Studies on Regulatory Coordination, produced by Ag Innovations Network

Alliance Publications

Ventura: *The Impact of Agricultural Practices on the Environment, Social Equity & Economics*

San Mateo: *Call-to-Action: A Garden in Every School*

Yolo: *Yolo Food Forum Report* (written 2010/published 2011)

California Agricultural Water Stewardship Initiative (CAWSI) Publications

Why Water Stewardship for Agriculture?



Financials

Revenue		
Fee for Service Contracts	\$322,789	63.7%
Grants	\$118,171	23.3%
Donations	\$34,915	6.9%
Other Earned Income	\$26,131	5.2%
Miscellaneous	\$5,004	1.0%
Total Revenue	\$507,010	100.0%

Expenses		
Programs & Service Provision (78.6%)		
Personnel	\$267,875	57.7%
Space & Occupancy	\$17,181	3.7%
Travel & Project Direct Expenses	\$66,500	14.3%
Overhead & Misc.	\$13,421	2.9%
Administration & Fundraising (21.4%)		
Personnel	\$86,630	18.7%
Space & Occupancy	\$5,727	1.2%
Other Direct Expenses	\$1,214	0.3%
Overhead & Misc.	\$5,479	1.2%
Total Expense	\$464,027	100.0%

Funders and Donors

The following funders and donors provided substantial financial support for Ag Innovations Network's Alliances, Roundtables, and other programs:

- Clif Bar Family Foundation*
- Columbia Foundation*
- County of San Mateo*
- Davis Food Co-op, Inc.*
- Gaia Fund*
- The Health Trust*
- Roots of Change*
- UC Hansen Trust*
- USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program*
- Yocha Dehe Community Fund*

We would also like to acknowledge the monetary and in-kind contributions from members of our county Alliances and statewide Roundtables, without which these programs would not exist.

Clients

Ag Innovations Network provided a range of strategic planning, meeting facilitation, and project management services to the following clients in 2010:

- American Waygu Association*
- CA Ag Commissioners & Sealers Assn.*
- CA Dept. of Food & Agriculture:*
 - Cal Ag Vision 2030*
 - CA Dept. of Pesticide Regulation*
- Centers for Int'l Trade Development*
- Food Marketing Institute*
- James Beard Foundation*
- Marin Community Foundation*
- Santa Rosa Junior College*
- Sodexo, Inc.*
- Sustainable Food Lab*
- Tierra Miguel Foundation & Farm*
- UC Davis*
- Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops clients:
 - Markon Cooperative*
 - Natural Resources Defense Council*
 - SureHarvest*

