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CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS FIND COMMON GROUND IN CLIMATE POLICY PRINCIPLES

California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment Members Pen Principles to Guide Federal Climate Dialogue

SACRAMENTO, CA, July 9 – While efforts to craft federal-level climate legislation have been met with widely varying reactions, 19 agriculture, labor, and environmental representatives in California have achieved agreement on a set of guiding principles for federal climate policy, in the event that legislation should pass, available at <http://aginnovations.org/>.

Members of the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE) worked together to develop the principles, which spell out elements of a framework to encourage innovation, environmental protection and gains for farmers. The statement of principles calls for voluntary participation of farmers in a national climate change program, and also proposes roles for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in program development.

The groups are calling on Californian members of the legislature to push for adoption of these principles—if legislation is to move forward—to help agriculture adopt climate-friendly stewardship practices and adapt to climate change.

According to Cynthia Cory of the California Farm Bureau, “Because California already has a mandatory state policy on greenhouse gas emissions, we believe it’s important that any potential national policy must address the needs and concerns of farmers and ranchers.”

“As Congress debates federal climate policy, it will find that agricultural and environmental leaders in California can work together in crafting an effective approach,” said Jonathan Kaplan of the Natural Resources Defense Council. “Both constituencies have an interest in making this work for growers and the environment.”

CRAE is a broad alliance of farm, labor, and environmental organizations, plus advisors from state and federal agriculture and environmental agencies, that has been working since 2004 to build consensus among agriculture and environmental interest on key issues impacting the food system. For a complete list of members, see <http://foodsystemalliance.org/crae/category/members/>.