

**DOCKETED**

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*Comment Received From: Agricultural Energy Consumers Association  
Submitted On: 11/29/2022  
Docket Number: 22-ERDD-02*

**Agriculture Coalition Comments on Climate Innovation Program**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*



November 29, 2022

California Energy Commission  
Docket No. 22-ERDD-02  
*Submitted online*

**RE: Climate Innovation Program**

The Agricultural Energy Consumers Association (AECA) and associated agricultural associations appreciate this opportunity to comment on the development of the Climate Innovation Program. AECA and this coalition represent the interests of the state’s leading farming organizations, agricultural water agencies, and food processors. AECA has represented farmers, ranchers, and food and fiber processors for more than 30 years before the CPUC, CEC and state legislature.

Energy use in California’s farming and food production sectors is already highly efficient. Our farms and food processors have also installed solar power systems, anaerobic digesters, in-conduit hydro, and other renewable carbon-free energy technologies to help the state meet its RPS and GHG reduction goals while being more resilient against climate change.

As California moves toward 2030 and 2045 climate goals, additional efforts and resulting emission reductions will be needed in our sectors. Equally important, rapidly rising energy costs (gas and electric) are increasingly causing California farming and food processing operations to experience competitive disadvantages in the global marketplace. As a result, development of funding opportunities for the food production sector is critical. AECA recommends that the CEC prioritize funding for sustainable food and agriculture production projects in the following areas:

- Development of micro-grids including renewable energy generation and storage technologies that can serve rural food production operations;
- Scaling technologies to alternatively manage agricultural waste that also reduces greenhouse gases;
- Cost-effective alternatives to fossil natural gas in food processing operations; and
- Regenerative practices that turn agricultural waste streams into renewable energy and valuable organic fertilizers while maximizing improved water quality outcomes.

Each of these proposed funding areas would provide funding for:

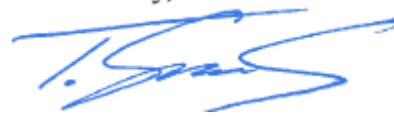
- Projects and technologies where existing funding sources are not currently available, limited or oversubscribed.
- Projects that prioritize investment in technologies that facilitate achievement of California's climate goals and other regulatory requirements.
- Projects that maximize air and water quality benefits to front-line communities in rural areas where these projects will be located.
- Projects that maximize opportunities to leverage federal matching funds available under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) or other existing USDA and DOE programs.

We look forward to working with the CEC to develop these important funding opportunities.

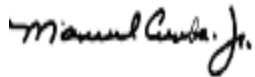
Sincerely,



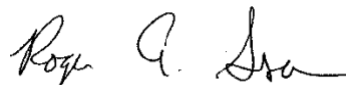
Michael Boccadoro, Executive Director  
Agricultural Energy Consumers Association



Todd Sanders, Executive Director  
California Apple Commission  
California Blueberry Association  
California Blueberry Commission  
Olive Growers Council of California



Manuel Cunha, Jr., President  
Nisei Farmers League



Roger Isom, President/CEO  
California Cotton Ginners and Growers  
Association  
Western Agricultural Processors Association



Casey Creamer, President  
California Citrus Mutual



Rick Tomlinson, President  
California Strawberry Commission



Ian LeMay, President  
California Fresh Fruit Association