

Regenerative Agriculture

&

Soil Biodiversity in California Agriculture Report

Jeff Dlott, PhD

Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel (EFA SAP)

Regen Ag Definition EFA SAP Background

On October 17, the State Board of Food and Agriculture Sent a letter to Chair Dlott asking for assistance from the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel (EFA SAP, or "Panel") with defining regenerative agriculture.



October 17, 2022

Dr. Jeff Dlott, Chair
Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Dlott and EFA SAP Members:

Regenerative Agriculture: Guiding Framework Overview

12/13/2022

Expert
Roundtable

EFA SAP
Discussion

Public
Comment

2/9/2023

Literature
Review
Leading to
Draft
Framework
Guiding
Principles

EFA SAP
Discussion

Public
Comment

2/17/2023

EFA SAP
Subcommittee
Refined Draft
Framework
Guiding
Principles

3/9/2023

EFA SAP
Discussion of
Framework
Guiding
Principles

Public
Comment

Approval of
Guiding
Principles

5/11/2023

EFA SAP
Discussion of
Draft Letter to
State Board of
Food and
Agriculture

Public
Comment

Approval of
Letter

Timeline



Regen Ag: Framing Elements

- The need to define the desired goals and outcomes from “regenerative agriculture,” including environmental, social, health, and economic goals.
- A need to guard against greenwashing.
- A definition that would accommodate site-specific contexts, which as we know in California are incredibly variable with more than 400 crops and more than 1,500 soil series.
- Careful consideration on how data would be shared given many farmers concerns about anonymity and privacy.

Regen Ag: Recommended Framework for Definition

- Being applicable, relevant, and useful for California Agriculture.
- Leading to positive impacts on California's environmental, social, human health, and economic goals, including climate goals.
- Providing measurable and verifiable outcomes, keeping in mind variability throughout the state, and – emphasizing outcomes farmers and ranchers can easily measure and that are not economically burdensome to measure.
- Allowing for context specific outcomes (in terms of scale, geographic location, diverse and/or innovative agricultural systems, goals, etc.)
- Include the idea that building soil health, including elements of physical quality, carbon sequestered, soil biodiversity, and alleviation of climate change (e.g., practices funded by the CDFA Healthy Soils Program) as a foundational element.

EFA SAP Regen Ag Definition

Guiding Framework

Questions, Comments, and Discussion