

In response to a request from the San Bernardino County Farm Bureau, the follow thoughts are being submitted for use in development of California's Ag Vision. The 36 Goals developed by the *Roots of Change* encapsulate nearly every action that needs to occur in order for agriculture to remain a viable industry in California. I see agriculture as more than an industry however; it is a necessity of life itself. Imagine that your entire food supply comes from not only another state, but another country? Imagine that nothing in your local grocery store comes from California because California has decided to raise people instead of crops. That in fact is exactly where we are headed. Land use trends are pushing us toward a reliance on anyone and everyone else for a basic need of life.

The *Roots'* most important issue is touched upon in their goals 1, 8, and 16. These goals drive everything and must become the Ag Vision's priority. Agriculture needs more than a partnership with the private sector and government agencies. Agriculture needs to drive the planning process, rather than be driven (out of town) by the process. Every county needs to adopt a Motto: "We **Will** be Sustainable by Protecting Land Designated for Maintaining and Enhancing California's Home-Grown Food Supply". Add up the acreage in every county's General Plan that is designated for agricultural use. This number will never increase, but it must be protected. Make that number the objective – nothing less than xxx acres will be maintained statewide for growing our own food supply. Give every county their goal.

How do you get every County Board of Supervisors to adopt such principals so that they refuse to approve any urban development project that transfers hundreds of acres of land out of agricultural production? How do you get farmers to turn the other cheek to a nice paycheck for selling their land? The answers to these two questions are the crux of the solution. The partnership needs to address the educational process that prevents these human actions from continuing. We may be too far down the road for such a change.

Al Montna says this plan will not gather dust – I wish the very best for this objective to come true. This planning effort needs to be more than that. It needs to change the way California does business and lives up to this mantra of "Sustainability". Every politician, planner, and landowner needs to understand what that word means in terms of a change in lifestyle. It also means California must figure out how to limit its population growth and live within its means. Aren't we already exceeding the sustainability of important resources – agriculture, water, energy? I vote for growth limiting policies that will allow the State to truly be sustainable and that will protect agriculture from its continuing demise.

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