



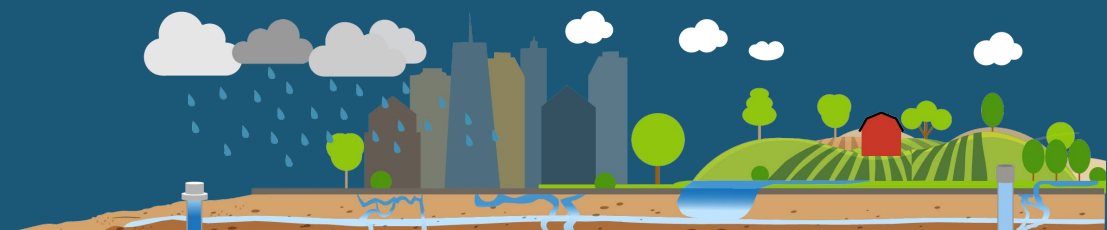
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# Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers Groundwater Technical Assistance (URCTA) Program

Presentation to CDFA's BIPOC Producer Advisory Board  
August 21, 2024



Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers  
Groundwater Technical Assistance  
(URCTA) Program





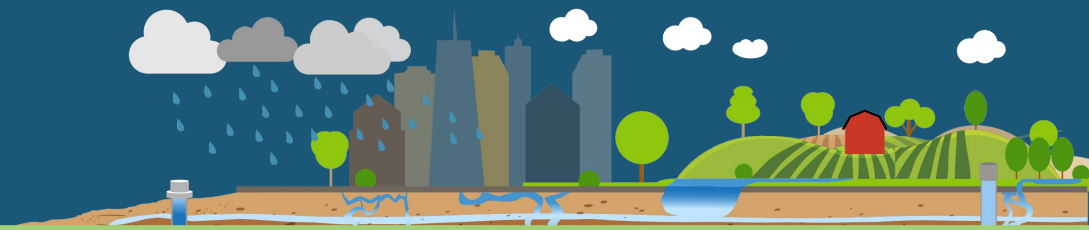
# Program Background and Purpose



Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers  
Groundwater Technical Assistance  
(URCTA) Program



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## Program Background

- **AB 685 – Human Right to Water**

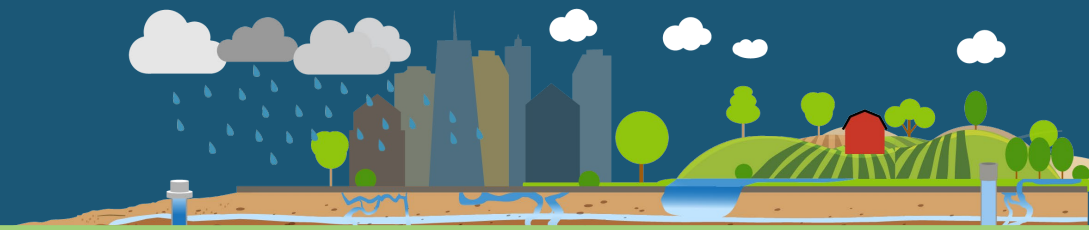
- Passed in **2012**, Declares that “**every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible drinking water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.**”

- **The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act**

- Passed in **2014**, **Requires** Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to address **water-related needs, risks, and vulnerabilities for underrepresented areas in groundwater basins regulated by SGMA.**







## Program Background

### • **AB 1348 – The Farmer Equity Act**

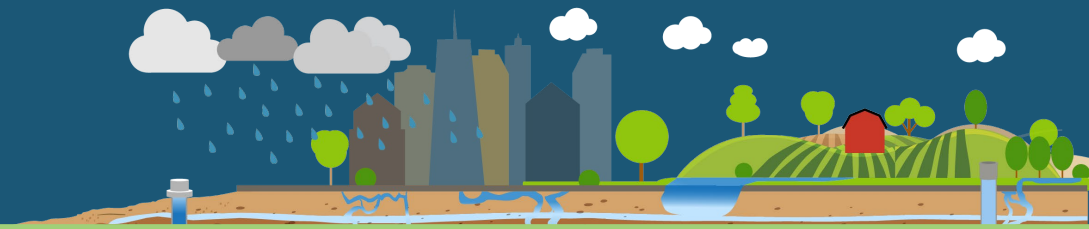
- Passed in **2017**, the legislation recognizes that **California's farmers and ranchers** are made up of a **diverse group of people**, and **not all** have historically had **access to resources and information in order to successfully run their businesses**.
- This **group of farmers and ranchers** is considered **socially disadvantaged** and has **faced historical discrimination**, some of which **still exists today**. In order to **keep California agriculture thriving**, there is a need to **invest in the long-term prosperity of all of California's farmers and ranchers**.





## Program Background

- More than **1 million Californians lack access to safe, clean, affordable drinking water** – particularly in **rural communities, underserved/low-income communities**, and **communities of color**.
- More people of **Native American heritage** live within the current political boundaries of **California** than **any other state**, including **109 federally recognized Tribes** and over **70 non-federally recognized Tribes**.



## Program Purpose

- **Communicate** and **engage** with **Underrepresented Communities (URCs)**, **California Tribes** (federally and non-federally recognized), and **Small Farmers** to determine water supply, water quality, and water sustainability needs, risks, and vulnerabilities.
- Provide **Technical Assistance** to address the **supply, water quality, and water sustainability needs, risks, and vulnerabilities**.
- **Communicate** with **GSAs** on the **needs** of the **URCs, Tribes, and Small Farmers** within the GSA boundaries.







## Program Partners

- DWR and Dudek are partnering and collaborating with:
  - University of California (UC), Davis
  - Water Foundation
  - Community Alliance with Family Farmers
  - UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR)/UC Cooperative Extension





# Eligibility Criteria for Small Farmers

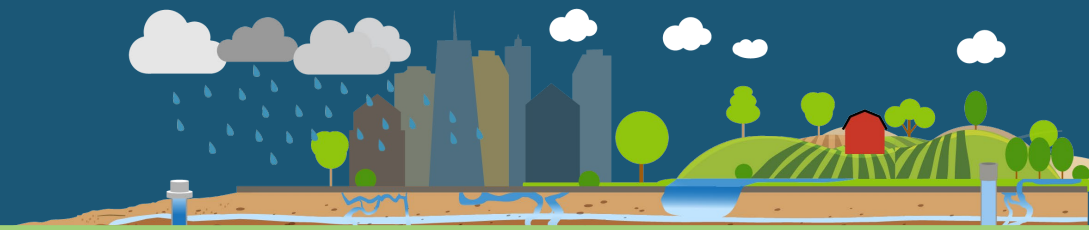


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## URCTA Eligibility Criteria for Small Farmers

- The eligibility criteria of a small farmer for the purpose of the URCTA Program is defined as meeting one or more of the following criteria:

1) A **rancher** that is **socially disadvantaged** as **defined by California's Farmer Equity Act of 2017**, grazes **livestock** on **rangelands**, and has **gross meat sales of less than \$1,000,000**.

- Per **AB 1348**: "**Socially disadvantaged group** means a group whose members have been **subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice** because of their **identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities**. These groups include all of the following: **African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians**, and **Pacific Islanders**."





## URCTA Eligibility Criteria for Small Farmers

2) A **farmer** or a **rancher** operating **80-acres or less** that meets **one of more of the following criteria**:

- Is **socially disadvantaged** as defined by **California's Farmer Equity Act of 2017**.
- Sells **50% or more of products to direct markets**
- **Cultivates crops** for California and is **not represented by commodity boards or trade organizations**
- Has **undergone a transformation from conventional agricultural processes to regenerative agricultural** processes within the **last 10 years**. **Regenerative agricultural processes** include **indigenous farming methods, cover crops, agroforestry, permaculture**, or any other **farming and ranching practices that result in regeneration of the soils to increase carbon sequestration**.

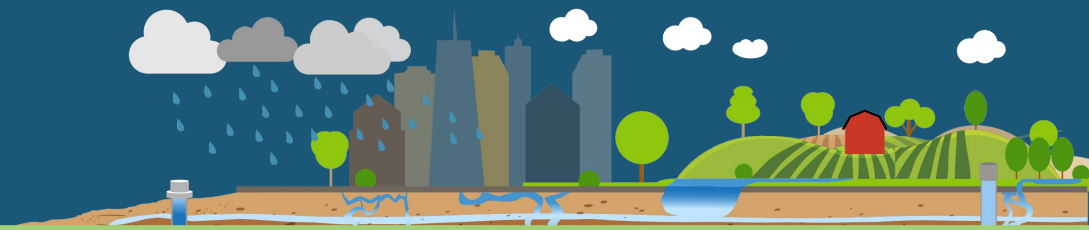




## URCTA Eligibility Criteria for Small Farmers

Per the California Department of Food and Agriculture (**CDFA**) Regenerative Agriculture Work Group Definition: “**Regenerative agriculture**,” as defined for use by State of California policies and programs, is an **integrated approach to farming and ranching rooted in the principles of soil health** leading to improved target outcomes. This approach **recognizes and respects the traditions and innovations from the original Indigenous stewards of the land**. Meeting target regenerative outcomes will require processes, practices, monitoring, evaluation, and innovation to be customized to specific production systems, ecoregions, and local Indigenous cultural regions. Practice selection is based on the best available science and practice, including **organic and traditional ecological knowledge**, for production systems. *Further information on what defines target outcomes can be found on CDFA’s Regenerative Agriculture Website*





## URCTA Eligibility Criteria for Small Farmers

### 3) A **farmer** or a **rancher** operating **200 acres or less** that meets **two of the following criteria**:

- Is **socially disadvantaged** as defined by **California's Farmer Equity Act of 2017**.
- **Cultivates a diverse crop mix of four (4) or more crop types**
- **Sells 75% or more** of products **to direct markets**
- Cultivates crops or California and is not represented by commodity boards or trade organizations
- Has **undergone a transformation from conventional agricultural processes to regenerative agricultural** processes within the **last 10 years**. **Regenerative agricultural processes** include **indigenous farming methods, cover crops, agroforestry, permaculture**, or any other **farming and ranching practices that result in regeneration of the soils to increase carbon sequestration**







# Support and Technical Assistance Services



Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers  
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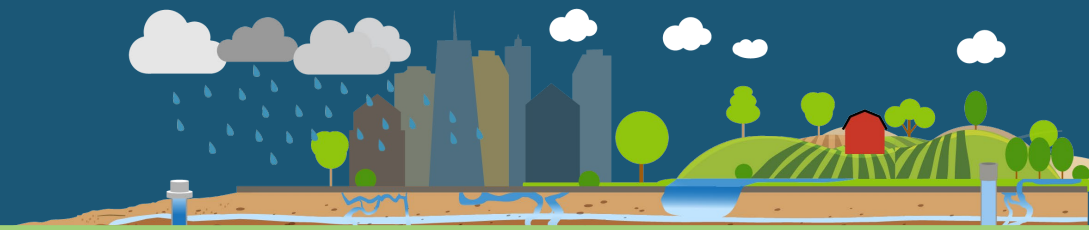


# Support and Technical Assistance Services



- Preparation of multi-lingual materials customized to the needs of Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers
- Coordination with GSAs, Cities, Counties, Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), Farm Bureaus, Ag. Commissioner's Offices, and Community Based Organizations/Partners (CBO/Ps)
- Presentations, workshops, and coordination
- Site visits, needs assessments, and surveys
- Graphics, animations, videos



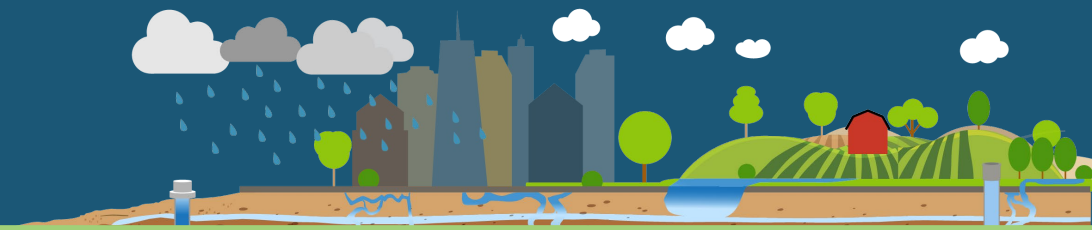


# Support and Technical Assistance Services

- Groundwater level monitoring
  - Including instrument installation and training
- Aquifer testing to determine long-term yield and supply
- Soil moisture monitoring
- Groundwater quality testing and treatment







# Support and Technical Assistance Services



- Analysis of well interference
- Analysis of existing well conditions using downhole video log and pump testing
- Facilitation of water well and/or pump construction and/or repair
- Well location, design, and construction oversight
- Groundwater impact analysis for new or existing wells or crops
- Analysis of groundwater level decline and reduction in storage, land subsidence, groundwater-dependent ecosystem depletion, etc.





# Thank you for listening – we have a few questions

- Are you aware of the URCTA Program?
  - If so, how did you hear about the URCTA Program
- Do you see the URCTA Program complementing the work of that the BIPOC Producer Advisory Board is doing?
- Is there an opportunity to collaborate, and if so, how?







# Thank You!



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## CONTACT

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## PROGRAM WEBSITE

[Underrepresented Communities, California Tribes, and Small Farmers Groundwater Technical Assistance \(URCTA\) Program](#)



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