

IMPACT RESILIENCE CLIMATE PROGRESS
ADVANCEMENT ADAPTATION REGENERATIVE
EDUCATIONAL WORKFORCE CALIFORNIA
TECHNOLOGY CONSERVATION



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

PROGRESS FOR CALIFORNIA'S AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY

CDFA's most impactful work for farmers, ranchers and all Californians

2025



FOREWORD

Fires in Southern California and bird flu in California's dairy and poultry farms have put California agriculture to the test. As urgent and captivating as those headlines have been, and as necessary as these emergency response efforts always are, our work is also so much more. CDFA's core work is the longer-term, purposeful, planned efforts to support agricultural communities, safeguard a resilient food system, and promote an equitable marketplace.

In this report, you'll find both our emergency response efforts and examples of our core projects, such as fighting invasive pests and showing the world the bounty that is "California Grown." **Agriculture here is unlike farming and ranching anywhere else in the world.** Here, we grow with such variety and such productivity and such quality that the mantle of leadership is simply a natural result of what we do. From the most immediate pressures like pests to the most far-reaching like climate change, California's agricultural community shows the world what works.

It helps tremendously to view all of what we do, at CDFA and in the larger ag community, through the lens of a project known as "Ag Vision." It's a long-term plan set forth by our State Board of Food and Agriculture, through extensive input and dialogue with the larger agricultural industry, that centers on growing opportunity for farmers and ranchers, farmworkers, individuals and communities. The plan guides areas of focus for CDFA and serves as a catalyst for action with farmers and ranchers, and other California agencies and partners. In our minds, Ag Vision is not just a plan for agriculture, but a plan to benefit every Californian.

This document fits into that plan and gives readers a "moment in time" glimpse of what CDFA is doing for agriculture and for Californians. I encourage you to read and share our vision for a future that is filled with opportunity.

Laren Ross



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT
OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

1220 N STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

www.cdfa.ca.gov

CONTENTS

Bird Flu: California's
Comprehensive Response 3

CA Grown: Connecting
With Consumers 4

Agriculture & California's
Climate Strategy 6

Farm to School: Improving
Nutrition in California Schools 8

Pest Prevention:
"The Year of the Fruit Fly" 10

Fairgrounds & Emergency
Response Readiness 12

Cover photo & images on pp. 4-5
courtesy of CA GROWN/BCMA.
All rights reserved.

BIRD FLU in California Dairies:

California's comprehensive response

Prioritizing public health, protecting workers, promoting animal welfare

When California confirmed its first detection of bird flu in dairy cows in August 2024, it wasn't the beginning of the story.

California's public health, agriculture and wildlife experts had already been collaborating for months to prepare for and mount an unprecedented response. For example, before virus was detected, CDFA and the Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory adopted milk tank testing as a screening tool for the H5N1 bird flu virus, allowing for early and accurate assessment of the virus in dairy herds.

Upon the first detection in August, California initiated mandatory testing of all dairies in the disease control zones and all dairies with ties to those sites. The state also quickly moved to conduct prevalence testing outside of the highly infected areas to detect newly impacted regions quickly. Public health officials worked in tandem with CDFA to ramp up outreach, monitoring and care for workers, their families and others at risk in the affected communities.

Leadership from the administration of Governor Gavin Newsom has strengthened this response, including the work of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, which broadened the initial working group to include 11 state departments and agencies to ensure resource needs are met and public education efforts are coordinated.

The success of California's efforts relies on partnership with the farmers who are investing many thousands of dollars on each quarantined farm to stem the spread of virus, including providing personal protective equipment like dedicated boots, gloves and clothes; equipment and transport vehicle disinfection; limiting access to cattle areas; and isolated care for sick cattle. CDFA requires and audits for biosecurity measures on infected dairies and poultry farms and is distributing thousands of biosecurity starter kits to dairies to assist in these practices.



DETECTION + RESPONSE + CONTROL BY THE NUMBERS

1.7 million cows on just under 1,000 dairies: California conducts mandatory testing of every uninfected dairy in the state, generating a weekly status check.

70% of California's egg-laying hens were lost during this period. Quick action by farmers and animal health officials stemmed the spread and got these farms back in business.

More than 4.5 million pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks, gloves, goggles and face shields have been distributed to agricultural workers and partners for distribution for people working with animals.

More than 700 California farms quarantined to prevent movement of infected animals.

3,000 dairy samples and 900 poultry samples are tested weekly using the state's main laboratory with additional surge capacity provided by four additional, specialized labs in other states.

Wastewater testing at 76 sites – Since May 2024, California has conducted wastewater testing for bird flu in partnership with federal and academic partners. California tests more than any other state in the U.S.

40 major research projects: State agricultural officials are coordinating a wave of scientific study to better characterize H5N1 behavior and impacts on poultry and cattle.



While the risk to the general public is low, Californians are encouraged to get a seasonal influenza vaccine, avoid handling dead birds and be aware of special risks if they work with farm animals or wildlife.

CALIFORNIA GROWN:

Connecting consumers with the people who produce **food**, **wine** + **flowers** in the Golden State

“California Grown” is an established brand, thanks to ongoing funding, support and commitments from growers and CDFA grant programs dating back two decades. The California agricultural community has embraced the little, blue license plate with the “CA GROWN” lettering, and consumers have responded to the positive impressions and associations that it adds to all that we grow here.

When we make these connections, growers get the benefit of consumer knowledge about what our state grows, and about what their region and local farmers grow as well. And we’re not stopping there – we are also educating the next generation of consumers through outreach to students, schools and retailers.

CA GROWN reaches consumers via social media + digital platforms, retail + foodservice programs, nutrition education, through partnerships with partners like Visit California, as well as influencer platforms with the CA GROWN Creators program.

Two CA GROWN advertising campaigns were launched in 2024: “**The Sound of Good**” which features seasonal recipes and on-farm content >



CDFA Secretary Karen Ross (below, center) joined by 15 of the CA GROWN Creators on an agriculture tour in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties, learning about what grows throughout the region and how the food makes it to consumers’ tables.





> with an ASMR audio component, and an **Agritourism campaign** in partnership with **Visit California** which highlights farmstands, eateries, farm tours, along with crops and the people who produce them in regions across the state.

CA GROWN also expanded their reach into educational and school foodservice programs.

“Eat the Season” posters were hung in schools across the state in both **English and Spanish** along with branded wraps being added to school transport vans in Chula Vista CA. The posters were also delivered to a number of retailers in the state to help California students learn about our state’s uniquely diverse, year-round bounty.



Performance Metrics: @cagrownofficial



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



X



YOU TUBE



THREADS



TIK TOK

Audience
229,691

Impressions + Views
74.8M

Engagements
554K

Link Clicks
90K



PINTEREST

Audience
14.68M

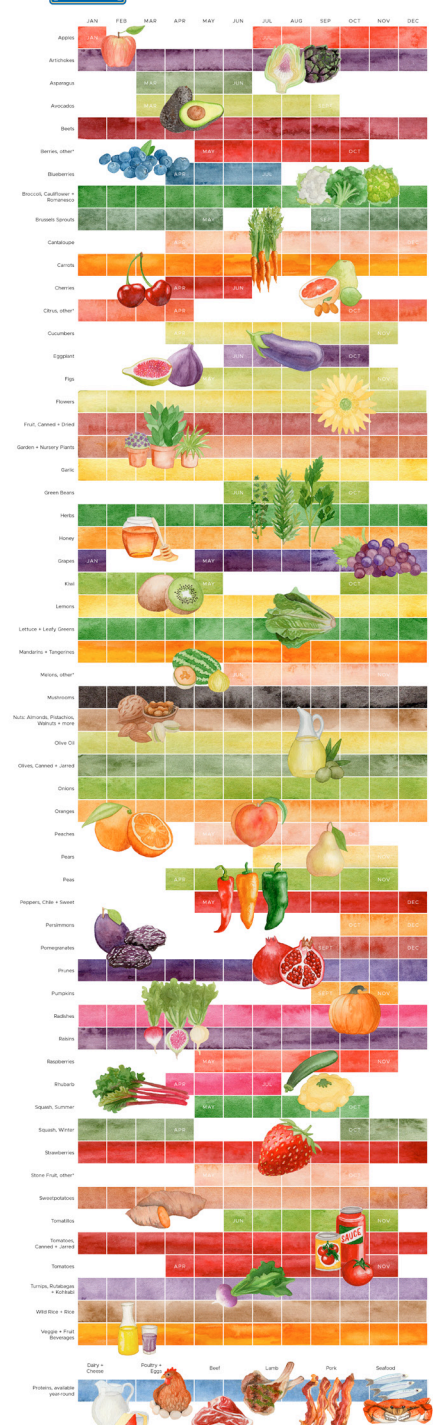
Impressions
57.71M

Engagement
1.3M

External Impressions + Views
30.8M
(FROM CA GROWN CREATORS)



EAT the SEASON



*Some varieties listed individually.
Seasons may vary slightly due to weather & growing conditions in the Golden State.
©2023 AgriMarketing

KellyPaw for CALIFORNIA CA GROWN

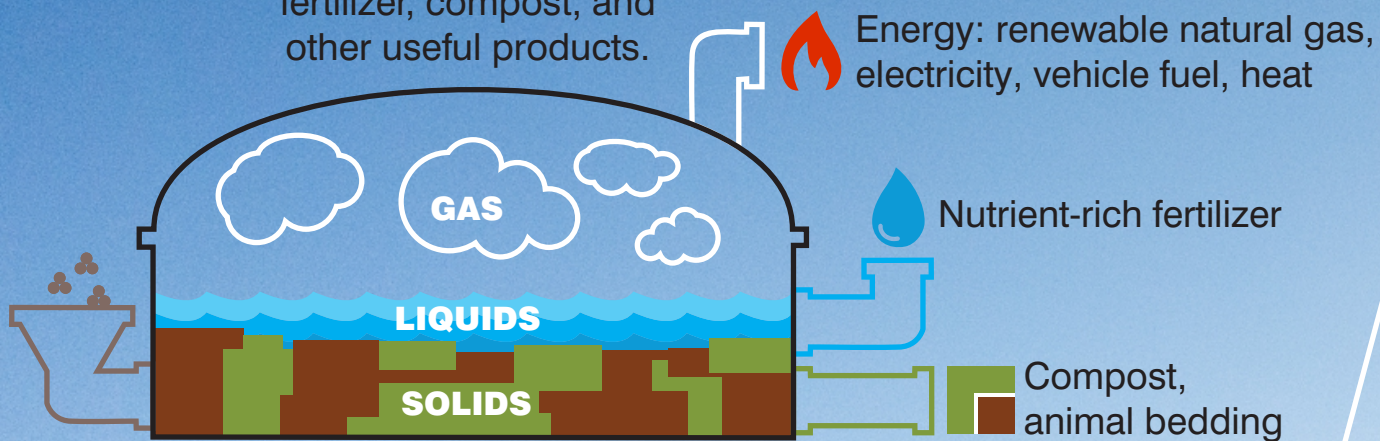
AG & CALIFORNIA'S CLIMATE

DAIRY DIGESTERS

Collect dairy cow manure to capture methane emissions, converting it into energy, fertilizer, compost, and other useful products.

139 Digester Projects

GHG Reduction:
24.3 million metric tons
(Co2 equivalent)

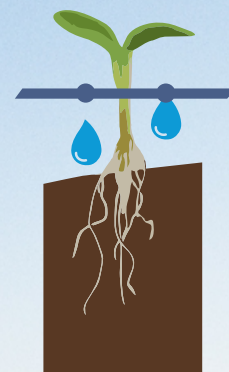


MANURE MANAGEMENT

Besides digesters, there are other ways to manage dairy pastures and livestock operations to reduce or avoid methane emissions, such as manure treatment, solar drying, or composting.

169 Manure Mgmt. Projects

GHG Reduction:
1.4 million metric tons
(Co2 equivalent)



IRRIGATION

Installation of irrigation systems that reduce water applied to a crop, or apply the water more efficiently through low-flow irrigation methods such as drip/ditch/pipeline/ and


1,100 Production Projects

GHG Reduction:
(Co2 equivalent)
1.5 million metric tons

TE STRATEGY

HEALTHY SOILS

Conservation management practices such as compost applications and reduced tillage, and on-farm plantings like cover crops and hedgerows, that improve soil health. Greenhouse gas-reduction benefits include soil carbon gains, lowered nitrous oxide and methane emissions, and biomass gains.



1,500 Producer Grants Funded
GHG Reduction:
1.1 million metric tons
(Co2 equivalent)

ATION EFFICIENCY MODERNIZATION

igation hardware and management reduce both the amount of water crop and the energy required to water. Examples are drip and ation systems, tools to improve /reservoir flows, modern pumps, salinity management.

ucer Grants Funded
tion: 900,000 metric tons
(nt)
acre feet of water saved



CDFA's Office of Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability (OARS) has a specific mission: use the best available science and knowledge from the agricultural community to design and implement practical solutions to California's natural resource challenges that improve the environmental and economic sustainability of producing nutritious food, fiber, and energy.

Direct, built-in input from farmers and ranchers and other stakeholders helps us implement workable practices on working lands that promote environmental, economic and social sustainability and resilience. OARS also leverages technical assistance providers to reach, advise and support small and underserved growers who must be part of these solutions.

Changing temperature and precipitation regimes caused by climate change are altering the growing season for California's 400+ crops, placing livestock under heat stress, and altering the context of agricultural production in the state, from pest pressure to farm worker safety. California's uniquely diverse agricultural system requires innovation on a vast scale, across a network of excellent public universities, with a robust history of agricultural research and private entrepreneurs plugged into the creativity and capital of the state's tech sector.

While most research funding comes from Federal sources, **California has strategically invested in research and information synthesis** that meets critical needs in the state. With a goal to reduce methane emissions by 40% below 2013 levels by 2030 while simultaneously retaining California's dairy industry, OARS has supported efforts to find new ways to recycle nutrients from manure and reduce emissions from enteric fermentation. To support California's substantial fruit and nut industry, OARS also collaborated with the California Air Resources Board to quantify the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from recycling, rather than burning, dead trees, allowing those growers to access new funding sources for sustainability practices.

FARM TO SCHOOL

Getting more **California-grown nutrition** on the table for our students



CDFA'S FARM TO SCHOOL INCUBATOR GRANT PROGRAM

In three rounds of grant funding since 2021:

- Reached **49% of all California students**
- Invested **\$86 million** in **375 projects**
- Benefitted **2,850,196 students**
- Served **269 California school districts**

California kids have a tremendous champion in their corner: California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom.

Her commitment to ensuring California children have the best start in life has brought her to school cafeterias and gardens throughout the state to witness firsthand the impact of CDFA's efforts under the banner of "Farm to School."

A collaboration – led by the First Partner and CDFA Secretary Karen Ross – with farm to school experts across the state led to the publication of [Planting the Seed: Farm to School Roadmap for Success](#), which highlights policy goals to advance child wellbeing, economic growth, >





CDFA Secretary Karen Ross (foreground) with California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom (left) at the Farm To School Conference.

"We have a duty to our California students to provide nutritious school meals, but beyond that, we should also be showing them where that good food comes from, who grows it, and how it gets to their cafeteria."

CDFA Secretary Karen Ross

Farm to School Spotlight: Ventura County Farm to School

2022 Farm to School Incubator Grantee Ventura County Farm to School (VCF2S) used its funds to establish a school food hub with a small regenerative farm collaborative, source and deliver crops to participating districts, and fund two new staff to expand nutrition, garden, and food system education to more schools in the county. VCF2S provided the opportunity for 1,000 students to try blood oranges! Using the CA Farmland Trust "Orange you glad we have farmland" lesson, VCF2S helped students to learn just how small the amount of land on earth is used to grow all of the world's food. Students also tried Cara Cara oranges and tangerines and voted for their favorite! (<https://www.instagram.com/p/C403MqDvUcF>)



> environmental resilience and racial equity – all through farm to school systems that connect children to locally sourced, whole foods and produce in cafeterias, classrooms and gardens. The report is a blueprint of farm to school success through focused grant funding in CDFA's Farm to School Incubator Grant Program.

Expanding Local Food Options

CDFA's California Farm to School Incubator Grant Program brings proven economic and environmental benefits to California food producers and communities, according to a report based on independent evaluation by researchers from UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, UC

Berkeley, the Food Insight Group, the Berkeley Food Institute and USDA. Highlights include:

57% of farmer grantees made sales to schools between April and September 2023

Three producer grantees reported that grant funding likely prevented them from going out of business

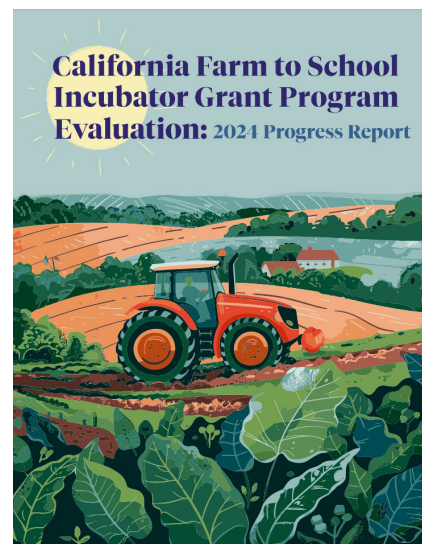
All producer grantees use or plan to use climate-smart agricultural practices in their operations during the grant period.

Hands-On Education

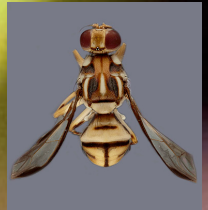
The first "track" of each round of grants has funded projects that engage students in hands-on food education opportunities for students in cafeterias,

classrooms and outdoor learning spaces. A total of \$46.3 million has been granted to 307 Track 1 projects.

Click on the image below to see the current report on the F2S Incubator Grant Program.



PEST PREVENTION



The Mediterranean fruit fly (left) and (from top) the Tau fly and the Oriental and Queensland fruit flies.

CDFA's Successful Response to "The Year of the Fruit Fly"

2023 will be remembered as the "year of the fruit fly" by California farmers. It was not a normal year.

In a normal year, for example, CDFA would expect to declare two, maybe three quarantines due to the detection of invasive fruit flies. The statistical norm would be something like 75 invasive fruit flies caught in our traps; instead, we caught 948 – and declared seven quarantines. And not just down south, where they happen most often. We also had quarantines in Santa Clara, Contra Costa and Sacramento counties, too.

Thankfully, working well into 2024, **we eradicated every last one of those infestations and lifted those quarantines.**

That success is shared with the Governor and Legislature, who recognized the required level of response and included funding in the budget to account for the exceptional circumstances.

It was a year that has served as a reminder of the importance of investing in prevention, detection and rapid response. Invasive pests incursions are a constant occurrence – but their nature and origins have changed over time.

That's why CDFA is working right now with researchers from the University of California and California State University systems on a **Comprehensive Pest Prevention Program Analysis (C3PA)**.

This project, in partnership with county agricultural commissioners, other researchers and experts, is evaluating new and high-risk pathways for invasive pests.

Travelers have always been a primary source of these infestations, so we are also working to inform them of their role and what they can do to help curb this influx of pests and diseases. CDFA, with the help and partnership of the USDA, is carrying out a **comprehensive outreach campaign** to notify communities when they are in a quarantine area, and to target travelers through our ports of entry to encourage them to dispose of any fruits, vegetables or other materials brought home from a vacation or business trip.

It's in every Californian's best interest to take these basic steps to protect not just agriculture, but also our natural environment, our gardens and parks, our shared spaces. Let's protect what makes California the exceptional place that it is.

Traveler Tip

Pests like fruit flies don't typically come to California on their own; they are primarily **brought here by travelers** who aren't even aware that they have tiny "stow-aways" in the fruit or other plant material they've brought back from a trip abroad. When you see a sign at the airport that says **"Don't Pack a Pest,"** that's why.

CDFA is working with USDA to increase outreach to travelers and residents of fruit fly quarantine areas so that these and other recommendations and helpful details are readily available.



FRUIT FLY QUARANTINES 2023-2024

NUMBERS TELL THE STORY:
Detecting and eradicating an unprecedented wave of infestations

	Tau fly	Oriental fruit fly				Queensland fruit fly*	Mediterranean fruit fly
County	L.A.	Santa Clara	Contra Costa	Sacramento	S.B./Riverside	Ventura	L.A.
Quarantine area (square miles)	128	112	99	106	554	90	159
Quarantine length (days)	353	258	304	252	317	280	282
Adult flies detected	132	8	16	10	696	3	33
Traps (Jackson, McPhail, erad.)	15,988	706	273	708	5,040	1,272	926
MAT bait stations (male attractant technique)	15,028	36,192	36,656	57,970	376,913	9,414	-
Sterile flies released	-	-	-	-	-	-	440,959,668

*First-ever detection of this pest in the Western hemisphere

FAIRGROUNDS ARE FUNDAMENTAL

From fairs to emergency shelters, fairgrounds are part of the fabric of California communities

As Californians watched 24-hour coverage of the fires in Southern California this winter, they also saw the tremendous response, rescue and recovery efforts that the state mounted. **California fairgrounds were part of that plan**, providing shelter and staging areas and resources when this unprecedented emergency caused evacuations of thousands of people as well as their pets and other animals. CDFA activated two fairgrounds, the LA Fairplex in Pomona and the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, to shelter families and animals, giving them a safe space to rest, recover and begin the process of rebuilding their homes and communities.

From fires to floods, natural disasters and other emergencies that threaten public health and safety impact every part of California – and climate change is making them more frequent, more likely, and more severe.

Looking back on 2024, **30 different fairgrounds were utilized for emergency response** – and some were activated more than once (45 total activations).

Building local community resilience is a major goal in emergency response for CDFA and the fairgrounds that the department oversees. We are building, renovating and upgrading facilities across the state to provide purpose-built structures, expand capacity, and upgrade facilities for each community to prepare for continuing climate-driven impacts and disruptions.

CDFA has improved communities' response readiness through targeted budget allocations of \$150 million invested through two Fairground and Community Resilience Centers programs administered by CDFA's Fairs and Expositions Branch. The allocation funded 12 projects on fairgrounds throughout the state to support infrastructure for emergency evacuation, shelter, base camps during emergency events, and critical deferred maintenance. The state's commitment continues with the voters' passage of Proposition 4, which authorizes an additional \$37.6 million to bolster the work we've already begun. (Details on next page.)



2024 FAIRGROUNDS EMERGENCY ACTIVATIONS

45 total activations for emergency response

15 fairgrounds used by responders as staging areas, command centers, or base camps by firefighters and utility providers

22,907 emergency responders staged at fairgrounds (average of 1,527 per activated fairground)

5 fairgrounds used as evacuation sites

17 fairgrounds used to shelter pets/other animals

1,071 animals were sheltered at fairgrounds (average of 63 per activated fairground)

389 evacuees housed at fairgrounds (average of 79 per activated fairground)

CA fairgrounds were used for a total of 369 days during this period (average of 8 days per activated fairground)



FIRES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA brought emergency response resources into full focus - including the vital role of our local and regional fairgrounds.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CENTERS

City of Kerman

Kerman Area Multi-Generational Resiliency Center

Awarded Amount: \$7,250,000

City of Oakland

Community Resilience Center at Lincoln Square Park

Awarded Amount: \$9,250,000

City of Redding

Panorama Park and Resiliency Center

Awarded Amount: \$92,500,000

Sacramento

La Familia Counseling Centers Climate Resilience Complex

Awarded Amount: \$5,000,000

San Mateo County

San Mateo County Resiliency Center

Awarded Amount: \$7,250,000



FAIRGROUNDS RESILIENCE CENTERS

Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, Chico (3rd DAA)

New Building and Jack Vanella Building Upgrade

Awarded Amount: \$30,000,000

Tulare County Fairgrounds (24th DAA)

Bldg. 1 & 2 Demolition/Rebuild, Bldg. 3 Upgrade Completion

Awarded Amount: \$11,000,000

Kings County Fairgrounds (24A DAA)

RV Park, Marketplace Building Upgrade

Awarded Amount: \$3,500,000

Amador County Fairgrounds (26th DAA)

Commissary Kitchen and Multipurpose Concession Stands

Awarded Amount: \$1,500,000

Shasta District Fairgrounds (27th DAA)

Lassen and Shasta Building Upgrades

Awarded Amount: \$4,000,000

San Bernardino County Fairgrounds (28th DAA)

Building 1 & 2 Upgrades

Amount Awarded: \$6,000,000

Merced County Fairgrounds (35th DAA)

Yosemite Hall Upgrades and Pavilion Reroof

Amount Awarded: \$5,000,000

Antelope Valley Fairgrounds (50th DAA)

New Marcc Campus and Culinary Facility

Amount Awarded: \$20,000,000

Cal Expo (Sacramento)

Restrooms in Livestock Area, HVAC at Expo Center

Amount Awarded: \$7,000,000

IMPACT RESILIENCE CLIMATE PROOFING
ADVANCEMENT ADAPTATION DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS COMMUNITY
TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION SERVICE



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95831

www.cdfa.ca.gov

2025