

SBALT NEWS

"Agriculture: Growing a Climate for Tomorrow"

By Laura Kirschmann

The Agriculture Council of America (ACA) announced that March 19, 2024, will be National Agriculture Day with the theme of "Agriculture: Growing a Climate for Tomorrow." Today, more than ever, the agriculture sector faces the challenge of feeding a growing population while mitigating the impacts of climate change. Agriculture faces erratic weather patterns, diminishing water resources, and encroaching pests, yet it adapts through innovative practices and technologies. Techniques such as precision agriculture, agroforestry, and organic farming can enhance productivity while nurturing soil health and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

These technologies can help farmers achieve a higher crop yield while optimizing resources. Precision agriculture has the potential to increase productivity, improve resource allocation for inputs such as pesticides, fertilizers, water, feed, and labor, and provide for more stable production. In agroforestry,



At the EcoFarm Pre-Conference at Paicines Ranch, attendees learned about regenerative agriculture.

trees and shrubs are grown among crops or pastureland, combining agriculture and forestry technologies to create more diverse, productive, profitable, healthy, and sustainable systems. Organic farming maintains and improves fertility, soil structure, and biodiversity, and reduces the risks of exposure to

potentially toxic material. These techniques can be integrated into conventional farming practices to reach the goals of sustainability, soil health, and productivity.

In January, I had the pleasure of participating in the EcoFarm Regenerative Agriculture Field Day at Paicines Ranch. The group ex-



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plored our relationship with nature and discussed ways to move toward a more diverse food system. Paicines Ranch favors practices that are proactive in regard to declining resources, increasing population, and climate change. By prioritizing principles such as minimal tillage, cover cropping, and crop rotation, their use of regenerative agriculture fosters sustainable food production and rejuvenates ecosystem health and productivity.

Consumer choice plays a crucial role. By opting for locally sourced products, we move toward a greener food system. In the spirit of National Ag Day, let us sow the seeds of gratitude and harvest hope for a future where agriculture thrives and communities flourish.

To learn about ways to protect local agricultural lands and to discover local food resources, visit us at www.sanbenitolandtrust.org.