



Biological Farming Programs

The Biological Farming Program builds and supports communities of farmers, agricultural professionals, and public institutions dedicated to the voluntary adoption of a whole systems approach to farm management. This approach is flexible, maintains long-term profitability, and conserves and enhances water, soil and air resources.

Projects:

[Environmentally Responsible Management Practices for Tree Crops in the Feather River Basin-Lower Feather River, Sutter Bypass, Southern Sacramento Valley](#)

The Environmentally Responsible Management Practices for Tree Crops in the Feather River Basin program focuses on outreach and demonstration to reduce organophosphate pollution in the Lower Feather River and Sutter Bypass, as well as developing and increasing the adoption of sound production practices that improve environmental impacts of orchards in the Southern Sacramento Valley.

[Farmscaping for Wildlife and Conservation - San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento Valley, Central Coast, North Coast](#)

Farmscaping refers to planting non-cropped areas of the farm such as corners and edges to native plants. Multiple benefits can be attained including beneficial insect attraction, creation of wildlife habitat for birds and other animals, and minimization of farm run-off, thereby reducing erosion and non-point source pollution. CAFF's Farmscaping project has directly helped farmers plant many miles of native plant hedgerows. We have produced educational field days for farmers to see some of these plantings first hand and learn from their neighbors the benefits of this type of on-farm conservation. CAFF continues to promote these plantings through publications and workshops for farmers, agricultural agency staff and other agricultural professionals.

[The Sustainable Cotton Project - San Joaquin Valley](#)

The Sustainable Cotton Project (SCP) was founded in 1996 to expand and disseminate knowledge about alternatives to chemical farming systems in cotton, and to promote the use of sustainably farmed cotton in the textile and apparel industry. As a private non-profit group working under the direction of CAFF, SCP is dedicated to helping build bridges among cotton farmers, manufacturers and consumers. SCP has two major focuses: a BASIC (Biological Agricultural Systems in Cotton) Program that works directly with growers; and a Developing Demand Program that encourages major apparel companies to use U.S. organic or our own BASIC cotton. The BASIC program walks farmers step-by-step through the transition from conventional to more biological techniques. It also offers farmers tested methods for reducing or eliminating certain farm chemicals and increasing sustainability.

[BMP's for Reducing Sediment & Pesticides in Runoff from Colusa County Almond Orchards - Colusa County](#)

Runoff from almond orchards along tributaries to the Colusa Basin Drain in Colusa County contains sediments and pesticides. The Colusa Basin Drain flows into the Sacramento River. Best Management Practices (BMP's) such as cover cropping, insectary hedgerows, grassed swales, and streambank stabilization could significantly reduce contaminated runoff. CAFF and the Colusa County RCD have found that farmer-to-farmer information exchange is the most effective way of changing agricultural management. In this project, we will work with local almond growers to implement BMP's and demonstrate their effectiveness to other growers. We will measure sediment and diazinon loads before and after, and up- and downstream of demonstration sites to assess BMP effectiveness.

Program goals:

- Facilitate the exchange of information based on the knowledge and experience of farmers, PCAs and researchers who have pioneered and continue to develop biological production systems.
- Create and coordinate local teams that provide leadership, program guidance and technical assistance.
- Monitor and document the effectiveness of biological management systems.
- Foster collaboration and respect among farmers, agricultural service providers and suppliers, researchers and both public and private institutions.

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Mission Statement

Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is building a movement of rural and urban people to foster family-scale agriculture that cares for the land, sustains local economies and promotes social justice.

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