

**Regenerative Agriculture**

**&**

**Soil Biodiversity in California Agriculture Report**

Jeff Dlott, PhD

Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel (EFA SAP)

# Regen Ag Definition EFA SAP Background

On October 17, the State Board of Food and Agriculture Sent a letter to Chair Dlott asking for assistance from the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel (EFA SAP, or "Panel") with defining regenerative agriculture.



October 17, 2022

Dr. Jeff Dlott, Chair  
Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel  
California Department of Food and Agriculture  
1220 N Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Dlott and EFA SAP Members:

# Regenerative Agriculture: Guiding Framework Overview

12/13/2022

Expert  
Roundtable

EFA SAP  
Discussion

Public  
Comment

2/9/2023

Literature  
Review  
Leading to  
Draft  
Framework  
Guiding  
Principles

EFA SAP  
Discussion

Public  
Comment

2/17/2023

EFA SAP  
Subcommittee  
Refined Draft  
Framework  
Guiding  
Principles

3/9/2023

EFA SAP  
Discussion of  
Framework  
Guiding  
Principles

Public  
Comment

Approval of  
Guiding  
Principles

5/11/2023

EFA SAP  
Discussion of  
Draft Letter to  
State Board of  
Food and  
Agriculture

Public  
Comment

Approval of  
Letter

Timeline



# Regen Ag: Framing Elements

- The need to define the desired goals and outcomes from “regenerative agriculture,” including environmental, social, health, and economic goals.
- A need to guard against greenwashing.
- A definition that would accommodate site-specific contexts, which as we know in California are incredibly variable with more than 400 crops and more than 1,500 soil series.
- Careful consideration on how data would be shared given many farmers concerns about anonymity and privacy.

# Regen Ag: Recommended Framework for Definition

- Being applicable, relevant, and useful for California Agriculture.
- Leading to positive impacts on California's environmental, social, human health, and economic goals, including climate goals.
- Providing measurable and verifiable outcomes, keeping in mind variability throughout the state, and – emphasizing outcomes farmers and ranchers can easily measure and that are not economically burdensome to measure.
- Allowing for context specific outcomes (in terms of scale, geographic location, diverse and/or innovative agricultural systems, goals, etc.)
- Include the idea that building soil health, including elements of physical quality, carbon sequestered, soil biodiversity, and alleviation of climate change (e.g., practices funded by the CDFA Healthy Soils Program) as a foundational element.

# **EFA SAP Regen Ag Definition**

## **Guiding Framework**

### **Questions, Comments, and Discussion**