Nutrient Management in California: A Vital Investment for Our Future

What difference does nutrient management make for farmers & communities in California?

The USDA's NRCS estimates that approx. 28% of total U.S. cropland are exceeding the nitrogen loss threshold. Implementing a Nutrient Management Plan on such acreage can save farmers an avg. of nearly $30 p/ac.[4]

Case studies conducted by American Farmland Trust in California's Central Valley in 2019[1] and 2020[2] found that farmers using soil health practices, including proper nutrient management, saw yield increases ranging from 10-20% in their almond farms.[3]

Research conducted by the Soil Health Institute and Cargill showed that 85% of farms that adopted soil health management systems, reported improvements in drought resilience, and 94% noted better water retention, both critical during heavy rainfall or dry periods.[8]

Applying cropland nutrient management across US cropland would save 52 million tons of CO_2e p/yr.[11] A 2022 report by the Environmental Defense Fund estimates that an aggressive yet feasible target would be able to reduce these emissions by 27 million tons CO_2e.[12]

90%

voters nationwide (85% GOP, 90% IND, and 96% DEM) support "providing assistance to farmers adopting practices that help address climate change and help farmland better withstand extreme weather like drought and flooding."[13]

What can be done with more funding for cropland nutrient management?

Expand incentive programs
Provide financial support to farmers who adopt sustainable nutrient management practices, helping offset the initial costs of implementing new practices and encouraging more farmers to participate.

Support education and training initiatives
Workshops, webinars, and field demonstrations can help farmers understand the benefits and methods of nutrient management.

Provide more technical assistance
Providing technical assistance to farmers is crucial. More funding could be used to hire and train experts who can work directly with farmers to develop and implement nutrient management plans.

Scale Edge-of-Field Practices
Increased funding could help scale edge-of-field (EoF) practices, such as buffer strips and constructed wetlands, which are effective in reducing nutrient runoff and improving water quality.[14]

SCAN FOR REFERENCES