

Mendocino County Sustainable Ag Lands Committee (SALC)

FACT SHEET



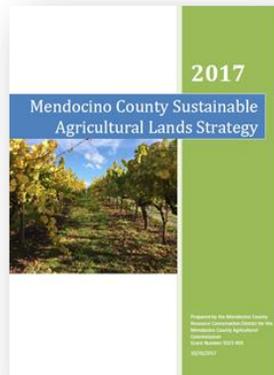
Background

In November of 2015, the Mendocino County Department of Agriculture was awarded a grant for the *Strategic Growth Council – Sustainable Agricultural Lands Strategy* through the California Department of Conservation. The County contracted with the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) to conduct an assessment of agricultural lands at risk of conversion and develop recommendations for policies and actions that could be undertaken by the County and community partners to conserve agricultural land resources.

The *Mendocino County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Strategy* was completed in October 2017 and can be found at: www.mcrcd.org/

Publications

Or for more information on the Committee, contact:
Megan.McCluer@mcrcd.org



Committee Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Committee is to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands throughout Mendocino County while encouraging responsible and balanced development. This will be accomplished by:

- Raising awareness among Mendocino County communities about ag land contributions to the economy, ecosystem services and quality of life.
- Encouraging a planning process that is inclusive and includes the use of conservation tools such as conservation easements, tax incentives, urban growth boundaries, zoning and ag mitigation programs to conserve ag land.
- Increasing communication and collaboration with diverse stakeholders and decision makers.

LEAD COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Carre Brown, Mendocino Co Board of Supervisors
Harinder Grewal, Mendocino Co Agricultural Commissioner

Carol Mandel, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Devon Jones, Mendocino Co Farm Bureau

Megan McCluer, Mendocino Co Resource Conservation District (RCD)

Greg Nelson, Planning Commissioner/Farmer

Glenn McGourty, UC Cooperative Extension

Ann Cole, Mendocino Land Trust

Barbara Goodell, Anderson Valley Land Trust

Alan Nicholson, Inland Mendocino Land Trust

Kyle Farmer, Rancher

The Benefits of Conserving Ag Land:

- **A long-term, stable land base for the future of the County's ag industry**
- **A vibrant and diverse economy and production of local food**
- **The preservation of rural character, cultural heritage and quality of life**
- **Climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration**
- **Wildlife habitat and reduced habitat fragmentation**
- **Groundwater recharge, reduced storm water run-off and flooding**
- **Local food is fresher, more nutritious with less packaging and transportation needs**

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Agriculture is a crucial component of the Ukiah Valley and Mendocino County's economy and cultural heritage. Agriculture provides numerous jobs for County residents and substantial tax revenue for Mendocino County.

The Vision of the Committee is a well-balanced mix of urban, rural, agricultural, and grazing lands, forest, waterways and wetlands in Mendocino County that sustains humans, local food production, ecosystems, working landscapes and wildlife.

The primary Mission of the Committee is to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands throughout Mendocino County while encouraging responsible and balanced development.

The committee will provide stakeholders and decision makers with clear and concise information to allow for responsible and balanced development while conserving agricultural values and natural resources throughout Mendocino County.

AGRICULTURAL FACTS:

- California lost 58,587 acres of irrigated farmland between 2010-2012.¹ Mendocino County lost 1,394 acres of important farmland between 2014-2016. Agriculture is an important economic, environmental and cultural resource in our county. For these reasons, agricultural conversion is a critical issue to pay attention to in relation to local land use policies.
- The county of Mendocino contains less than 50,000 acres of productive farmland, 27,044 acres of which is identified as Prime, Unique, or of Statewide Importance as of 2016.² The majority of this farmland is located in southern Mendocino County in areas anticipated to experience population growth and urbanization over the next two decades.
- A risk assessment conducted using applicable Agricultural Conservation Easement Grant Program 2015/16 risk categories, found that 90 percent of Prime agricultural land, 85 percent of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 83 percent of Unique farmland was at-risk of conversion to residential development. The highest risk areas in the county occur within municipal services boundaries and their Sphere of Influence or within two miles of these areas.

1. 2015 California Farmland Conversion Report. http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/FMMP_2010-2012_FCR.aspx

2. CA Department of Conservation 2014-16 Mendocino Co. Land Use Conversion Data (latest report). <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Mendocino.aspx>