

Agricultural Land Equity Initiative



Advancing equitable agricultural land access in California.



About

The Agricultural Land Equity Initiative (ALEI) works to equitably increase agricultural land access across California for food and fiber production and traditional tribal agricultural uses. ALEI staff administer and support the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force (Task Force).



California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

The Task Force is made up of thirteen appointed members working together to identify and address barriers and opportunities to equitably increase agricultural land access and stable tenure for Native American tribes and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers* in California. The members will submit a report to the legislature and Governor by Jan. 1, 2026 that includes their recommendations on how to address the agricultural land equity crisis. You can find details and resources for all Task Force meetings [on the website](#).

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in California is fundamental for tribal sovereignty and success as a farmer or rancher.



Learn more about Agricultural Land Equity Initiative (ALEI) at sgc.ca.gov

Meet the Members

Task Force members have wide-ranging expertise and experience in issues of land access and tenure, especially as they relate to Native American tribes in California and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. You can read the Task Force members' bios on the [Task Force website](#).



Darlene Franco
Member of the Wukchumni Tribe



Doria Robinson
Agricultural Industry Member, California State Board of Food and Agriculture / Executive Director, Urban Tilth



Dorian Payán
Director of Holistic Land Relations, Sustainable Economies Law Center (SELC)



Emily Burgueno
Head Seed Keeper, Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel



Irene de Barraicua
Director of Policy & Communications, Líderes Campesinas



James Nakahara
Farm Business Advisor, Kitchen Table Advisors



Lawrence Harlan
Treasurer, Fort Bidwell Indian Community Council



Liya Schwartzman
Senior Program Manager, California FarmLink



Nathaniel Brown
Owner/Operator, Brown Sugar Farm



Nelson Hawkins
Founder, We Grow Urban Farm



Ruth Dahlquist-Willard, Ph.D.
Interim Director, University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program



Thea Rittenhouse
CDFA Farm Equity Advisor



Qi Zhou
Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Program Manager, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Why Does Agricultural Land Equity Matter?

Stable and secure access to agricultural land in California is fundamental for tribal sovereignty and success as a farmer or rancher. Native American tribes and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers* in California from many backgrounds have faced centuries of systemic discrimination, displacement and dispossession of their land. The [2022 USDA Census of Agriculture](#) shows that 86% of farms in California are owned by white producers. In this context, progress towards more equitable land access is a critical component of Strategic Growth Council's efforts to address inequities and advance a California for all.

Engage & Learn More

- [Agricultural Land Equity Initiative Homepage](#)
- [Meeting details, registration and background reading](#)
- [Meet the Task Force](#)
- [Public comment and written communication](#)

Socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers is defined in the Farmer Equity Act of 2017 and included in the legislation that created the Agricultural Land Equity Task Force. ALEI staff use this term to remain consistent with existing legislation but recognizes that there are diverse terms and preferences for how best to refer to priority communities.