

Briefing Materials

Prepared for the Sep. 19, 2024 Meeting of the Secure Land Tenure Subcommittee of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

The Secure Land Tenure Subcommittee (Subcommittee) of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force (Task Force) was established on August 15, 2024. Subcommittee members include Emily Burgueno and Liya Schwartzman.

In preparation for the first Subcommittee meeting on September 19, 2024, SGC staff request that Subcommittee members review the Secure Land Tenure section of the [draft work plan](#) shared at the August Task Force meeting.

Secure Land Tenure Section of the Work Plan

The revised work plan defines the Secure Land Tenure dimension of land access as the following:

How an individual, entity, or organization maintains relationships with land once they have access, and what is required to do so.

Guiding principles and approaches

- Land equity requires secure relationships with land.
- Secure tenure is critical to support farmer and community wellbeing.
- Secure tenure requires building capacities of all kinds—community, individual, ecological, organizational, and governmental.

Topics, issues to address, and potential solutions

Topic	Issues to Address	Potential solutions
Leasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term leases prevent investment in land and business, in turn, prevent tenant farmers from becoming landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair leasing terms and tenants' rights, including decision-making powers • Tenant farmer bill of rights • Incentives for long-term ag leases
Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for sovereignty and wealth generation • Development pressures impact owner decisions and ability to hold onto land • Ag easements and other restrictions on land use and sale can reduce farmers' ability to build wealth and retire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce financial burdens for first time landowners to acquire and maintain land
Infrastructure and land improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insecure access (e.g., short-term leasing) reduces ability to invest in improvements to the land • Infrastructure impacts land equity, e.g. irrigation infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms to support investment on lands after acquisition • Outline list of potential post-acquisition infrastructure that could be included in new grant programs • Recs from SGMA conversation
Technical assistance, education, and information-sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers reduce access to public resources and technical assistance • Overly complex applications and qualifications reduce access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and outreach to farmers that account for diverse languages, cultural norms, and accessibility needs • Improve capacity for community-based organizations (CBOs) to assist farmers with access to programs

<p>Financial access and wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of insurance options and high costs • Different expenses for urban, peri-urban, and rural producers, e.g., with costs of housing and water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed basic income for land stewards • Forgivable loans and past loan forgiveness, e.g. student loans • Public funds directly to land stewards
<p>Access to technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal access has impacts on financial and physical well-being and land tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access/education and support • High-speed internet access • Technology share