



# Advancing Agricultural Land Equity in California

## Executive Summary

Recommendations of the California  
Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

DECEMBER 2025



Agricultural land equity is when priority producers and Tribal land stewards have secure and affordable access to viable land for the stewardship and cultivation of food, fiber, medicine, and cultural resources without systemic barriers, disparities, or exploitation.



Dream Farm in Fresno

## Executive summary

California faces an agricultural land equity crisis that must be promptly addressed. For decades, many producers and Tribal land stewards in California have been systemically excluded from landownership and secure tenure due to race, ethnicity, gender, class, and citizenship status, among other factors. Today, these exclusions intersect with agricultural land consolidation and financialization, climate change, and burdensome regulations resulting in negative outcomes for agricultural communities and the state's ecological and economic resilience.

Addressing these harms requires active efforts to ensure that priority producers and Tribal land stewards have access to secure, affordable, and viable land for the stewardship and cultivation of food, fiber, medicine, and cultural resources, without systemic barriers, disparities, or exploitation. In turn, these efforts hold potential to benefit all Californians by fostering a more resilient and just food system through strengthening local,

diverse food economies and sustaining healthy natural and working lands.

Established in the **California Budget Act of 2022 (AB 179)**, the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force is an independent 13-member body directed to “submit a report (by Jan. 1, 2026) to the Legislature and Governor...that includes a set of policy recommendations on how to address the agricultural land equity crisis.”

The Task Force is an independent body administered by the California Strategic Growth Council. As an independent body composed of public members with diverse backgrounds and experiences, the Task Force is uniquely situated to provide the Governor and Legislature with an understanding of people's lived experiences with agricultural land access and tenure.

## Executive summary

---

Recommendations are divided into six topic areas:

1. Prioritize Tribal stewardship and land return.
2. Fund and incentivize land acquisition for priority producers and Tribal land stewards.
3. Halt, mitigate, and reverse agricultural land consolidation.
4. Preserve California's agricultural land while prioritizing equitable land access and stewardship.
5. Prioritize and protect secure land tenure.
6. Support urban agriculture.

This report is the result of two years of public meetings, site visits, guest speakers, presentations, and community engagement sessions across California. In addition to relying on members' expertise, the Task Force prioritized community engagement and outreach throughout its process. The views and recommendations expressed herein are those of the Task Force and not necessarily those of the California Strategic Growth Council or the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation.



*Eleven of 13 Task Force members at their first meeting in Sacramento in 2023*

## Summary of recommendations

### 1. Prioritize Tribal stewardship and land return.

- 1.1 Establish an Ancestral Land Return Fund.
- 1.2 Embed ancestral land return for California Native American Tribes in the state's policies and programs.
- 1.3 Return publicly held land to California Native American Tribes.
- 1.4 Enable and promote the implementation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge and cultural practices.

### 2. Fund and incentivize land acquisition for priority producers and Tribal land stewards.

- 2.1 Establish a Restorative Land Fund.
- 2.2 Develop and implement a public education campaign to document past and ongoing harm.
- 2.3 Provide funding for the purchase of agricultural land to be leased or transferred to priority producers and Tribal land stewards.
- 2.4 Establish loan and debt forgiveness programs.
- 2.5 Adopt new tax programs and benefits designed to serve priority producers and Tribal land stewards.
- 2.6 Continually evaluate and improve funding and incentive programs.
- 2.7 Expand tailored technical assistance for land access and acquisition.

### 3. Halt, mitigate, and reverse agricultural land consolidation.

- 3.1 Limit agricultural landownership by investment companies.
- 3.2 Develop local first opportunity to purchase ordinances for priority producers and Tribal land stewards.
- 3.3 Establish a California Producer Retirement Fund.
- 3.4 Establish and fund a Land Market Monitoring Program.

### 4. Preserve California's agricultural land while prioritizing equitable land access and stewardship.

- 4.1 Develop a statewide agricultural land preservation and stewardship plan.
- 4.2 Improve conservation programs and tools to enable equitable land access and stewardship.

## Executive summary

---

- 4.3 Promote local strategies for agricultural land preservation.
- 4.4 Expand state and local government capacity to effectively and fairly lease publicly held land.

### 5. Prioritize and protect secure land tenure.

- 5.1 Address power imbalances in landowner-tenant relationships.
- 5.2 Expand the capacity of CDFA's Farmer Equity Office.
- 5.3 Establish and fund regional Ag Ombuds positions.
- 5.4 Address inequitable policy consequences while respecting the intention of the law.
- 5.5 Incentivize and support local governments to adopt zoning and land use planning practices that facilitate secure land tenure and stewardship.

### 6. Support urban agriculture.

- 6.1 Ensure eligibility of urban producers and Tribal land stewards in existing programs and provide tailored funding.
- 6.2 Make land available for urban agriculture and address barriers to secure tenure.





The Task Force was established to equitably increase access to agricultural land for food production and traditional Tribal agricultural uses. As such, all recommendations included in this report are intended to serve and support priority producers and Tribal land stewards, which refers to those who have been historically and systematically excluded from landownership and secure tenure. Unless otherwise specified, all recommendations are directed to the Governor and Legislature of the State of California.



The full report of recommendations can be found online in English.

[bit.ly/aletf-report](https://bit.ly/aletf-report)