Financial Incentives for Ranching

(SEQUESTERING CARBON THROUGH **COMPOST APPLICATIONS TO GRAZED GRASSLANDS**)

How Am I Compensated?

- *Ranchers can produce carbon offset credits by following a protocol approved by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).*
- *Carbon offset credits accrued by following the protocol can be sold on the carbon market.*

How Are My Land and the Environment Improved?

- *Carbon sequestration*
- *Reduced soil disturbance*
- *Land conservation*
- *Increased soil productivity*
- *Increased forage production for cattle*

Butte County's agricultural lands are rich with high-quality soils and are located in one of the best agricultural areas in the world. Agriculture plays a large role in the County's economy. The SALC Strategy is intended to conserve agricultural land while sequestering carbon, reducing GHG emissions, conserving water, and recharging groundwater.

Image: matteroftrust.org

What is the "Compost Applications" Protocol?

- *The protocol adds 1/2" - 1" of compost to grazed grasslands.*
- *The Air Resources Board's Compliance Offset Program provides financial incentives for sustainable practices; specifically, practices that reduce GHG emissions or sequester carbon.*
- *A carbon offset protocol must be adopted by CARB to be eligible for offset credits.*
- *Ranching activities must meet specific requirements to be eligible for offset credits. When they are met the offset credits can be sold on the carbon market for profit.*

What Farming Practices Are Involved?

- ***1/2" to 1" of compost is added to existing grazed grasslands, resulting in:***
- *Direct carbon sequestration achieved by directly adding a carbon source to the soil through compost applications.*
- *Indirect carbon sequestration achieved passively through increased plant growth.*
- *A 2013 study indicates that 28 million tons of CO_2 equivalent GHGs could be avoided by adding composted manure to 5% of California's rangelands (DeLonge et al. 2013).*

Grassland conservation may not be appropriate for all agricultural operations. Interested land owners and managers are encouraged to evaluate the practices described in this brochure to determine whether they are feasible and appropriate for their property and operation.

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What Lands and Farming Practices Are Eligible?

- *Project includes one or more parcels that are grazed grasslands for the entire project duration.*
- *Stocking rates shall be determined via consultation with a qualified expert.*
- *Any areas that are regularly flooded are excluded.*
- ***Compost regulations must meet the following specifications**:*
  - *Less than 3% nitrogen (dry-weight basis)*
  - *Free of seeds and germinants*
  - *Meets EPA's limitations for heavy metals, biosolids, and pathogens*
  - *Waste food or manure has been properly handled*
- ***For more information on this protocol visit** http://www.marincarbonproject.org/policy/rangeland-compost-protocol*
- ***To set up an account with the registry and get started visit** http://americancarbonregistry.org/how-it-works/what-we-do*

For More Information...

- ***Butte County Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation (SALC) Strategy**: Learn more https://www.buttecounty.net/dds/Planning/Grants/SALC.aspx*
- ***SALC Mapper:** See if your property may be eligible for this protocol http://gis.buttecounty.net/Public/index.html?viewer=SALC*
- ***California Air Resources Board:** Learn more about the Compliance Offset Program https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/offsets/offsets.htm*
- ***Compost-Planner**: Estimate GHG reductions and carbon sequestration here http://www.compost-planner.com/*
- ***Marin Carbon Project:** Origin of this protocol http://www.marincarbonproject.org/*

Butte County Department of Development Services

SALC Strategy

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