



# The Sustainable Urban Food Initiative: Teaching Farmworkers to Farm in the Face of Climate Change

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*EJ4Climate (Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience)*

## ***Sustainable Systems Research Foundation***

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## ***Dr. Ronnie Lipschutz***

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# Application Form

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## Project Title\*

The Sustainable Urban Food Initiative: Teaching Farmworkers to Farm in the Face of Climate Change

## Objectives and Results\*

Explain how the project will provide community-driven solutions to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Describe the specific climate change-related impacts in your area, relevant environmental justice issues that the project will address, the objectives of the project, and desired results. (Max. 500 words)

Objective: To provide farmworkers the opportunity to transition to becoming farm operators and thereby reduce the impacts of present and future climate change on their lives and those of their families and communities.

Among the underserved communities most vulnerable to climate change are the world's farmworkers. They depend for their livelihood on food growing and food processing under the ownership of other, usually wealthy, individuals and corporations. Wages are far beneath the statutory minimum and are subject to disruptions by changing seasons and crops, unfavorable weather conditions, drought and water scarcity as well as floods, poor living conditions and lack of nutritious food.

The farmworkers of California are especially vulnerable to the current and future impacts of climate change, especially as these will affect the availability of work, water and housing. Moreover, a significant fraction of California farmworkers are undocumented and do not speak Spanish. While a tightening supply of farm labor should increase wages and lead employers to value farmworkers more—after all, they were deemed “essential workers” during the COVID-19 pandemic, even in the face of greater exposure due to crowded homes and minimal medical care.

The population of the Monterey Bay Region (Santa Cruz, Monterey & San Benito counties) is close to 800,000, of which approximately half are Hispanic. Of these, more than 200,000 are farmworkers and their families. The poverty rates for the region are around 10% and, although median incomes are close to that for the state as a whole, this is a consequence of high-earning sectors in all three counties. The number of small (less than 50 acres) and low income (less than \$10,000/yr. in sales) farms is around 40-50% for the region.

The numbers of Latinx farmers on the California Central Coast is growing, but many lack reliable access to lucrative local markets. The majority rent and farm small tracts of land and experience significant language and infrastructure barriers to maximizing the wholesale value of their produce. Most of these small farmers were formerly Mexican farmworkers and many have learned their craft at ALBA (The Agriculture and Land Based Training Association in Salinas, California). SUFI is designed to supplement and complement their training and experience to make them more successful.

There are many opportunities to address the impacts of climate change on farmworkers, one of the most promising is providing them with the skills, tools and knowledge required to become small farmers. Small farms are more productive per acre, produce more nutritious food with less environmental impact and generate fewer food miles than large corporate farms. Farmers who practice regenerative organic agriculture by recycling organic wastes into their soil and using other waste byproducts to foster plant growth, also use less water and no pesticides, create carbon sinks and less methane, and are more resilient in the face of major weather events and climate change. Small farms can also provide a steadier and more reliable income than farmwork, providing the cash, capital and resilience to deal with the impacts of climate change.

The Sustainable Urban Food Initiative partnership works with local agricultural organizations whose focus is on small and minority farmers. The partnership is offering a series of training and experiential

education workshops for new and aspiring farmers, designed in close consultation with Latinx farmers around California's Monterey Bay region, to provide access to new agricultural technologies, techniques and practices. These workshops focus on implementation of "closed-loop" agricultural principles deployed at Whisky Hill Farm in Watsonville, California and effective farm management and marketing skills and development of resilience to climate change impacts. The objective result of the workshops will be to increase farm productivity, distribution and marketing opportunities and higher profits, allowing farmworkers greater control over their futures and looming challenges, while adapting to the impacts of climate change through a move up the employment ladder.

### Budget requested\*

Total budget requested from EJ4Climate (in Canadian dollars).

\$79,202.00

### Budget breakdown\*

Use the worksheet template to provide details of the project budget. Break this information into the following categories:

1. Salaries and benefits
2. Equipment and supplies
3. Travel
4. Consultant services (if applicable),
5. Overhead (not to exceed 15 percent)
6. Other costs

### Budget Template

Note 1: The CEC will not fund expenses related to travel in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount.

Note 2: The CEC will not fund expenses related to overhead and administration (such as rent, telephone, fax, and photocopies) in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount.

E4J Budget 2021\_en.xlsx

### Project duration\*

Number of months, project starting date and project end date (Maximum duration 12 to 24 months)

12

### Start date\*

04/01/2022

### End date\*

03/31/2023

## Geographic location of the project\*

Indicate the country or countries where the project will be implemented.

United States

## Beneficiaries\*

Describe the vulnerable and underserved community/ies that will benefit directly from the project, the target population, and number of individuals served. (Max. 200 words.)

The farmworkers of California are the “Global South in the North” and will experience many of the same conditions resulting from climate change as other poor parts of the world. They comprise an underserved and vulnerable group that is already experiencing risk and sensitivity to California’s increasingly variable climate, with less capacity and fewer resources to deal with climate impacts. Most are migrants from Mexico (many are indigenous Mexicans and don’t speak Spanish), a considerable number are undocumented, and they cannot cross the border seasonally to return home, as was once possible.

“Training Farmworkers to Farm in the Face of Climate Change” will also make small minority farms more accessible to neighbors, customers, the public and students, let them bring nutritious food to low-income neighborhoods through focused distribution activities, provide work to colleagues, and increase neighborhood social capital and cohesion. Local opportunities to learn about small scale agriculture and underlying support technologies can also introduce potential career paths to urban and periurban residents and offer low-income and minority individuals the opportunity to become farmers.

This project has the potential to serve a considerable number of individuals, including farmworkers and local customers. We anticipate teaching 25 or more new and aspiring farmers each year between 2022 and 2027, which will benefit not only themselves but also families and friends and residents of food-insecure neighborhoods.

## Detailed work plan\*

Describe in detail the project’s objectives, expected results and the performance indicators that will be used to measure these results. Results must be measurable and must be achieved within the timeframe of the grant. Also describe the main activities to be undertaken to meet the project objectives, including actors and the corresponding budgets and timelines. Use the template provided.

### Work Plan Template

EJ4Climate Detailed\_Workplan\_template\_2021\_en(1).pdf

## Partnerships

Please provide the names of any other organizations involved in the project, including partners and/or beneficiaries, if applicable.

Whiskey Hill Farms demonstrates the technologies and techniques of a circular food economy  
Watsonville High School has a well-developed Agriculture Department which enrolls 600 students annually.

Esperanza Community Farms is a community farm focused on increasing food security among low-income families in the Pajaro Valley.

The Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) builds sustainable food and farming systems through policy advocacy and on-the-ground programs.

The Center for Farmworker Families works to promote farmworker financial and nutritional well-being and independence

## Other funding sources and/or leverage opportunities\*

List other funding sources and/or leveraging opportunities. (Max. 100 words.)

SARE/USDA: \$25,000 (received): This grant was awarded by the Sustainable Agriculture, Research and Education program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to bring new ag technologies and techniques to small farmers.

Santa Cruz Gives: \$3,000 (anticipated): This is an annual program of giving to area non-profits. This is the first year SSRF is on the list of organizations..

Private donors in the region: \$10,000 (potential): We are reaching out to potential private donors who are committed to sustainable farming on small farms.

Agricultural & food businesses in the region: \$5,000 (potential): We are reaching out to agriculture-related businesses who have an interest in the welfare of farmworkers and may be interested in setting up direct relationships with local farmers.

Registration fees: \$2,500 (potential): In the longer term, this program will be open to the public and we will ask for registration fees (and offer scholarships).

## Innovation\*

Describe any innovative approach to be adopted in this project (Max. 100 words.)

This project addresses a primary challenge to well-being of California farmworkers, an underserved and highly vulnerable community. The primary innovations are social and educational, rather than technological. Rather than finding ways to support such communities through financial resources, technologies and other external help, we propose to provide farmworkers with the knowledge and skills to become active farmers and to spread “closing the loop” of their agricultural economies through regenerative agriculture, recycling, and reuse of agricultural inputs and wastes.

The research, education and training site for this project is Whiskey Hill Farm (<http://whiskeyhillfarms.com/>), a 14-acre organic farm on California’s Central Coast, near Watsonville. WHF is a pioneer in developing a systems approach to agricultural technology by recycling and reusing various inputs and outputs in farming and demonstrating the technology and best practices of a circular, closed-loop food economy.

## Replicability/Scalability

Explain how this project could be replicated or scaled up in other North American communities (Max. 100 words.)

Small farms are everywhere across the United States, and so are farmworkers. According to the USDA’s 2017 Agricultural Census, 47% of the nation’s 2 million farms are less than 49 acres in size. there are 2.4 million farmworkers in the United States, of which 83% identify as Latino/Hispanic and 6% indigenous. The average family’s total income from farm work is \$20,000- \$24,499, but 33% of farmworker families had incomes below the official poverty line. Finally, of the country’s 2.7 million principal farm producers, a mere 3.3% were identified as being of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. This project will produce open access educational materials in English and Spanish that can be the basis for training workshops and used by

farmworkers who seek to become farmers. The application of closed-loop and regenerative agriculture by new and aspiring minority farmers can reduce climate impacts on farms and communities, and these practices can be adopted by all farmers.

### Sustainability\*

Explain if/how this project or its impacts could carry on successfully after the funding from this grant ends (Max. 100 words.)

This program will be institutionalized within the agricultural research, education and demonstration center being created at Whisky Hill Farms. Development activities and project success will generate the following income streams to sustain the program:

- i. Business sponsorships by local agricultural businesses, agricultural organizations, individual farms, restaurants and markets, farmers markets.
- ii. Registration fees for instructional programs, based on ability to pay
- iii. Memberships and subscription fees for access to online portal and platform.
- iv. Honoraria for external presentation, workshops, etc. presented by program personnel.
- v. Public and private funding through grantwriting, public funds and private donors.

### Mission of the lead organization/ institution/group/community\*

(Max. 50 words)

SSRF addresses complex sustainability problems that confound communities and defy singular technical or social solutions. We design, develop and deploy local projects and programs to promote community development. We design and pursue projects that are local, replicable and scalable. We bring together numerous stakeholders with competing interests, capacities and approaches. We believe that if a project or program can be implemented successfully at one site, it can be replicated elsewhere.

### Applicant organization\*

Please upload a certificate of non-profit status of the applicant organization. If not certified or registered, it is not disqualifying - Please make note of that.

SSRF 501(c)3.pdf

### Declaration of acceptance of Impartiality and Independence\*

Please print, sign and upload the Declaration of Impartiality and Independence.

#### Declaration of Impartiality and Independence

EJ4Climate declaration-of-acceptance-impartiality-and-independence-2021\_en.pdf

## File Attachment Summary

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### *Applicant File Uploads*

- E4J Budget 2021\_en.xlsx
- EJ4Climate Detailed\_Workplan\_template\_2021\_en(1).pdf
- SSRF 501(c)3.pdf
- EJ4Climate declaration-of-acceptance-impartiality-and-independence-2021\_en.pdf

**Project Budget for Sustainable Systems Research Foundation**

**The Sustainable Urban Food Initiative: Teaching Farmworkers to Farm in the Face of Climate Change**

Project Start and End Dates: April 2022-March 2023 (12 months)

<b>Expenses - Year 1</b>					
	<b>Amount Requested for this Project (in Canadian\$)</b>				
	<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total Year 1</b>
Salaries & Benefits (course instructors & educators)	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 26,000
Equipment and Supplies	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 10,000
Travel (not to exceed 15 percent of the total grant amount)					\$ -
Consultants/Professional Fees (videographers & translation)	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 14,000
Overhead (not to exceed 15 percent of the total grant amount)					\$ 9,652
Other (itemize in table below for 'Other Expenses')	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,350	\$ 19,550
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>	<b>\$ 10,000</b>	<b>\$ 12,500</b>	<b>\$ 24,850</b>	<b>\$ 79,202</b>

<b>Other Expenses - Year 1</b>					
	<b>Amount Requested for Other Expenses (in Canadian \$)</b>				
	<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total Year 1</b>
US\$1,000 stipends (C\$1,235) for 10 farmer participants in compensation for lost work time				\$ 12,350	\$ 12,350
Overhead @ 10%					\$ 7,200
Item 3					\$ -
Item 4					\$ -
Item 5					\$ -
Item 6					\$ -
<b>Total Other Expenses:</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 12,350</b>	<b>\$ 19,550</b>

## Detailed Work Plan

*Instructions: Describe all project objectives, activities, expected results and how they will be measured (performance indicators), targets by end of project, timeline and budget required to achieve the objectives.*

*Objectives must be expressed in terms of the **environmental benefit and be SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound). Add as many rows as needed.*

Objective	Activities to achieve objective (How?)	Expected results	Performance indicator	Target	Timeline/Dates of activities	Budget (Canadian dollars)	Name of partner organizations or collaborators
<b>Objective 1: Outreach to participants to enroll in second workshop series on small farmers &amp; farmworkers facing climate change.</b>	Reach out through first iteration cohort, social networks, partner organizations; newspapers, social media, bulletin boards	List of potential participants for personal contact by phone or site visit	Number of farmworkers and farmers registered	25 participants registered	April-July 2022	\$2,500 for consultant services	Center for Farmworker Families, Esperanza, Watsonville High, CAFF will publicize through networks and identify potential participants
<b>Objective 2: Revise curriculum and materials prepared for first workshop round on closed loop &amp; regenerative agriculture</b>	Workshop instructors and educational consultants evaluate & revise 2021-22 workshop curriculum and modules, based on first round outcomes.	Polished open access curriculum, resources, handbook in print and electronic versions	Completion and dissemination of revised educational materials	Dissemination to 5 high schools, 3 community colleges, 100 farmworkers & farmers, 10 agriculture-related websites and organizations	April-August 2022	\$14,500 for instructors and consultants	CAFF & Watsonville High will collaborate on revision and evaluate sections of the curriculum
<b>Objective 3: Polish video modules filmed during first workshop series</b>	Videographers will edit footage from first workshop series	10-15 minute videos to supplement curriculum, including "how-to" videos from experiential fieldwork	Completion of at least 10 videos & upload to web site	Farmworkers & farmers with smartphones; high schools; community colleges; agricultural organizations and websites	June-September 2022	\$10,000 for videographer consultants, \$5,000 for equipment and supplies	CAFF & Watsonville High School to advise and review editing and draft videos

<p><b>Objective 4: Conduct second round of workshops focused on teaching farmworkers to farm</b></p>	<p>Conduct six workshops for farmworkers &amp; small farmers</p>	<p>Farmworkers &amp; farmers will learn about impacts of climate change, regenerative and closed loop agriculture, technologies and techniques, and practice in experimental plots at Whiskey Hill Farm</p>	<p>25 participants successfully complete the program with scores of 60% or higher</p>	<p>New farmers, farmworkers interested in farming, high school students</p>	<p>October 2022- March 2023</p>	<p>\$12,350 for participant stipends; \$13,000 for instructors; \$5,000 for equipment &amp; supplies</p>	<p>CAFF &amp; Watsonville High will observe, participate, teach in workshops</p>
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INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

**MAR 30 2016**

SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION  
C/O KEVIN W BELL  
3861 MISSION ST  
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-5755

Employer Identification Number:  
47-2856470

DLN:

17053034315006

Contact Person:

FAITH E CUMMINS

ID# 31534

Contact Telephone Number:

(877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending:

December 31

Public Charity Status:

509(a)(2)

Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:

Yes

Effective Date of Exemption:

January 5, 2015

Contribution Deductibility:

Yes

Addendum Applies:

No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Letter 947

SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS RESEARCH

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey I. Cooper". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeffrey I. Cooper  
Director, Exempt Organizations  
Rulings and Agreements



## DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

I, the undersigned,

Last Name: Lipschutz First Name: Ronnie

Representing: Sustainable Systems Research Foundation

Project proposal name: The Sustainable Urban Food Initiative: Teaching Farmworkers to Farm in the Face of Climate Change

### IMPARTIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

**(If your project proposal is approved for funding, the CEC will require the declaration of acceptance of impartiality and independence. Please check one of the two following boxes. The choice of which box to check will be determined after you have taken into account, *inter alia*, whether there exists any past or present relationship, direct or indirect, with any of the Parties to the Environmental Cooperation Agreement (ECA) or their Commission for Environmental Cooperation (“CEC”) representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of this contract, whether financial, professional, familial, or of another kind and whether the nature of any such relationship is such that disclosure is called for pursuant to the criteria set out below. Any doubt should be resolved in favor of disclosure.)**

### ACCEPTANCE

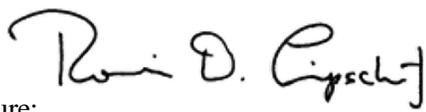
I hereby declare that **I accept** the terms of this declaration and that:

**I am impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, CEC Secretariat staff, and third parties involved in the performance of the proposed activities, and intend to remain so; to the best of my knowledge, there are no facts or circumstances, past or present that need be disclosed because they are likely to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest.

OR

**I am impartial and independent** with respect to the ECA Parties and their CEC representatives, Secretariat staff, and/or third parties involved in the performance of the proposed activities, and intend to remain so; **however**, I wish to call your attention to the following facts or circumstances which I hereafter disclose because they might be of such a nature as to give rise to justifiable doubts as to my impartiality or independence, and that may constitute a conflict of interest. Where facts or circumstances exist that might give rise to the latter such doubts, I may set out measures I intend to take to mitigate or eliminate any doubts regarding my impartiality and independence, and/or a possible conflict of interest. (Use separate sheet and attach.)

Date: November 9, 2021

Signature: 

N.B. Signing this declaration does not guarantee that your project proposal will be approved for funding.