



**Vision:** All Central Coast residents practice healthy eating and physical activity in communities that value, support and promote these life-long behaviors.

**Mission:** The Nutrition and Fitness Collaborative of the Central Coast works collectively to promote and advocate for policies and environmental changes that foster healthy lifestyle behaviors, with an emphasis on nutrition and physical activity, to prevent the rising trend of obesity and related chronic disease in Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties, especially for low income populations.

January 22, 2018

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## Central Coast Region State Policymakers Get 100% on Food & Farming Policies

*Annual Report Again Gives California Elected Officials Credit For Incremental Gains, But Sees That Food And Farming Remain An “Indefensibly Low Priority” For Policy Makers*

Salinas, CA – Two reports were released on Tuesday, January 16th, by [Roots of Change](#), California Food and Farming Network and the [California Food Policy Council](#) (CAFPC) reveal the 2017 food and farm policy votes of California’s 120 elected state legislators. *The 2017 California Food and Agriculture Legislation Tracker* and the *Legislators Scorecard* illustrate that despite making modest progress on food and agriculture issues, the Legislature continues to miss critical opportunities to pass the transformative — and often controversial — policies needed to address the public health challenges that are undermining California’s future.

Created by 39 nonprofits advocating for change, these reports represent growing statewide consensus from constituencies representing the diversity of California: rural and urban, conservative and progressive, affluent and low-income. For the state to achieve significant policy reform there must exist a strong base of Californians from north to south and east to west, who are determined to push their legislators toward positive change.

Of the twenty priority bills tracked this year by the coalition, Governor Jerry Brown signed twelve of the thirteen that reached his desk. Included in this group was AB 822 (Assembly member Anna Caballero) that promotes local farm economies by requiring State institutions to purchase California-grown agricultural products. Thirty-two assemblymembers and twenty-three senators voted to support coalition priorities 100% of the time, which represents 46% of the Legislature. Local Assemblymember Mark Stone and Senator Bill Monning both received 100% scores.

“While pleased by the signing into law of Assembly member Caballero’s bill to strengthen local farms through State procurement policy, we are disappointed that her bill to enable low cost loans for small and beginning farmers was not signed by the Governor after passage by the Legislature. Senator Monning’s bill in progress to create the Safe

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and Affordable Drinking Water Fund is a key component of decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages for better health. We continue to advocate for all communities to have access to potable water as a way to end reliance on sugary drinks for hydration”, stated Melanie Wong, Chair, Central Coast Food Access Committee.

“We remain hopeful based on the steady increase in legislators voting with our coalition each year. But we also remain perplexed by the Legislature’s lack of focus on the many fundamental food and farm challenges that impact public health. A good example would be the unwillingness to consider a tax on sugary beverages to fund healthy food access and other prevention strategies to combat diabetes,” said Michael R. Dimock, president of Roots of Change.

Paul Towers, coordinator of the California Food and Farming Network offered, “Large corporations and trade groups continue to provide undue and unfair influence on food and farming legislation. Despite these challenges, some legislators seem emboldened to stand up to powerful interests and advocate for the most vulnerable.”

Peter Ruddock, coordinator of the California Food Policy Council, noted that while legislators did pass bills this year setting guidelines for Sell By Dates on food and requiring that ingredients in cleaning products be listed on packaging, lawmakers remain wary of requiring that manufacturers give consumers all of the information that they require to make truly informed choices.

Two legislators were acknowledged for their leadership over the past year: Senator Mike McGuire led efforts to provide school meals for low-income children (SB 138), and provided critical support for fire-affected farmworkers and farmers, while Assembly member David Chiu protected undocumented workers, including farmworkers, at job sites (AB 450) and supported better labeling to reduce food waste (AB 954).

With these reports, the coalition completes its fifth successful year of collaboration on statewide food policy, and celebrates the addition of California Food Farming Network with its forty-plus partner organizations. The enlarged alliance now ties together the vision and goals of 27 regional councils and forty advocacy organizations seeking food system policy change. In addition to tracking votes and the Governor’s actions on key bills, the *Legislation Tracker* contains an analysis of the legislative session and special section entitled the *California Food and Farming Index* that presents key facts that set the context and underline the critical need for food system change.

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***The Nutrition and Fitness Collaborative of the Central Coast (NFCCC)*** is a three-county (Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties) collaborative of health focused individuals and agencies, working together to increase the health of all.

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***Roots of Change:*** *Roots of Change* is a ‘think and do tank’ developing road maps to victory for the food movement. Since 2002, ROC has been a critical resource for food system reformers, creating large and unprecedented collaborations between agriculture and NGOs, community organizations and policy experts. From 2012 to 2017, ROC served as the backbone of the California Food Policy Council, a statewide collaboration diverse food system reform groups, that believe sound food and farm policy is key to promoting healthy and resilient communities. Today, ROC’s network includes a base of 155,000 engaged constituents and reaches a national audience via Michael R. Dimock’s writing for ROC’s newsletter the [Pulse of the Food Movement](#). In 2018, ROC will launch a nationally distributed podcast. ROC is a program of the Public Health Institute. Facebook: Roots of Change. Twitter: @RootsofChange