



University of California | Agriculture and Natural Resources

California Institute for Water Resources

Developing solutions to California's water-related challenges

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UC & Israel sign agricultural research agreement



Scientists from California and Israel met to exchange ideas for managing water for agriculture.

by Pam Kan-Rice, UC ANR

Pledging to work together to solve water scarcity issues, Israel's Agricultural Research Organization **signed a memorandum of understanding** with UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) and UC Davis on July 16, 2018. The signing ceremony kicked off the **2018 Future of Water for Irrigation in California and Israel Workshop** at the UC ANR building in Davis.

"Israel and California agriculture face similar challenges, including drought and climate change," said Doug Parker, director of UC ANR's California Institute for Water Resources. "In the memorandum of understanding, Israel's Agricultural Research Organization, UC Davis, and UC ANR pledge to work together more on research involving water, irrigation, technology, and related topics that are important to both water-deficit countries."

The agreement will enhance collaboration on research and extension for natural resources management in agriculture, with an emphasis on soil, irrigation and water resources, horticulture, food security, and food safety.

"It's a huge pleasure for us to sign an MOU with world leaders in agricultural research like UC Davis and UC ANR," said Eli Feinerman, director of Agricultural Research Organization of Israel. "When good people, smart people collaborate, the sky is the limit."

Feinerman, Mark Bell, UC ANR vice provost, and Ermias Kebeab, UC Davis professor and associate vice provost of academic programs and global affairs, represented their respective institutions for the signing. Karen Ross, California Department of Food and Agriculture secretary, and Shlomi Kofman, Israel's consul general to the Pacific Northwest, joined the group in celebrating the partnership.

"The important thing is to keep working together and develop additional frameworks that can bring the people of California and Israel together as researchers," Kofman said. "But also to work together to make the world a better place."

Ross said, "It's so important for us to find ways and create forums to work together because water is the issue in this century and will continue to be."

She noted that earlier this year the World Bank and United Nations reported that 40 percent of the world population is living with water scarcity. "Over 700,000 people are at risk of relocation due to water scarcity," Ross said. "We're already seeing the refugee issues that are starting to happen because of drought, food insecurity, and the lack of water."

Ross touted the progress stemming from CDFA's Healthy Soils Program to promote healthy soils on California's farmlands and ranchlands, and SWEEP, the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program, which has provided California farmers \$62.7 million in grants for irrigation systems that reduce greenhouse gases and save water on agricultural operations.

"We need the answers of best practices that come from academia, through demonstration projects so that our farmers know what will really work," Ross said.

As Parker opened the water workshop, sponsored by the U.S./Israel Binational Agricultural Research and Development (BARD) Program, Israel Agricultural Research Organization, and UC ANR, he told the scientists, "The goal of this workshop is really to be creating new partnerships, meeting new people, networking, and finding ways to work together in California with Israel, in Israel, with other parts of the world as well."



From left, Ermias Kebeab, Eli Feinerman, Karen Ross, Shlomi Kofman, Mark Bell, and Doug Parker. "We need the answers of best practices that come from academia," Ross said.

Drawing on current events, Bell told the attendees, "If you look at the World Cup, it's about effort, it's about teamwork, it's about diversity of skills, and I think that's what this event does. It brings together those things."

Our mission is to integrate California's research, extension, and higher education programs to develop solutions to water resource challenges.

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Global Climate Action Summit

by Doug Parker

I was honored to be a delegate at the [Global Climate Action Summit](#) in September in San Francisco. The Summit highlighted the efforts being made in California and across the globe to combat climate change. All the delegates I met were committed to addressing this important issue. Here at the California Institute for Water Resources we support a research and extension projects on climate change. From irrigation efficiency to groundwater recharge to stream restoration, our Institute is supporting projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration. In addition, we provide technical assistance on a host of [climate smart agriculture programs](#) sponsored by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

There were many other events related to the Summit. Prior to the Summit, I attended a two day event on [Scaling Up Climate Smart Agriculture](#) in Sonoma County. We heard from farmers, NGOs, agencies, corporations, and policy makers on soil health, carbon sequestration, cover crops, dairy manure management, grass-fed beef production, and more. The event included tours highlighting climate smart practices in vineyards, dairies, and pastures.

Parallel to the Summit was the [Water Pavilion](#). This event featured two days of speakers and networking opportunities on the impacts of climate change on water supplies and management. A host of speakers from across the globe addressed issues of water governance, community engagement, finance, and technology.

These events put into perspective the important work we do at the California Institute for Water Resources and with all of our university partners. I am especially heartened by the efforts of scientists to be sure that their work has impact outside academia. Through outreach and engagement, scientists are helping communities implement appropriate solutions at a variety of scales.

Institute activity highlights

The Institute has been busy continuing our [training programs](#) in Nutrient and Irrigation Management for Certified Crop Advisors. In March, Doug Parker, CIWR Director, attended the ThinkWater to Think: X Symposium, which produced some interesting [videos](#) of efforts to change how we think, learn, and tackle complex water problems. He also participated as part of the project's advisory committee. Doug also co-chaired the planning committee for the UC ANR [statewide conference](#), which brought together over 600 employees for four days of training, workshops, seminars, and networking. In June, he helped host the annual [UCOWR/NIWR conference](#) as a member of both the UCOWR and NIWR boards of directors. In October, CIWR hosted its [10th Biennial Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy](#). This year's forum focused on groundwater management and included a special luncheon honoring the Forum's namesake, Richard Rosenberg.

[Faith Kearns](#), Academic Coordinator, recently published several articles. They include a peer-reviewed article on [climate change and agriculture](#) in California led by T. Pathak, commentary on [groundwater management](#) with D. Parker, and a brief on [climate change training](#) with T. Grantham, S. Kocher, T. Pathak, and L. Roche. She also recently led two [science communication training sessions](#) at the UC ANR conference, co-led a [relational communication workshop](#) at the Society for Conservation Biology meeting, and participated in a conversation climate change, fire, and water at [Uncharted: The Berkeley Ideas Festival](#) with Tessa Hill of UC Davis.

2018-19 Water Resources Research RFP

The California Institute for Water Resources invites submission of proposals for funding that will begin March 1, 2019.

This year, proposals are requested in the Junior Investigator category only. Please note that the funding period may fluctuate and is based on budget appropriations.

[Download the full RFP and budget worksheets on our website.](#)

The Confluence: New on our blog

Here are just some of our most recent articles. You can follow and subscribe at: ucanr.edu/confluence.

California Indigenous perspectives on water and fire management F. Kearns

Don Hankins is a professor of geography and planning at Chico State and a Miwoko (Plains Miwok) traditional cultural practitioner. He has spent his academic career working on water and fire issues in California, with a focus on applied traditional Indigenous stewardship...[READ MORE](#)



Niki Michael

Listening to communities: A bottom-up approach to water planning in California F. Kearns

Valerie Olson and Emily Brooks are environmental anthropologists at UC Irvine. They have a new project to better understand how communities, particularly the underserved, think about and use their water, and how water agencies can better serve them...[READ MORE](#)



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How are California water managers thinking about climate change? It depends F. Kearns

When it comes to using climate science to help guide decisions, researchers have found that California water managers fall into three groups based on how they work with scientific information and how they think about the future. While some water managers are actively using climate change science, others are not using it at all...[READ MORE](#)



Faith Kearns

Son of farmworkers turned professor focuses on water issues in California's Central Valley F. Kearns

Mario Sifuentez is an associate professor of history and director of the UC Merced Center for the Humanities. He says: "I grew up in a migrant farmworker community in the high desert of eastern Oregon. When I came to California, I remember driving down the highway and seeing the 'no water, no jobs' signs. A lot of them were in Spanish, which really struck me." [READ MORE](#)

