

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1508**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Flora**

February 19, 2021

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An act to add Section 38562.1 to the Health and Safety Code, relating to agriculture, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1508, as introduced, Flora. Agriculture: whole orchard recycling: carbon offset credits and healthy soils.

(1) The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 establishes the State Air Resources Board as the state agency responsible for monitoring and regulating sources emitting greenhouse gases. The act requires the state board to approve a statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit equivalent to the statewide greenhouse gas emissions level in 1990 to be achieved by 2020 and to ensure that statewide greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 40% below the 1990 level by 2030. The act authorizes the state board to include the use of market-based compliance mechanisms. The act establishes the Compliance Offsets Protocol Task Force, with a specified membership, to provide guidance to the state board in approving new offset protocols for a market-based compliance mechanism for the purposes of increasing offset projects with direct environmental benefits in the state, as specified.

This bill would require the state board to develop a carbon offset credit for whole orchard recycling.

(2) Existing law, the Cannella Environmental Farming Act of 1995, requires the Department of Food and Agriculture, in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Panel on Environmental Farming, to establish and oversee a Healthy Soils Program to seek to optimize climate benefits

while supporting the economic viability of California agriculture by providing incentives, including, but not limited to, loans, grants, research, and technical assistance, and educational materials and outreach, to farmers whose management practices contribute to healthy soils and result in net long-term on-farm greenhouse gas benefits.

This bill would appropriate an unspecified sum from the General Fund to the department for purposes of providing grants to the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Division and the California State University for research to assess the cobenefits from healthy soil practices.

Vote:  $\frac{2}{3}$ . Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 38562.1 is added to the Health and Safety
- 2 Code, to read:
- 3 38562.1. The state board shall develop a carbon offset credit
- 4 for whole orchard recycling.
- 5 SEC. 2. The sum of \_\_\_\_ dollars (\$\_\_\_\_) is hereby appropriated
- 6 from the General Fund to the Department of Food and Agriculture
- 7 for purposes of providing grants to the University of California
- 8 Agriculture and Natural Resources Division and the California
- 9 State University for research to assess the cobenefits from healthy
- 10 soil practices, such as whole orchard recycling, cover crops, and
- 11 composting. Cobenefits may include the reduction of potential
- 12 contaminants, such as nitrate leaching into groundwater or the
- 13 increase in water-holding capacity of soil allowing for more
- 14 groundwater recharge.

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