

Perennial Farming Initiative Annual Report 2018



The Perennial Farming Initiative took a number of big steps this year. On the administrative front, **Karen Leibowitz** became the organization's Executive Director in March 2018, as former ED Nathan Kaufman stepped into the Secretary role. In April, PFI became fiscal sponsor to a new non-profit, **Soil Centric**, led by our "perennial" ally **Diana Donlon** (former Director of The Center for Food Safety's Soil Solutions program). Welcome, to the family, Soil Centric! Soil Centric is a new organization designed to accelerate engagement in regenerative agriculture.

As 2019 begins, PFI will be taking on fiscal sponsorship for a second, closely allied non-profit: [Zero Foodprint](#), co-founded by PFI's Director of Operations, Anthony Myint. Since 2015, Zero Foodprint has helped to assess, reduce, and zero out the carbon footprint of restaurants around the world, from San Francisco to Brooklyn to Copenhagen to Hong Kong. Bringing Zero Foodprint under the auspices of the Perennial Farming Initiative represents a merger of sorts, as both organizations clarified their ambitions and created a newly ambitious theory of change that reflects the relationships between farmers, chefs, and everyone else who participates in the food system (i.e., all of us). Zero Foodprint has committed to investing its carbon offset budget in healthy soil projects on farms and ranches, which will in turn increase the supply climate-beneficial food. We see this merger as an important step toward establishing a renewable food economy, rooted in healthy soil, where sustainability aligns with financial and cultural values. Please visit our new website, [renewable.ag](#) for additional details, visualizations, and links to PFI's agenda for the future.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Building a renewable and circular economy to fund healthy soil as a **climate solution**.

Zero Foodprint

Scaling a movement of carbon neutral restaurants

GOAL: 500 restaurants

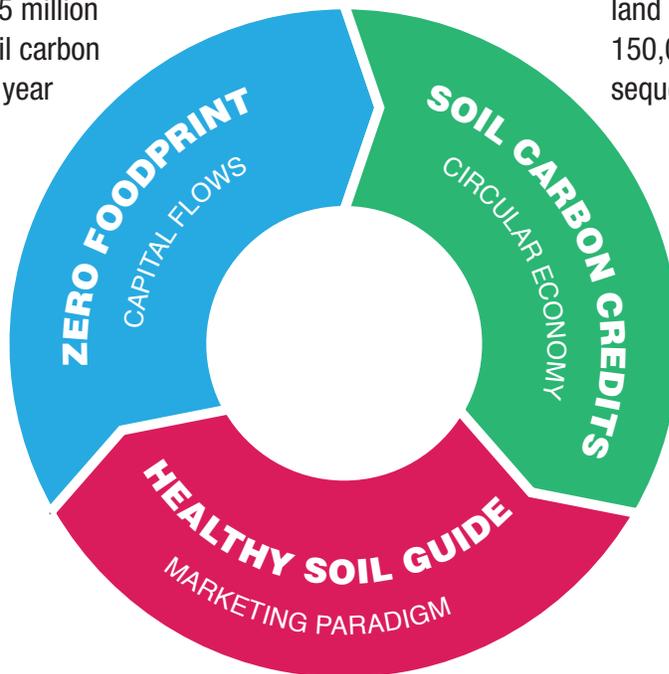
Driving \$1.5 million towards soil carbon credits per year

Healthy Soil Carbon Credits

Creating the path for consumers to directly fund implementation of regenerative practices

GOAL: 500,000 acres of new carbon farmed

land per year
150,000 tons of additional CO₂E sequestered per year



Healthy Soil Guide

Changing the conversation to actually drive spending

GOAL: 500 farms and ranches

10% premium for soil organic matter % transparency

The Perennial Farming Initiative organized and/or participated in an wide-ranging schedule of activities in 2018. Highlights include:

- **Dirt Saves the Earth.** For the Global Climate Action Summit that convened in San Francisco in September, PFI was proud to organize a gathering of stakeholders across the food and climate landscape in partnership with Temra Costa (CALIFORNIA FOODSHED FUNDERS), Calla Rose Ostrander (CONSULTANT), and Kevin Drew (SF DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT).
 - The “Dirt Saves the Earth” dinner was designed to forge connections across scientific, agricultural, policy, political, philanthropic, and business perspectives. More than 50 of the 325 attendees were farmers, seated at mixed tables with local and state officials, funders, organizers, and academics, from the Bay Area and from as far as South Africa.
 - Incredible food was provided by six restaurants: Atelier Crenn, Cala, flour + water, Mission Chinese Food, The Perennial, State Bird Provisions.
 - Thanks again to the event’s sponsors: American Farmland Trust, California Foodshed Funders, Cienega Capital and the #NoRegrets Initiative, City and County of San Francisco Department of the Environment, Flow Kana, Gaia Fund, Kiss the Ground/ Terra Genesis, Genentech, Jackson Family Vineyards, Jena and Michael John Wick, King Foundation, John Wick, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, Marin Carbon Project, Patagonia Provisions, Recology, Regenerative Agriculture Foundation, The Perennial Farming Initiative, Threshold Foundation, and TomKat Ranch Educational Foundation.
 - Karen Leibowitz’s recap of the evening is available [here](#) and photos from the event are [here](#).
- **Changemakers in Food.** PFI’s Executive Director Karen Leibowitz joined Kathleen Finlay (President of [Glywood](#) and Founder of [Pleiades](#)) and Navina Khanna (Director of the [HEAL Food Alliance](#)) for a panel discussion at The Perennial in October focused on sharing resources across the food movement, drawing in issues of sustainability, equity, health, and more. Attendees joined in a lively conversation and were invited to collaborate through an “I have/I need” exercise, designed to create momentum beyond the event itself. PFI created a spreadsheet of attendants’ needs and offers that found several points of contact for attendees.
- **Exchange Fellowship on Food and Climate.** Executive Director Karen Leibowitz spent three weeks in residence at [The Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture](#) in Pocantico Hills, NY as one of nine women working at the intersection of food and climate, brought together to share ideas and push each other forward. The fellows reconvened at TomKat Ranch in Pescadero, CA in for a weekend in October and participated in the annual Young Farmers Conference at Stone Barns in December. A video of Karen’s panel, “Pour Your Soul into Soil,” was livestreamed and [may be watched here](#). The Exchange Fellowship was instrumental in clarifying Karen’s vision for PFI under her leadership.

- **Representatives of The Perennial Farming Initiative were featured speakers** on the importance of healthy soil and forging a renewable food system at events organized by other entities, including:
 - Evening programs at The California Academy of Sciences (JANUARY, OCTOBER)
 - Radio interview and public presentation at the Winter Fancy Food Show (JANUARY)
 - Participant in CalCAN’s lobbying day in Sacramento (APRIL)
 - On a panel following the “Eating Animals” film premiere (APRIL)
 - 100 members of the World Restaurant Awards’ Judging Panel (MAY)
 - Panelist at public event on “Eating your Values” organized by Pineapple Collaborative (JUNE)
 - At meeting for Kernza stakeholders from The Land Institute, Patagonia Provisions, General Mills, etc. (JUNE) with Stanford environmental science students (OCTOBER)
 - Participated in Earth Day celebrations (APRIL), the anniversary of the Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture (MAY); gathering of women in sustainable food and agriculture at Soul Food Farm (AUGUST), launch of Carbon 180 (SEPTEMBER), Civil Eats fundraiser (NOVEMBER); and more
 - We also engaged in productive dialogue with many allied organizations including: The Basque Culinary Institute, The Berkeley Food Institute, Drawdown, Edible Schoolyard, Golden Gate Restaurant Association, GRACE Communications, Grantham Foundation, Greening America, Hewlett Foundation, Invoking the Pause, James Beard Foundation, #NoRegrets, Pleiades, ROC United, The Ruby, San Francisco Department of Environment (and individual supervisors’ offices), and the World Restaurant Awards.

Looking ahead to 2019, we are pleased to be the official charitable partner of the World Restaurant Awards at their inaugural ceremony, coming in 2019. In 2018, we successfully lobbied Resy to add a searchable category for sustainable restaurants.

Overall, 2018 marked a turning point in The Perennial Farming Initiative’s history, with a new director, new projects, and new programming.

If you would like to contribute to PFI’s work, please [support us financially](#) or [get in touch](#) with other kinds of resources. Here’s to championing and building a renewable food system in 2019!