



Photo courtesy of Governor David Y. Ige

Win for Science, Communities & Keiki

With the vacuum of leadership at the federal level, state policymakers are stepping up to protect their communities and children from the harms of pesticide exposure. Recent wins and progress in key states signal growing momentum and offer models to build on across the country.

In mid-June, for example, Hawai‘i made history when Governor David Ige signed Senate Bill 3095 into law. The first-in-the-nation law bans all uses of chlorpyrifos, a neurotoxic pesticide that has been shown to harm children and has been found in food, air and drinking water. The law also put small protective buffer zones in place around schools to help protect children from pesticide drift.

Meanwhile, in California, pesticide buffer zones around rural schools and daycare centers are in their first year of implementation after a hard-fought battle to win them. When it comes to chlorpyrifos specifically, the state pesticide agency recently revised its assessment of the risks of the widely used pesticide and found that children are exposed to unacceptable risk of harm from the pesticide in food residues, water and drift. This finding paves the way for stronger restrictions—or a statewide ban—in the coming months.

Persistence pays off

The significant state-level progress we’re seeing is the result of tenacious organizing with communities most affected by pesticide harms. The new law in Hawai‘i, for example, was the culmination of nearly six years of grassroots organizing by rural communities facing pesticide exposure.

A coalition of families, teachers, scientists, health professionals and advocates, including Hawai‘i Alliance for Progressive Action, Hawai‘i Center for Food Safety, Hawai‘i SEED and PAN, worked for years to push forward rules to protect the island’s keiki (children)—overcoming millions spent by the agricultural industry to block the proposed reforms.

“Hawaii’s efforts have set a precedent, and we hope this will pave the way for other states that are looking to enact similar legislation,” said Leslee Matthews, PAN’s Honolulu-based policy fellow, following the June win.

Recent progress in California reflects years of organizing with rural communities in the Central Valley and Central Coast agricultural regions of the state. Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR)—a powerful coalition PAN helped found more than 20 years ago—now has 90 participating

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PAN Fellows Build a Brighter Tomorrow

Small farmers, farmworkers, Indigenous Peoples and rural communities disproportionately bear the burdens of our chemical-dependent industrial agricultural system. This can include chronic illnesses, contaminated air, water and soil, inadequate on-the-job protections and unfair laws rooted in racism and oppression. At PAN, we believe the best way to address these problems is by supporting and growing movements led by people on the frontlines, especially people of color & Indigenous Peoples.

The PAN Fellowship Program supports a pathway to leadership for food and farming activists from frontline communities. Leaders with a deep and personal understanding of the issues—including their social, political and cultural context—can craft meaningful and appropriate solutions for their communities and the system as a whole. This year, PAN had the honor of bringing on three amazing women of color as our 2018 Fellows: Leslee Matthews, Paola Diaz and Moretta Browne.

Leslee Matthews: Hawai'i Organizing & Policy Fellow

Leslee grew up on Maui as the daughter of farmworkers and now lives in Honolulu. From growing kalo (taro) in a traditional lo'i, to advocating for education as a tool of empowerment, to helping restore native forests, to providing crisis intervention to victims of violent crimes, Leslee is a longtime advocate for social change who is "passionate about connecting the community with resources and resources with the community."

As PAN's Hawai'i Fellow, Leslee has been instrumental in passing the landmark legislation that banned chlorpyrifos across the Hawaiian islands. She conducted critical legal and policy research, testified and attended hearings, met with legislators and their staff, talked with agency officials and represented PAN within the multi-island Protect Our Keiki Coalition.

Moretta Browne: Farmer Justice Fellow

Moretta is an urban farmer who has dedicated herself to cultivating spaces for and lifting up stories of queer farmers of color. As part of her apprenticeship with UC Santa Cruz's Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, Moretta co-facilitated a queer ecology reading group and workshop. She then went on to develop this workshop into the Queer Ecology through Climate Chaos workshop that was presented to a packed room at the Allied Media Conference earlier this summer.

At PAN, Moretta is helping to grow the California Farmer Justice Collaborative by building relationships with other farmers of color across the state. She is also collecting and documenting farmers' stories in order to highlight the huge contribution these farmers make to our food system and to disrupt the trope of the white male farmer.

Paola Diaz: Farmer Justice Fellow

Paola is a Colombian-American organizer, systems-thinker, educator and farmer at heart. Many of her familial roots were internally displaced during La Violencia (the decade-long civil war in Colombia), forcing her family to move from the mountainous countryside to the inner cities, damaging their ancestral connection with the land and traditional farming.



"The work of the community matters and it is up to us to take on these big corporations and the government to protect our kids and families. It is also up to those with the knowledge and resources to share with the community so we can make more informed decisions."
— Leslee



"By empowering farmers with knowledge about the policies that affect their livelihood, PAN and the CFJC are directly influencing the change we all wish to see. I am glad to be part of a collective that is supporting the healing of our community."
— Moretta



"My work with PAN focuses on empowering historically underserved farmers of color by confronting racial, political and economic disparities in farming systems. Food is a platform for building justice in the overarching agroecology and sustainability vision for a more mindful, conscious and connected tomorrow."
— Paola

Grounded in this family and community history, Paola has gained extensive experience in both rural and urban agriculture projects, working with Pulau Bidan Permakultur, a permaculture farm on a small Malaysian island, Ryder Farm Organic in upstate New York, and where her great grandmother still farms today, in the Colombian state of Tolima.

Paola moved from New York to California to work with PAN as a Farmer Justice Fellow, helping with implementation of the California Farmer Equity Act through on-the-ground policy work in Sacramento. She also supports the work of the California Farmer Justice Collaborative, of which PAN is a founding member. —

How Could the Farm Bill Work for Farmers?

Patti Naylor farms with her husband George near Churdan, Iowa. Patti's activism is focused on transforming the agribusiness model of farming to one that is more regenerative and agroecological—including the leadership and participation of women to bring food sovereignty to communities around the globe. In this interview, Patti focuses on her vision for a Farm Bill process that better serves her farm and community.

Why does the Farm Bill matter to you?

The Farm Bill showcases how federal policy has deep implications for our food and farming system—and our communities.

It's a big, complicated piece of legislation. In years past, even the legislators who voted for these bills and the experts who explained the programs to farmers didn't fully understand the details. But it's not just the bill as proposed that needs to change—it's the whole process. Food is such a basic part of how we survive, so the Farm Bill process needs to be more inclusive, engaging and responsive to our needs as farmers, eaters and community members.

What provisions in the Farm Bill are you most excited about? What are you most concerned about?

From cutting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to gutting protections from dangerous pesticides for endangered species, this Farm Bill is full of concerning proposals—our work is cut out for us. While actions to protect programs are important, the problem is we're not looking at the bill—or the process—as a whole. We're in defense mode, rather than fighting for what we need.

In its current form, the Farm Bill is like a train. We put all these programs on it, and then we take things off and put things back on as policy debates and special interests allow. It's

a shuffle of programs—organic, beginning farmer, conservation, value-added—so the final product is not a comprehensive plan for the future that farmers, workers and communities really need. We're not having any conversations about where the train is headed.



During these program-shuffling conversations, advocates on various sides of the issue talk a lot about the allocation of funds for farm subsidies. In reality, what some Farm Bill programs do is subsidize risk. These subsidies stop a disaster from shaking the whole food and farming system, but do little to keep individual farmers from going out of business during extended periods of low prices for their products.

What would a Farm Bill that supports your farm, community and movements look like?

We need to create a comprehensive program that farmers and communities really need, one that promotes farm and social justice, and ensures fair compensation for farmers, workers and communities. So much of our current food and farming system has externalized costs that affect all of us. Meanwhile, farmers, workers and rural communities often bear these costs most directly. From low farm-gate prices driving over-production and monocropping, to monocropping driving increased pesticide use, to pesticide use leading to worker and community exposure to carcinogens and more—it is evident we need a Farm Bill that actually works for farmers, rather than propping up a system that is heading full speed in the wrong direction. —P

ABOUT PAN PAN works to create a just, thriving food system, working with those on the frontlines to tackle the pesticide problem—and reclaim the future of food and farming. One of five regional centers worldwide, PAN North America links local and international consumer, labor, health, environment and agriculture groups into an international citizens' action network. Together, we challenge the global proliferation of pesticides, defend basic rights to health and environmental quality, and work to ensure the transition to a just and viable food system.

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When you join PAN as a Sustainer, you become part of a vital group that donates each month to fund grassroots science, collaboration with frontline communities and policy change.

We rely on consistent support from Sustainers to work towards a healthy, fair and resilient system of food and farming.

Become a Sustainer today by going to www.panna.org/give-monthly.



organizations and has led the charge to win child-protective buffer zones and progress on chlorpyrifos.

Powerful coalitions

Again and again, we see that supporting and organizing with partners on the frontlines of pesticide exposure is key. These communities understand the urgency of the problem best and, in many cases, have the best and most creative ideas around how to solve it.

In the Midwest, this means working with farmer groups to tackle the problem of drifting herbicides that are damaging crops and undercutting farmer livelihoods. Last year's dicamba drift crisis is repeating itself this season and we're helping farmers in Iowa and Minnesota document the damage and press regulators to get Bayer's (previously Monsanto) latest dangerous chemical off the market.

Now we're seeing growing concern about how pesticides are affecting the health of children among our partners in the Midwest as well. A recent investigative report from IowaWatch, a nonprofit media and science project based at the University of Northern Iowa, found that nearly 90% of Iowa schools are within 2000 feet of fields where pesticides are applied.

More important than ever

State-level action on pesticides has become increasingly important as the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) steps away from its responsibility to protect public health and the environment. In the case of chlorpyrifos, reversing a planned national ban was the first action of recently resigned Administrator Scott Pruitt—just weeks after meeting with executives from the chemical's producer, Dow Chemical (now DowDupont/Corteva).

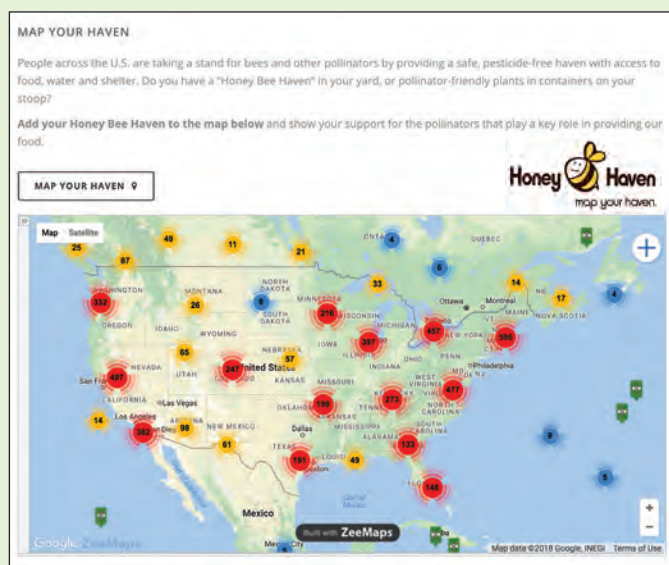
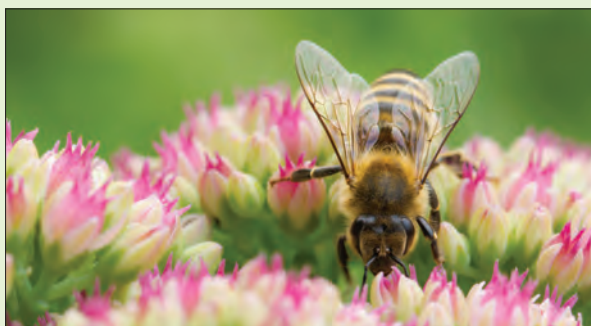
Here at PAN, we're supporting this growing momentum at the state level while we also keep an eye out for industry efforts to undermine states' authority to protect their communities. Plus, we continue to show up in court with our lawyers, pressing federal officials to actually do their job as the law requires. —

Take action: Urge your governor to protect children from pesticides, and take action on chlorpyrifos!

If you're in California or Hawai'i, visit www.panna.org for actions specific to your state.

Bees and other pollinators need our help!

You can support bees in your backyard by providing pesticide-free habitat and growing bee-friendly plants. Learn more at the brand-new www.honeybeehaven.org.



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