

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025-2026 SIMULATION SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO 8

Introduced by Senator Christopher Cabaldon

Sponsored by: Senator Ashy, Senator Stern, Senator Dhale, Senator McGuire, University of California,  
Farmer Bureau Association

This bill aims to establish a targeted competitive grant program at the University of California, Davis, to advance research and solutions for the impact of climate change on California's water supply and agricultural production.

October 1, 2025

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 8, as introduced, Cabaldon. UC Davis Climate and Agriculture Research Act of 2025

Existing law supports research across the University of California system.

This bill recognizes the severe threat posed by climate change to California's water supply and agricultural economy. This bill would enact the UC Davis Climate and Agriculture Research Act of 2025, establishing the Agricultural Climate and Water Competitive Grant Program. This program allocates \$2,000,000 exclusively to the University of California, Davis, to fund research projects focused on drought-resistant crops, water reuse, predictive climate modeling, and resilient land management techniques. The University of California Office of the President (UCOP) shall be responsible for the administration of these funds. This bill would appropriate a total of \$2,000,000 from the General Fund, to be allocated in annual increments of \$500,000 from the 2025-26 fiscal year through the 2028-29 fiscal year, for the purposes of this Act.

Vote: majority or 2/3 Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** General Provisions and Legislative Intent

(a) This act shall be known and may be cited as the UC Davis Climate and Agriculture Research Act of 2025.

(b) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) California's water security and agricultural sector face increasing and immediate threats from climate change, requiring specialized, accelerated research.

(2) The University of California, Davis, is the state's premier institution for agricultural and environmental science and is uniquely positioned to address the complex relationship between climate, water, and food security.

(3) The Legislature intends to make a targeted, high-impact investment of \$2,000,000 to fund competitive research that provides actionable, policy-relevant solutions for the entire state, originating from the UC Davis campus.

## **SEC. 2. Agricultural Climate and Water Competitive Grant Program**

(a) The Agricultural Climate and Water Competitive Grant Program is hereby established to be administered by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP).

(b) Purpose: The program shall fund competitive research projects by UC Davis faculty, post-doctoral researchers, and graduate students specifically addressing the nexus of agriculture and climate change.

(c) Eligible Research Areas: Priority research areas include, but are not limited to: (1) The development of drought- and heat-resistant crop varieties and adaptive plant genetics.

(2) Advanced predictive modeling of climate change impacts on Central Valley water resources and agricultural productivity.

(3) The study and implementation of carbon farming practices and resilient land management techniques designed to improve soil health and water retention.

(d) Administration and Appropriation:

(1) Funds are strictly allocated for use by the UC Davis campus.

(2) The sum of \$2,000,000 is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the UCOP for the purposes of funding the Agricultural Climate and Water Competitive Grant Program at UC Davis. This sum shall be allocated in increments of \$500,000 annually, beginning in the 2025-26 fiscal year and concluding in the 2028-29 fiscal year.