



## Problem

In 2001, the Funders for Sustainable Food Systems (FSFS) discovered that there was no single, dependable source for information on the environmental and health effects of conventional agriculture. FSFS commissioned a report, *Roots of Change: Agriculture, Ecology, and Health in California*, that concluded that multiple environmental, social, and economic problems in California could be addressed simultaneously by a systemic transition to sustainable food systems. The report's findings pointed to the need for a strategic and collaborative vehicle for pooling financial and intellectual resources. As such, FSFS wanted to build a funding collaborative to identify key, high-leverage funding opportunities to support the systemic transition to healthier, more viable food systems in California.

## Solution

CEA helped create the Roots of Change Fund and provided strategic counsel and staffing to the funders. CEA worked with the funders to design the fund, develop a strategic plan, build an administrative structure, syndicate additional collaborating funders, and build a high-level board of advisors—the Roots of Change (ROC) Council. CEA then helped to identify funding priorities and launched the Roots of Change (ROC) Fund as an independent entity from FSFS in January 2003. Additionally, CEA managed the further development of the fund's infrastructure—refining the governance structure, developing the evaluation and communications framework, creating the grants administration structure, and building tools for project collaboration.

## Results

This multi-million dollar fund is continuing to expand as its projects gain momentum. Additional funders, businesspeople, advisors, and public interest leaders are becoming partners of the fund and helping define the best strategies for accelerating the transition to sustainable food systems. To learn more about the structure of the ROC Fund, please visit [www.rocfund.org](http://www.rocfund.org).