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Our first Growing with Biochar session, held this December in Sacramento and Parlier, California, was a resounding success! The energy and collaboration set a strong foundation for the journey ahead.

As I reflect on these sessions, a few themes stand out:

- **Knowledge sharing matters.** Listening to the diverse perspectives of speakers and participants deepened our understanding of both the opportunities and challenges facing stakeholders.
- **The importance of connection.** Networking proved invaluable, reminding us that progress happens not only in presentations but in conversations and relationships built along the way. We'll continue refining future events to maximize these opportunities.
- **Biochar isn't a one-size fits all solution.** The sessions highlighted how biochar adapts to different priorities—from waste reduction to energy generation to soil health—showcasing the diversity of this growing ecosystem.

Looking ahead to 2026, USBI is excited to expand the reach of our Growing with Biochar program with three sessions across the country. We'll begin in Virginia this spring, followed by two additional events in the fall and winter at locations being finalized. Our selection process focuses on regions with reliable feedstock and biochar availability, strong agricultural stakeholder interest, and soils well-suited for biochar application. Importantly, each event will be tailored to the unique needs of its region. Whether the focus is on specific crops, livestock systems, or soil types, our goal is to ensure the program is as relevant and impactful as possible for local participants. By equipping local leaders with practical knowledge and fostering strong networks, we aim to ignite self-sustaining ecosystems where biochar can thrive as a cornerstone of soil health and regenerative agriculture.

Growing with Biochar is more than a training program—it's a movement to embed biochar into the fabric of agricultural practice. With your continued engagement and support, we can accelerate adoption, strengthen supply chains, and deliver lasting environmental and economic benefits.

To everyone who joined us in California: thank you. Your enthusiasm made this first session unforgettable. Let's keep this movement growing—together.



Tera Lewandowski
Director of Agricultural Markets

Growing with Biochar

What a strong start to the training series! Echoing Tera's statements above: thank you to everyone who joined us.

Participants explored where and why biochar fits into regenerative practices, how to source, store, and apply it using the 4R framework, and ways to navigate federal and state cost-share programs. Additionally, the Q&As, networking breaks, and roundtable discussions gave attendees space to talk all about what biochar looks like in practice.

We're grateful to our trainers for sharing their time and expertise: Kristen Trippe (USDA-ARS), Debbie Aller (Cornell University), Brandon Smith (Allied Soil Health), and Kiros Hadgu and Aysha Tapp Ross (American Farmland Trust).

For more information, please contact Tera Lewandowski at tera@biochar-us.org



□ USBI's new brand launch coming in 2026 □

To support our next stage of organizational growth and better serve the biochar community, USBI will roll out a new brand identity in the new year!

The refreshed brand will better reflect our expanding role in a rapidly growing industry and support the tools, resources, and programs we're building for 2026 and beyond.



"To capitalise on the promise of biochar, producers must 'pitch like engineers' and 'think like bankers'"

A recent Reuters article highlights both the rapid growth and the persistent challenges facing the global biochar industry. While biochar delivered more than 90% of all durable carbon removal credits this year and major buyers like Microsoft and Google continue to commit to long-term volumes, many producers still struggle to access financing and secure offtake agreements.



Exomad Green/Handout via REUTERS

"Large buyers aren't interested in sourcing a whole bunch of credits from lots of medium- and small-scale facilities. [...] To meet their 2030 goals, they want larger projects." - Myles Gray, USBI

This leaves many small and mid-sized facilities caught between strong demand and limited capital to scale. But that doesn't mean there isn't a path forward. Instead, it means that these small and medium sized facilities need to present themselves as either a repeatable model, or as part of CDR deals that agglomerate multiple similar projects.

The piece flags an important truth to consider: scaling biochar isn't just about science and technology. The industry needs standardized processes, diversified revenue streams, and market structures that investors recognize.

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Orbital Biocarbon to scale PFAS-removing biosolids facilities

[Orbital Biocarbon](#), a sludge processing startup that uses [PYREG](#)'s (one of NABC25's platinum sponsors!) pyrolysis technology, has secured a new investment round to accelerate development of biosolids treatment facilities across the Northeast. This news comes at a critical moment as the region faces limited disposal capacity and growing concerns around PFAS contamination.



Credit: John Day/Orbital Biocarbon

Here's how they do it: Orbital's system converts dried sewage sludge into biochar while substantially destroying PFAS and other organic pollutants. The company's first facility, now under development near Pittsburgh, is **expected to process up to 14,400 wet tons of sludge annually and produce roughly 1,700 tons of biochar!** Their future facilities could scale several times larger to meet regional growing demand.

With stricter PFAS rules on the horizon and disposal becoming more expensive, utilities are under pressure to find reliable and affordable treatment options. Orbital's approach demonstrates how biochar-based systems can provide a practical, future-ready solution to one of the sector's most pressing waste challenges. □

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Connect and collaborate at in-person or online events!

January 20, 2026

[Winter Cut Flower Webinar Series, Session 3: Anaerobic Soil Disinfestation and Biochar:](#)

The fifth annual Cornell Cooperative Extension Cut Flower Webinar Series is series of online events with topflight speakers, a wide variety of subjects concerning growing cut flowers and plenty of interaction between speakers and attendees. Session 3: Biochar Use in Cut Flower Production speaker is Dr. Debbie Aller.

Virtual

January 22-23

[Carbon Unbound West Coast:](#) USBI's Executive Director will be leading a Campfire session focused on results from the Global Biochar Market Survey.

[Study: Factors Affecting Biochar Production Locations in South Carolina.](#)

A recent study by Clemson University that identified the best locations in the state for biochar production.

[A Healthier Earth Publishes New Expert Guide On Scaling Biochar.](#)

A Healthier Earth has published The Biochar Blueprint: A developer's guide to scale.

[Boeing enters carbon-removal deal with startup.](#)

Boeing will purchase up to 100,000 metric tons of carbon removal from Charm Industrial, a startup transforming forest wastes into "bio-oil" stored permanently underground.

Stay connected!

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