

N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Loree Levy
Aubrey Henry
(916) 654-9029

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**EDD provides nearly \$1 million to retrain
150 unemployed farmworkers**

SACRAMENTO – The California Employment Development Department (EDD) awarded \$998,550 to retrain 150 unemployed farmworkers throughout the state and prepare them for new careers in the growing industries of energy efficiency and renewable energy and green construction.

“The professional training provided through this grant will help unemployed workers find new careers in emerging green industries,” said EDD Director Patrick W. Henning.

The funds are being awarded to the Kern/Inyo/Mono Workforce Development Board, who will partner with the farmworker advocacy association La Cooperativa Campesina de California and Employer’s Training Resource to provide training to unemployed agricultural workers statewide.

Jobs in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industry include production or repair technicians for energy-efficient technologies, as well as jobs in solar power, green building construction and renewable fuels. Community colleges in Kern, Merced, Madera, Stanislaus and San Joaquin counties will provide venues for vocational training. Skilled laborers and representatives from several multi-trade unions will assist with pre-apprenticeship training and apprenticeship referrals. Participants looking to transition into well-paying green industry and construction jobs can take advantage of employment development services that include:

- Remedial education to address skill deficiencies
- Vocational skills training
- Hands-on training
- On-the-job training
- Work experience
- Career pathway counseling

Agricultural workers face employment instability due to the conversion of agricultural land into housing and industry, and changes in regional crop planting. Most of the workers targeted by the grant live in rural counties with significantly higher unemployment than the state’s 4.1 percent unemployment rate. The job training and services will address barriers that many unemployed farmworkers face, which include poverty, limited education, limited English proficiency and insufficient job experience.

(more)

Funding for this grant was provided through discretionary funds made available to Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in accordance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and administered by EDD and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

For more information on the Kern/Inyo/Mono Workforce Development Board and its programs, contact Director Teresa Hitchcock at 661-336-6976.

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