

# THE CENTER SQUARE

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## \$16 million in grants will make 'California Dream a reality for ... farmworkers'

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Farmworker Xochilt Nunez, holds a copy of a bill signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Rich Pedroncelli / AP Photo

(The Center Square) - Farmworkers in the California counties of San Mateo, Fresno, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Kern, Madera, and Merced will soon benefit from \$16 million in grants announced by Governor Gavin Newsom to expand home ownership.

“These grants will help make the California Dream a reality for dozens of farmworkers by helping them become homeowners – and help them lay a foundation for future generations to build upon,” Newsom stated.

The San Mateo County Department of Housing which is purchasing 28 manufactured housing units for San Mateo County, will provide 10 housing units for homeownership opportunities for extremely low-income households and displaced households from dilapidated housing conditions. The other 18 units are prioritized to purchase homes for survivors of the tragic Half Moon Bay farm shooting last

January, which left 2 Mexican nationals and 5 Chinese immigrants dead. Most of them were married and some had children.

San Mateo County was awarded \$5 million. It is unclear how the units will be provided to spouses with children, living outside the US. The remains of both Latino victims were expected to be returned to Mexico.

“We are so grateful to Governor Newsom and the State of California for this vital influx of resources in support of our efforts to ensure that every farm working family in Half Moon Bay and San Mateo County is living with dignity in safe, healthy, and affordable housing,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller.

The California Center for Cooperative Development in Fresno County will use their grant of \$5 million to help qualified low-income farmworkers purchase the sites on which their homes are located.

People’s Self-Help Housing will use their grant of \$4,004,000 to build 16 homes for farmworker families in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County. The grant will also fund the development of 49 other low-income homes.

Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay was awarded \$1,202,500 to fund a current low-income project located in Watsonville, Santa Cruz County. The grant will assist five units with funding, under the First-time Homebuyer Mortgage Assistance Program and Technical Assistance for Self-Help Housing Grant.

In Kern, Madera, and Merced counties, Self-Help Enterprises will provide first-time homebuyer mortgage assistance to low-income farmworker families in the form of loans from their grant of \$999,370.

The awards from the Department of Housing and Community Development will be disbursed through the Joe Serna, Jr. Housing Grant program which has a focus for low-income farmworker housing.

“California isn’t California without our farmworkers – not only are they our state’s economic backbone, but they help us produce over a third of our country’s vegetables and three-quarters of the country’s fruits and nuts. Our farmworkers have our backs – now it’s time we have theirs,” said Governor Newsom.