

SIERRA SUN TIMES

Kern, Madera, Merced Counties Self-Help Enterprises Receive \$999,370 as California Governor Gavin Newsom Announces \$16 Million to Support Farmworker Homeownership

June 2, 2023

Why It Matters: The \$16 million awarded today will help expand homeownership for farmworkers in California. As part of today's announcement, San Mateo County will receive \$5 million to purchase homes for survivors of the tragic Half Moon Bay farm shooting in January.

June 2, 2023 - SACRAMENTO – Governor Gavin Newsom has announced the awarding of \$16 million in grants to increase homeownership for farmworkers in California. The grants will support five programs statewide to build or purchase homes for lower-income farmworkers and advance programs that help farmworkers become or remain homeowners through mortgage assistance.

“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. “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.”

The Department of Housing and Community Development awarded today's grants through the Joe Serna, Jr. Housing Grant program to advance homeownership development projects, self-help technical assistance projects, mortgage assistance programs, and programs for the acquisition of manufactured housing for agricultural workers.

“Agricultural workers are integral to the vitality of California and its economy, yet too often they face housing insecurity that can increase the likelihood of job loss,” said Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramírez. “These awards will create homeownership opportunities, which leads to greater housing and economic stability for these essential workers – strengthening ties to their local communities, and allowing their families to create generational wealth.”

“Farmworkers play a vital role in California's economy and communities; it is an honor to play a part in expanding opportunities for homeownership for them and their families,” said HCD Director Gustavo Velasquez. “Today's awards are a welcome extension of the work HCD does each day to help provide safe, affordable, and reliable housing for the people who endure harsh conditions to put food on our tables and support a vital California industry.”

“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.

Awards Summary:

Half Moon Bay – San Mateo County: \$5,000,000

The San Mateo County Department of Housing will purchase 28 manufactured housing units. Approximately 18 of the 28 proposed manufactured housing units will be prioritized for those households displaced from the tragic events of the Half Moon Bay farm shooting in January. The remaining 10 manufactured housing units will provide homeownership opportunities to agricultural workers making up-to 80% of the area median income (AMI) and will target extremely low-income households and displaced households from dilapidated housing conditions.

Fresno County – California Center for Cooperative Development: \$5,000,000

The California Center for Cooperative Development (CCCD) will utilize the funds for the acquisition of manufactured housing. CCCD will assist 30 low-income units at 80% AMI or below within Fresno County. This program’s goal is to prevent lower-income farmworker displacement from mobilehome parks, and/or communities, by helping qualified homeowners purchase their sites.

Santa Maria – People’s Self-Help Housing: \$4,004,000

People’s Self-Help Housing will use the funds for a homeownership development project and technical assistance for self-help housing. The development project will have 49 total homes with 40 of those being affordable for people at 40-80% AMI; of these, 16 homes will be reserved for farmworker families. The community will be built in Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County.

Watsonville – Habitat For Humanity Monterey Bay: \$1,202,500

Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay will assist five units with funding under the First-time Homebuyer Mortgage Assistance Program and Technical Assistance for Self-Help Housing Grant. The current project, located in Watsonville, will support families at or below 70% AMI.

Kern, Madera, Merced – Self-Help Enterprises: \$999,370

Self-Help Enterprises will work with families in Kern, Madera, and Merced counties to provide first-time homebuyer mortgage assistance. The program will assist 10 low-income, and/or very low-income, farmworker families at or below 80% AMI. Funds to individual homeowners will be in the form of loans.

Source: Office of the Governor