



Employment Training Panel

# Memorandum

To: ETP Policy Committee  
Gretchen Newsom, Chairperson  
Rebecca Bettencourt, Member  
Rick Smiles, Member

Date: October 26,  
2023

CC: Executive Staff  
Peter Cooper, Executive Director  
Jaime Gutierrez, Chief Deputy Director

From: Heather Miguel, Program Projects Unit Manager

Subject: ETP Policy Committee Meeting Agenda Item  
Agriculture Initiative and Funding for FY23/24

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I. Brief Issue Statement:

The California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) is working on an Agriculture initiative to advance workers within the industry. The initiative goals include expanding the number of workers with the educational capacity necessary to enter higher training programs, increasing access to existing and emerging high-paying jobs in the agricultural industry, and improving job-quality and wages. This aligns with ETP's mission to create and retain high wage jobs while providing workers the opportunity to train for career advancement.

As a step to implement this initiative, LWDA is partnering with the Employment Development Department (EDD) on a Solicitation for Proposals for the Farmworker Advancement Program (SFP released on October 11, 2023). This program will award funding to entities across the state to implement projects that focus on farmworker advancement by offering essential skills and upskilling training. This funding will enable farmworkers to obtain employment in good quality jobs that pay family sustaining wages, provide benefits, offer predictable work schedules, provide opportunities for advancement, and encourage worker voice.

In addition, the LWDA has been working on agency-wide effort to improve outreach and access to services for farmworkers, including its enforcement entities. This has included LWDA and the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) funding a Statewide Agriculture and Farmworker Education (SAFE) program to target farmworkers with information about how to work safely during the COVID pandemic, and signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen labor rights and protections for Mexican workers in California through cooperation for training and

education, outreach and communication and promotion of a bilateral dialogue. LWDA is also working with EDD, DIR, and the Agricultural Labor Relations Board (ALRB) in launching one-stop shop clinics in agricultural regions to bring LWDA services directly to farmworkers. EDD, DIR, and ALRB have also signed an interagency memorandum to better share information and refer cases related to agricultural workers.

## II. Background Information:

In an effort to support the training and advancement of agriculture and farmworker populations in coordination with the efforts of the LWDA, EDD and others, ETP proposes to allocate \$10M in funding to serve businesses and workers in the agriculture and food processing sectors. The goal of this funding allocation is to upskill farmworkers to transition into better jobs.

All organizations with the Agriculture NAICS Codes (11110-115310) will be prioritized for this initiative. ETP will review, on a case by case basis, any applicants that may be in Agriculture related companies such as food packing, food processing, irrigation and fishing industries for prioritization as well.

In addition to allocating funds, ETP is also recommending the following:

- The Panel allow Single Employer Contractor's request up to \$600k in funding for projects in the Agriculture industry.
- The Panel allow Multiple Employer Contractor's request up to \$1M in funding. In order to request funding over the cap, the funding over the cap (\$750k) must be exclusively reserved for the Agriculture initiative.
- These projects will receive priority of processing, meaning that they will be moved to the top of the queue upon application submittal and prioritized for funding development.

Staff has been and will continue to work with LWDA, EDD, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and other partners and stakeholders across the state to outreach to potential applicants for this funding.

Finally, depending on demand, ETP may need to open this funding back up to all industries to ensure program goals are met overall. As such, staff will provide updates to the Panel on the status of this initiative.

## III. Recommendation

No action items beyond soliciting and receiving feedback from the Policy Committee, staff, contractors, stakeholders, and the public concerning the Agriculture Initiative.