

N E W S R E L E A S E

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**Employment Development Department awards \$6.6 million
to provide job training to nearly 1,000 laid-off farmworkers**

Sacramento – The California Employment Development Department (EDD) today announced it has awarded more than \$6.6 million to Kern County Employers' Training Resource to provide employment and training services to 956 laid-off agricultural workers.

Employers' Training Resource will partner with La Cooperativa Campesina de California (La Cooperativa), a non-profit organization that serves farmworkers, to assist workers laid off from Dole Food Company, Premium Packing, Inc.; Andy Boy, D'Arrigo Bros. Co. of California, Inc.; GreenGate Fresh, LLLP; Fresh Express, Inc.; L.E. Cooke Co.; Tree House Foods, Inc.; LoBue Bros., Inc.; Foster Farms; Silgan Containers, LLC; California Dairies, Inc.; Seneca Foods Corp, Inc.; Grimmway Farms; and Vincent B. Zaninovich & Sons, Inc.

"In response to seasonal layoffs that affect farmworkers, their communities and local economies, EDD is funding employment services that will help reemploy seasonal farmworkers in sustainable, locally in-demand jobs," said EDD Director Patrick W. Henning.

Participants may receive vocational training, on-the-job training and work experience to prepare them to transition into locally in-demand occupations such as automotive specialist, electrician, solar installation technician, and industrial maintenance and green building construction workers. Services provided by La Cooperativa will also address employment barriers including basic skills deficiencies, limited education and English skills, and limited career exposure.

Seasonal layoffs are common in the agricultural industry and can lead to increased unemployment rates for farmworkers in affected areas. More than 800,000 farmworkers in California are continually affected by seasonal changes and long-term industry developments that include the ongoing loss of agricultural land to urban housing and industry, mechanization of farm equipment and regional crop changes.

Funding for this grant was provided through discretionary funds made available to Governor Gavin Newsom in accordance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and administered by the Employment Development Department and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

For more information about Employers' Training Resource and its services, contact Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Teresa Hitchcock at (661) 336-6956.

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