



# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 2, 2020

### **Farmworker Household Assistance Program launched September 1** *County aims to help farmworkers struggling from impacts of COVID-19*

Ventura, CA – On Tuesday, the Board of Supervisors approved the program design of the Farmworker Household Assistance Program, providing up to \$250,000 in county general funds to match private donations made through the Ventura County Community Foundation.

The program aims to provide farmworkers financial relief from the impacts of COVID-19. Farmworkers may apply for this funding assistance from September 1 at 5 p.m. through September 30, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. at [www.vchsa.org/FHAP](http://www.vchsa.org/FHAP).

“We are grateful to partner with the agricultural community and community-based organizations to support essential farmworkers who have experienced hardship due to the pandemic,” said County Executive Officer Mike Powers.

Applicants must be farmworkers with low incomes who have lived in Ventura County for at least the last 30 days and who are struggling to meet basic needs such as food, housing or health care due to COVID-19. Priority will be given to eligible applicants with an annual household income of less than 50% area median income, followed by 80% AMI.

The application process opened online at [www.vchsa.org/FHAP](http://www.vchsa.org/FHAP) on September 1, 2020, at 5 p.m. Applications must be fully completed by September 30, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Depending on the amount of private funds raised and matched by the county, and the number of eligible applications received by the published deadline, a lottery process may be used to select grantees at random from among eligible applicant households. Each funded household will receive a one-time grant of \$1,500.

Outreach to the farmworker community is underway, with bilingual materials in circulation as well as videos available in Spanish, Mixtec, Zapotec and Purepecha to reach the target population. “We already have more than 1,000 interested farmworker households,” said Melissa Livingston, Director of the Ventura County Human Services Agency, which is administering the program. “The need is great, and we stand ready to assist as many households as possible,” continued Livingston.

“The estimated 43,000 hardworking farmworkers in Ventura County struggle with housing costs at the best of times,” said Ellen Brokaw from Brokaw Ranch Company. “In this pandemic many are simply unable to continue housing and feeding their families without help. The FHAP Committee, House Farmworkers!, the Ventura County Community Foundation, and the County of Ventura are working together, with the financial support of the community, to provide desperately needed support.”

Every dollar donated will go directly to farmworker families in need. To donate to the FHAP, please visit <https://vccf.org/fhap/>.

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