

# Empowering the Future of Agriculture: Bridging the Skills Gap - Insights from the Farmworker Surveys

August 2, 2023



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# F3 AgTEC Workforce Initiative



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AgTEC Regional Director

# Applied Agriculture Systems Certificate

A 12-unit certificate program that aims to provide students with the skills-based learning necessary to succeed in the agriculture industry



1 in 3 workers are at risk for automation. These field workers have been at the forefront of feeding the nation and will be prioritized for this program.



After completion, students can pursue entry-level jobs in agriculture, or continue their education by specializing at a community college



Will be the same across 8 community colleges in the region

## Program Level Competencies

- Students can explain foundational agricultural concepts.
- Students can select, effectively utilize, and identify faults with technologies for agricultural processes
- Students can exhibit employability skills, quantitative reasoning, and effective communication



Ricardo Castorena

## Supporting Farmworker Needs

# Understanding the Needs and Perspectives of California's Farmworkers

As part of our effort to create a comprehensive and inclusive AgTEC Program, we conducted a survey to gather insights from California's farmworkers. We recognize the critical role that farmworkers play in our agriculture industry, and their perspectives and needs are essential in shaping our program's development. In this section, we will share the results of the survey, highlighting key findings and recommendations for addressing the challenges faced by farmworkers in their work and career development.

# Meet the Survey Collectors



**Ana Zarco**  
Cultivating Communities Together



**Dafne Palma**  
BOCC Merced



**Erica Linares**  
BOCC Fresno



**Las Panchas**  
Central Valley

# Survey Locations

The survey was conducted across Madera, Fresno, Tulare, and Kings Counties



# Survey Respondents

**Over 10000  
Respondents**

**Survey administered  
from Merced to Kings  
counties**

**Majority of respondents  
age 25-44**

**90% of respondents are  
foreign born & identify as  
hispanic or latin(o)(a)(x)**

**Majority of respondents  
have 1-5 dependents**

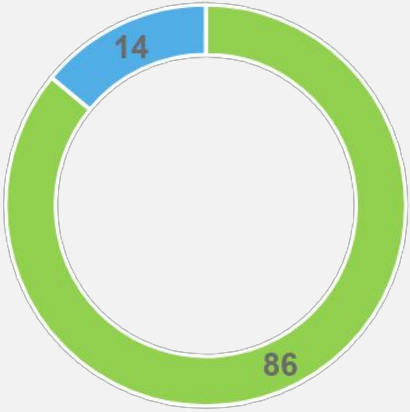




# Financial Security

Have you received any assistance from the following programs in the last 12 months?

Have you felt financially insecure in the last 12 months?



■ Yes ■ No

WIC	23%
EDD Unemployment	12%
Disability	4%
MediCal	53%
Medicare	7%
None	22%

# How Important do you view education?

Not Important	4%
Somewhat Important	18%
Important	29%
Very Important	46%
Neutral	2%

# Educational Questions Level of Education



No School **4%**



Elementary School **37%**



Middle School **33%**



Some Highschool **11%**



Highschool Graduate **6%**



GED **33%**



Vocational **0.11%**



Some College **3%**



College Graduate **1%**

70% of Respondents have education at or under middle school level

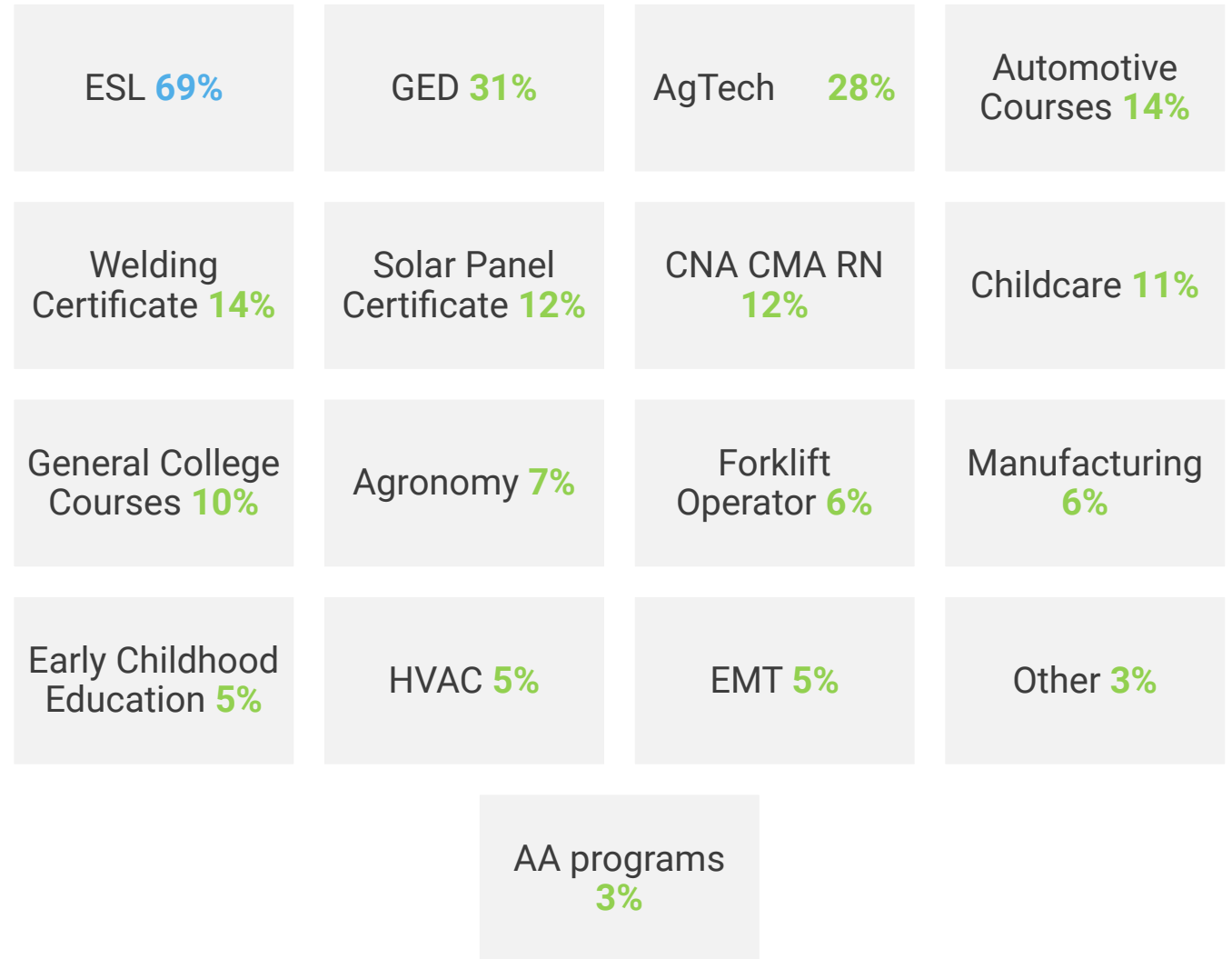


Elementary School **37%**



Middle School **33%**

# What programs are you most interested in?





# Why were you unable to continue your education?

Needed to Work	<b>46%</b>
Language Barriers	<b>16%</b>
Financial Barriers	<b>12%</b>
Lack of Transportation	<b>11%</b>
Childcare	<b>8%</b>
Not Interested	<b>5%</b>
Mental Health	<b>1%</b>
Other	<b>1%</b>

# Are you interested in going back to school?

Yes	<b>66%</b>
No	<b>32%</b>
Already Enrolled	<b>1%</b>



# Do you have reliable transportation?



Yes **90%**



No **10%**





# Where would be your ideal location to take class?

At Home 59%

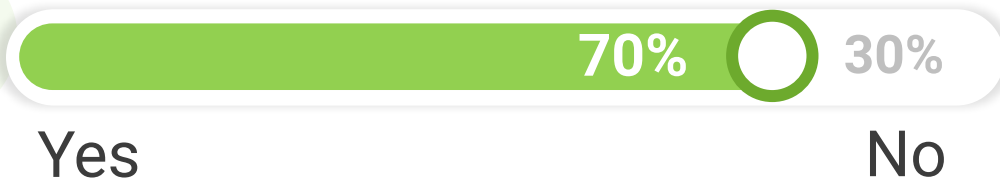
At a College 34%

At a Community Center 16%

On Zoom 15%

On a Work Site 4%

If you could take courses online would it increase your interest in going back?



# What would be the ideal time to take classes for you?

(8 AM-12PM)  
6%

(12 PM-5PM)  
12%

(5 PM-9PM) 39%

Weekends 25%

I don't have time  
17%

# How far are you willing to travel?



5 Miles **34%**



10 Miles **30%**



15 Miles **13%**



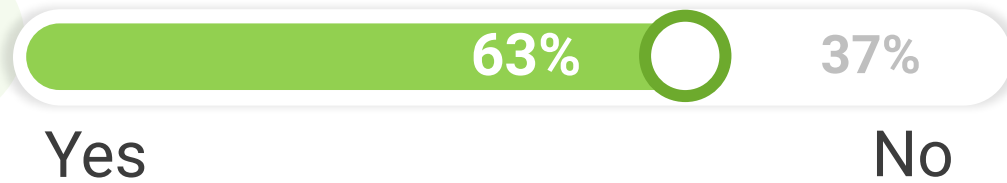
20+ Miles **6%**



I'm not interested in school **17%**

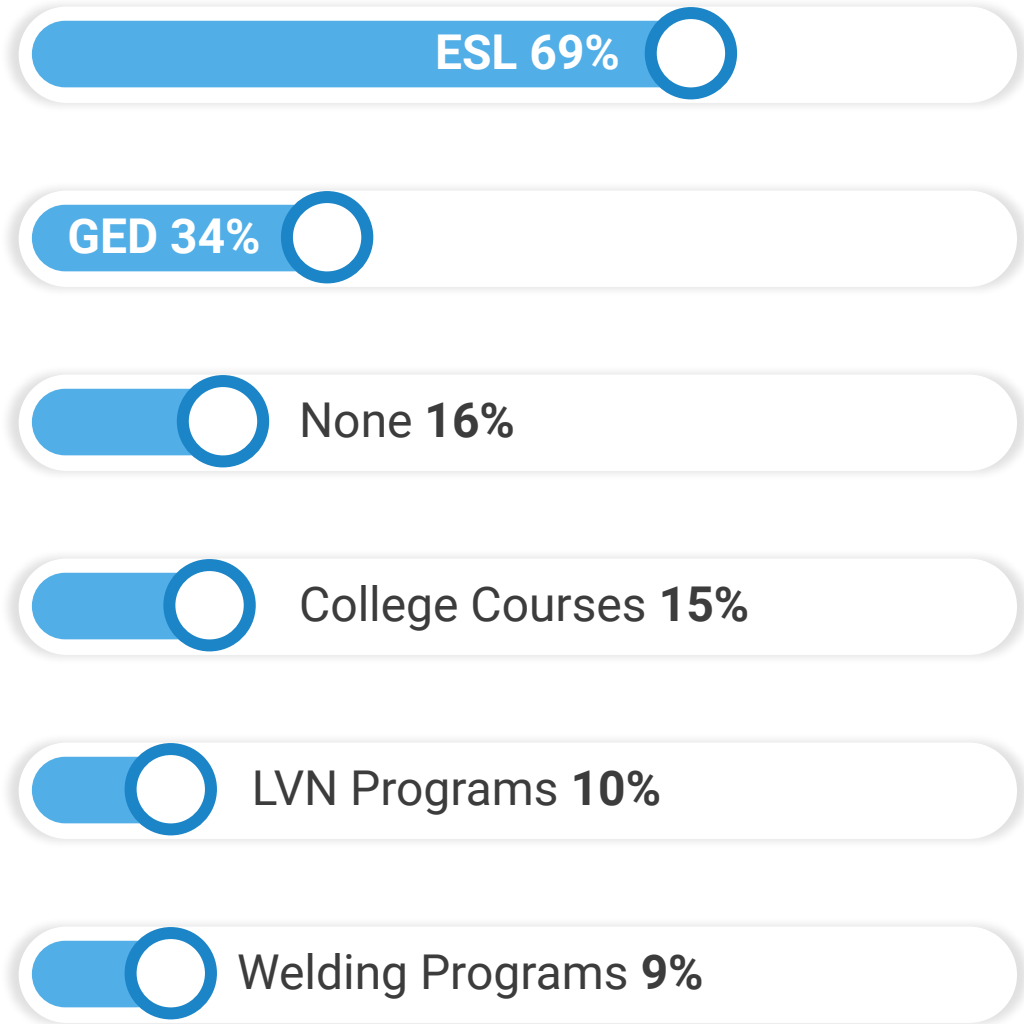


# Would you be interested if there was childcare offered?





What programs are you already aware of in your community?



# Would you like more information on this program?

**53%** of respondents answered yes and left their contact information to be reached out to as these programs come to their communities.

# Key Takeaways



Clear demand for upskilling and re-skilling.



Despite interest, cost remains a primary concern with **86%** respondents indicating financial insecurity in the last year.



Online learning is becoming increasingly popular with **70%** indicating their interest would increase if at home learning was offered.



Farmworkers continue to have to choose between working or going to school. With **46%** percent citing their reason for leaving school as needing to work.



As we've seen from the farmworker surveys, there are still many challenges facing our agricultural workforce. However, through the AgTEC program, we're working to address these challenges and provide training and support to workers across the region.



Thank you