

California Receives USDA Loans For Affordable Farmworker Housing

Six communities across the state will each receive \$3 million in [US Department of Agriculture](#) loans to develop and repair affordable housing units for farm workers.

[Mutual Housing California](#) is one recipient. It is a non-profit housing developer in Yolo County. The USDA funding will help the organization develop the second phase of an affordable housing complex in Woodland, CA.



Mutual Housing at Spring Lake
Photo credit: Sunseri Construction

According to Vanessa Guerra, a project manager with Mutual Housing, the help comes not a moment too soon.

“Farm workers, some of the lowest income earners in California, struggle to afford decent housing.” And, she adds, in the Sacramento region, “what little housing is available is seasonal.”

Guerra explains, “And what we’ve been starting to see is that there’s now a higher need for year-round housing for farm workers. We’re seeing that families like to stay in place, just to support the stability of their children (in) schools.”

Other affordable housing advocates welcome the boost from the USDA’s Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant program, but acknowledge it won’t solve the state’s housing crisis.

Ilene Jacobs is Statewide Director of Litigation for [California Rural Legal Assistance](#). She says the USDA loans are “a drop in the bucket - but a good drop.”

Jacobs adds, “Housing and infrastructure funding targeted to rural and farmworker communities and their unique circumstances are desperately needed in California and are not the focus of most federal and state programs.”

Qualified organizations in the communities of Calexico, Greenfield, McFarland, Bakersfield and Ukiah also will receive USDA loan assistance.

Founded in 1988, Mutual Housing California develops sustainable housing that is affordable to a diversity of households. Our housing builds strong and stable communities through resident participation and leadership development. For more information, call (916) 453-8400 or visit our website at mutualhousing.com.