



**HARTNELL
COLLEGE**

AgSTEP

Agriculture Systems Training Expansion Program

*A competency-based certificate expanding across California's
community colleges*

Our Mission

We advance social and economic justice through the transformative power of education.

What is AgSTEP

AgSTEP is an expansion of the AgTEC Initiative

California's first bilingual, competency-based agriculture certificate delivered through the community college system.

It is built on a simple premise: **workers who already know the job should not have to start from scratch to get credit for it.**

Students advance when they demonstrate mastery, not when the semester ends.

COLLEGE

Key Facts:

- 14 competencies, industry-defined
- Bilingual delivery (English & Spanish)
- Non-credit, direct assessment CBE
- Flexible pacing , mastery based
- Built with 6 Central Valley colleges
- \$500,000 offered to each college for expansion
- Expanding to Imperial Valley, Shasta & Hartnell

How Competency-Based Education Works

Traditional Model
Progress based on seat time
Fixed semester pace for all students
Prior experience not formally recognized
One-size grading: A through F
Rigid schedule & classroom required

CBE Model
Progress based on demonstrated mastery
Students advance when they prove the skill
Prior learning assessed and credited
Mastery / Mastery+ / Not Yet Mastered
Flexible pacing, hybrid, bilingual delivery

The standard is mastery. Every student, every time.

The 14 Competencies

Defined by industry. Validated by employers. Assessed by demonstration — not by quiz or exam.

1. Basic Equipment Operation

2. Basic Equipment Configuration

3. Basic Equipment Troubleshooting

4. Agricultural Systems Fundamentals

5. Crop Production Systems

6. Tool Operation

7. Interpersonal Skills

8. Animal Production Systems

9. Food Safety

10. Basic Safety

11. Industry Communication

12. Applied Technical Reading

13. Applied Technical Writing

14. Digital Literacy

The Three Pillars That Make This Work

1

Employers

Defined the 14 competencies before curriculum was written. They needed adaptable workers, not fixed-occupation degree holders.

2

Students

Nearly 12,000 farm workers surveyed across 13 Central Valley counties. 60% want to return to school. They told us exactly what it would take, and we built for that.

3

Colleges

Faculty championed the curriculum. Administrators aligned the systems. Academic senates moved it forward.

This work moves best, when everyone works together.

The Problem We Are Solving

2.3M+

California Adults with
some college but no
credential

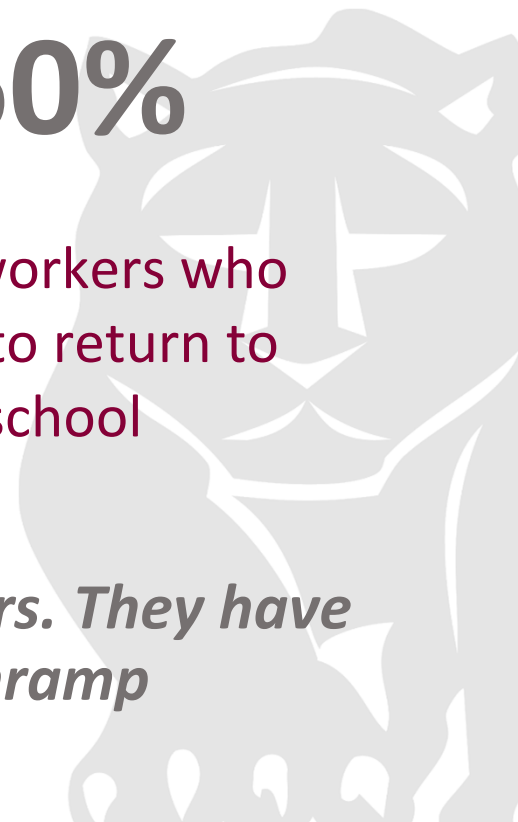
1 in 3

Agricultural
Workers at risk
from automation

60%

Farmworkers who
want to return to
school

Traditional education was not build for these workers. They have the skill. They need the credential and the onramp



Occupations Contributing to the Workforce Gap

Santa Cruz & Monterey Subregion

Occupation	Annual Openings	Entry Wage	Mid-Career Wage
Farm Equipment Mechanics & Service Technicians	35	\$19/hr	\$22/hr
Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technologists / Technicians	20	\$31/hr	\$41/hr
Mechanical Engineering Technologists / Technicians	2	\$29/hr	\$38/hr
Electro-Mechanical & Mechatronics Technologists / Technicians	1	\$29/hr	\$33/hr

Jobs + Employers + Industry Opportunity

Top Occupations Hiring

- Farm Equipment Mechanics & Service Technicians
- Mechatronics Technicians
- Electrical Controls Technicians
- Robotics Technicians
- Mechanical Technicians

Top Regional Employers Posting Jobs

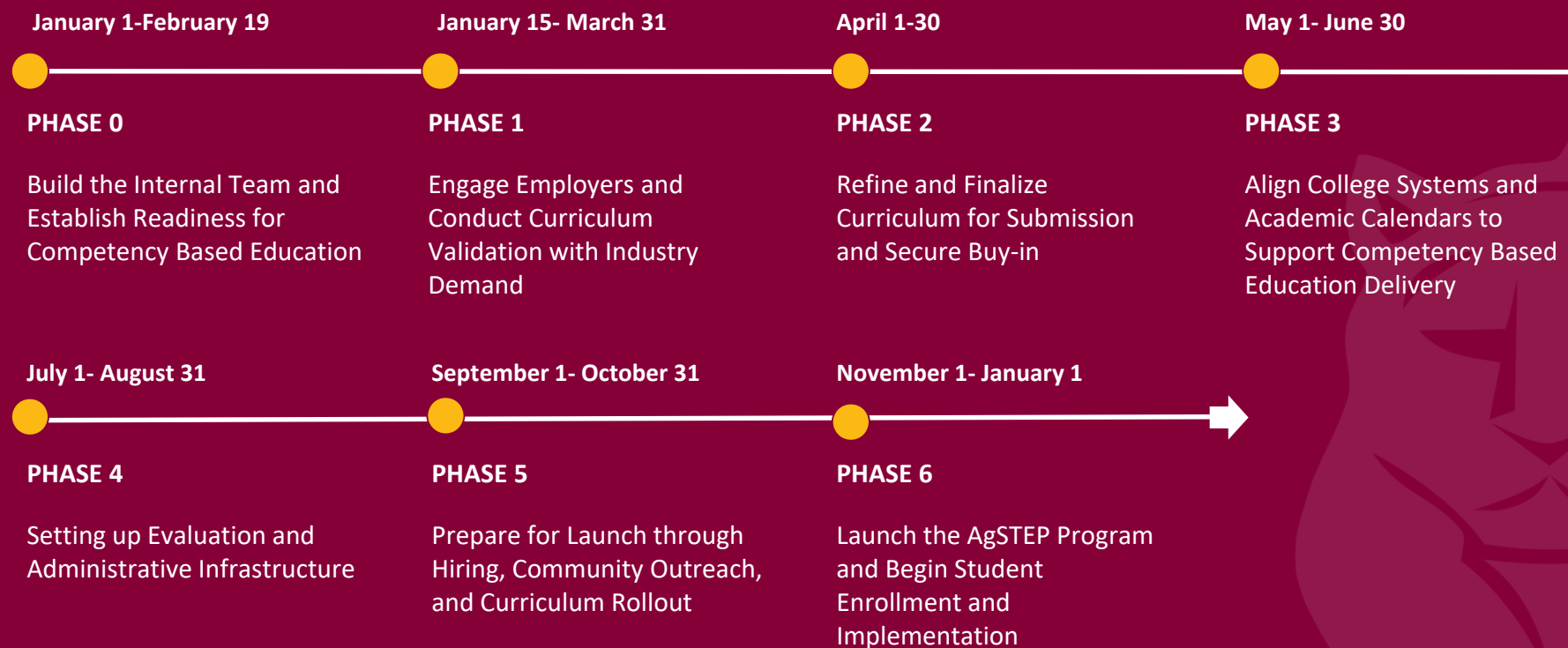
- Monterey One Water
- Carbon Robotics
- Cushman & Wakefield
- Aerotek
- Joby Aviation

Why It Matters

- Supports Ag automation & precision agriculture
- Prepares students for high-skill technical careers
- Connects directly to Monterey County's agriculture economy

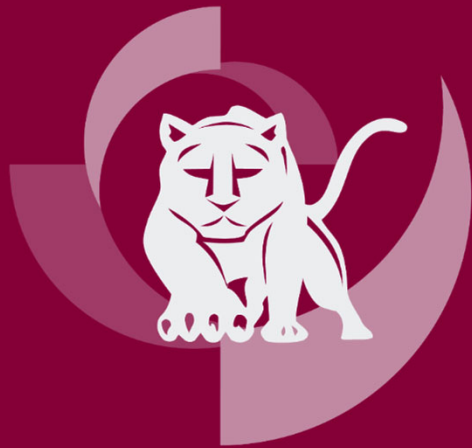
This program fills a critical workforce gap by preparing students for high-demand, living-wage careers supporting the future of agriculture in Monterey County.

Phases of the Project



Hartnell College was awarded \$500,000 to support the AgSTEP Initiative

AgSTEP Timeline



**HARTNELL
COLLEGE**

**CTE & WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**

Q&A

