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**SUCCESS OF 80 IN '08 CAMPAIGN TO BOOST EFFORT
TO BUILD HOMES FOR FARMWORKERS
Fund at Ventura County Community Foundation to offer \$92,000 in grants**

CAMARILLO, Calif. (May 5, 2009) – Due to the success of the just-completed 80 in '08 campaign, \$92,000 in grants are now available to organizations dedicated to building or renovating housing for farmworker families in Ventura County.

The grants will support predevelopment costs – including staffing and fees – of experienced affordable housing developers. Money also will be available to fast track farmworker housing projects currently in process.

The high cost of providing safe and decent housing for agricultural workers was cited as one of the major challenges facing Ventura County's \$1 billion agricultural industry in the 2008 report: *Ventura County's Agricultural Future: Challenges and Opportunities*.

“We know from this report that while farmworker wages remained flat during the last 10 years, the cost of housing in this region has soared,” said Hugh J. Ralston, president and CEO of the Community Foundation.

The VCCF Farmworker Housing Fund, he noted, is the only countrywide effort to raise money from all sectors impacted by agriculture in Ventura County – be they growers, processors of local produce, local farm-supply businesses, developers or area residents who believe efforts to build affordable housing for essential workers should address the needs of agricultural employees.

The 80 in '08 campaign kicked off with \$40,000 challenge grant from the Farmworker Housing Task Force of the Ag Futures Alliance and raised the remainder during the past year. The fund was established in 2003 at Ventura County Community Foundation with a \$250,000 grant from the former Washington Mutual.

Those interested in applying for a grant can download the application by visiting <http://vccf.org/fundingcycles.html#fwh>. Proposals must be received in VCCF offices no later than 1 p.m. Friday, Aug. 14.

The Ventura County Community Foundation is a family of 500 charitable funds with total assets of \$96 million, which distributed \$5.6 million grants and pledges in 2008. The Foundation's mission is to promote and enable philanthropy to improve our community for good for ever, building long-term charitable capital to benefit Ventura County. The Foundation has been confirmed in compliance with national standards by the Council on Foundations, a reflection of the highest peer review across the nations 700 community foundations. For more information, visit www.vccf.org.

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