

Cuyama Valley Farmworker Housing Report

**PREPARED BY BLUE SKY CENTER
FEBRUARY 2022**



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Executive Summary

This Cuyama Valley Farmworker Housing Report presents the results of a door-to-door survey administered in late 2020 into early 2021. Through narratives and comparison, the results of these housing-focused questions are contextualized within the broader Cuyama Valley community.

This report serves as an addendum and follow-up to the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan (published in early 2020). For information on the Cuyama Valley's geography, attributes, history, and (broader) demographics and community priorities, it is worth first reviewing the Community Action Plan, found at blueskycenter.org/action-plan or by contacting Blue Sky Center.

As a rural community of 1,100 residents, community development projects of any kind have an immediate, tangible effect. In communities like the Cuyama Valley, it is not easy to isolate and zoom in to highly specific community concerns without recognizing how a change to one community arena has a direct correlative effect on another. So, even as this report attempts to focus specifically on the housing needs and opportunities of current Cuyama farmworkers, it is acknowledged that housing—availability, access, and affordability into the future, broadly—is a community-wide issue, tied directly to economic opportunity and job creation (Community Action Plan Priority C): jobs need housing, and housing needs jobs. In the same mindset, attention is simultaneously being paid to the strengthening of the Cuyama Valley's food network (Priority B, to improve access to food and connect local producers to consumers), initiating community beautification efforts (Priority A, to improve community pride and bring in sustaining revenue from visitors), supporting the Cuyama school system (Priority D, increasing enrollment, expanding offerings, and retaining staff), and bringing broadband internet to the valley (Priority F). Surrounding and entwined in all of these priorities is also a consistent need to address limitations and precariousness within the water and sewer infrastructure (Priority E).

As highlighted in the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan as well as door-to-door research presented in UCSB's "Cuyama Water Census" report (see Appendix G), quality and availability of potable water at home rated as the most important issue facing the Cuyama Valley in the next five years. The Action Plan established three goals for Cuyama's water: 1) support water systems in Old Cuyama and Ventucopa, 2) create back-up systems for the water/sewer system in New Cuyama (back-up power and a second well), and 3) improve domestic water systems and delivery infrastructure throughout the Valley. This precious resource critical to community viability for both housing infrastructure and the local agriculturally dominant economy is currently and persistently stressed; any housing improvements or developments that add to the household water infrastructure must take into account the limits of the system and seek to support increased redundancy and water quality.

In the process of creating the Community Action Plan, a community-wide survey was provided to all Cuyama residents; a total of 42% of households responded to the 63-question survey, providing a breadth of information on desires and opportunities for the Cuyama Valley as self-reported by Cuyama residents. One of the community priorities identified by residents and included in the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan focused on housing affordability and availability (Priority G from that report). Given that approximately 1-in-4 working Cuyamans labor in agriculture, a focus of further study logically became housing needs, barriers, and opportunities specific to the farmworker population currently living in the Cuyama Valley.

Any development of new housing options (or improvement of existing housing units) should honor the existing nature of the Cuyama Valley, including its geography, rural attributes, culture, relative distance from urbanized political centers, and the values of Cuyama Valley residents themselves. Supporting access to safe, decent, and affordable housing (be it new units or existing ones) would benefit Cuyama as a whole—supporting economic development—while also benefiting Cuyamans as individuals and households—providing housing security and supporting families with school-age children. Investments from outside resources should be sure to support the Cuyama Valley’s current residents while also purposeful to maintain Cuyama’s quality of life, which is highlighted by Cuyamans in the community survey as being quiet, rural, and affordable, supported by a small and tight-knit local population.





SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- We received complete responses from 34 farmworker households.
- One-in-four workers in the Cuyama Valley work in agriculture.
- Of the farmworker respondents, 52% reported living in the Cuyama Valley for 25 years or longer. If we compare that percentage to the results of the 2019 community-wide survey, a Cuyama farmworker is more likely to have lived longer in the Cuyama Valley than the average Cuyaman.
- One-in-two Cuyama farmworkers have been employed in their present agricultural position for over 10 years.
- Nearly nine-in-ten Cuyama farmworkers are employed year-round in agriculture (as opposed to seasonally employed).
- Taking into account the year-round nature of employment as well as the longevity of both residence and employment, farmworkers living in the Cuyama Valley represent a critical component to both the local employment and community make-up.
- Agricultural businesses that employ Cuyama Valley-resident farmworkers operate primarily in Santa Barbara County.
- Half of agricultural employers of Cuyama Valley-resident farmworkers provide housing to their employees; when made available, four-in-five farmworkers choose to live in the employer-provided housing.
- Trailers (mobile homes) make up a much higher percentage of housing units for Cuyama farmworkers as compared to the general Cuyama Valley population.
- Nearly three-in-four Cuyama farmworkers rent their residence, compared to just one-in-four general population Cuyamans.
- A Cuyama farmworker that is renting their home is most likely to be paying under \$600 per month in rent and have at least one essential utility included in their rent payment.
- Even so, one-in-two Cuyama farmworkers are paying unaffordable rates for their rent or mortgage.
- A Cuyama farmworker household has an average household income level lower than that of a general population Cuyama household.
- Farmworker houses, like Cuyama houses in general, are large: a significant majority of units have three bedrooms or more.
- Perception of housing availability among the farmworker population mirrors the perceptions among the general population: housing of any type—with the one exception of a house to buy—was perceived by a majority of respondents in both surveys as unavailable.
- Cuyama farmworkers echo the results of the community-wide survey that WiFi/ internet broadband is very much desired.

This report is published by Blue Sky Center (BSC) with technical assistance provided by Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC). Funding for some of BSC's staff time in developing the survey questions was provided by AmeriCorps VISTA, while funding for RCAC's staff time was provided by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. For any inquiries or feedback, contact Blue Sky Center at hello@blueskycenter.org or at PO Box 271, New Cuyama, CA 93254.

The Farmworker Survey Overview

The survey created and implemented consisted of 27 questions (a copy is provided as an addendum). A total of 34 households completed the survey, all indicating they are current or retired farmworkers working in the Cuyama Valley. Thirty-one households (91%) are addresses within the Cuyama Valley, while the remaining three are currently living in Taft, a community adjacent to Cuyama.

To collect survey information, three bilingual personnel of Blue Sky Center were trained by Rural Community Assistance Corporation as to the purpose of the survey, the intent of each question, and the specific meanings of terminology used. The subjects of the survey were farmworkers only.

To ensure Cuyama Valley farmworkers were the survey's respondents—and because the Cuyama community is small enough to do so—a list of Cuyaman households with known farmworkers was created by the three Blue Sky Center personnel (all local residents) and divided up among them to carry out engagement. When needed, these engagement personnel assisted the survey respondents one-on-one, providing clarification on the questions and ensuring complete surveys for each. The survey results were anonymized before being submitted to an aggregated spreadsheet.

“Farmworker” or “agricultural worker” means an individual who derives (or, prior to retirement or disability, derived) a substantial portion of their income from agricultural employment. For the purpose of this survey, the definition of “farmworker” was provided by the California Code of Regulations, Title 25, Chapter 1, Section 7, Subchapter 3. From Section 7200's Purpose and Scope: “These regulations set forth the policies and procedures governing the management and use of the Joe Serna, Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Fund established by Section 50517.5 of the California Health and Safety Code.” Section 7202 defines “agricultural workers” (for our purposes, synonymous with “farmworkers”) as all those that retired from or are *“employed in the cultivation and tillage of the soil; the production, cultivation, growing and harvesting of any agricultural or horticultural commodities; the raising of livestock, bees, furbearing animals, or poultry; dairying, forestry, and lumbering operations; and any work on a farm as incident to or in conjunction with such farming operations, including the delivery and preparation of commodities for market or storage.”* This definition was chosen due to its relevance to the Joe Serna, Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant Fund (or “Serna Funds” as is the shorthand), a state fund meant to support and spur the development of multi-family housing units for California's farmworkers. This fund is a significant source of housing funding statewide and is therefore a likely source of funds for any new housing development in the Cuyama Valley. When Serna funds are used for a housing project, their definition of “farmworker” determines eligibility of households for selection for a housing unit.

As of the time of this report’s publication, there is a housing development being proposed by Frank Thompson Housing Consultants (a private housing developer) in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara. The research for this report and the report itself is not made in conjunction with this or any specific housing development. Blue Sky Center and Rural Community Assistance Corporation have been working together since 2018 on community development opportunities that support the livelihood and economic opportunity for all Cuyamans; access to affordable, safe, and adequate housing is critical to the broader economic opportunity for residents within any rural community. The Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan presents the rationale as such:

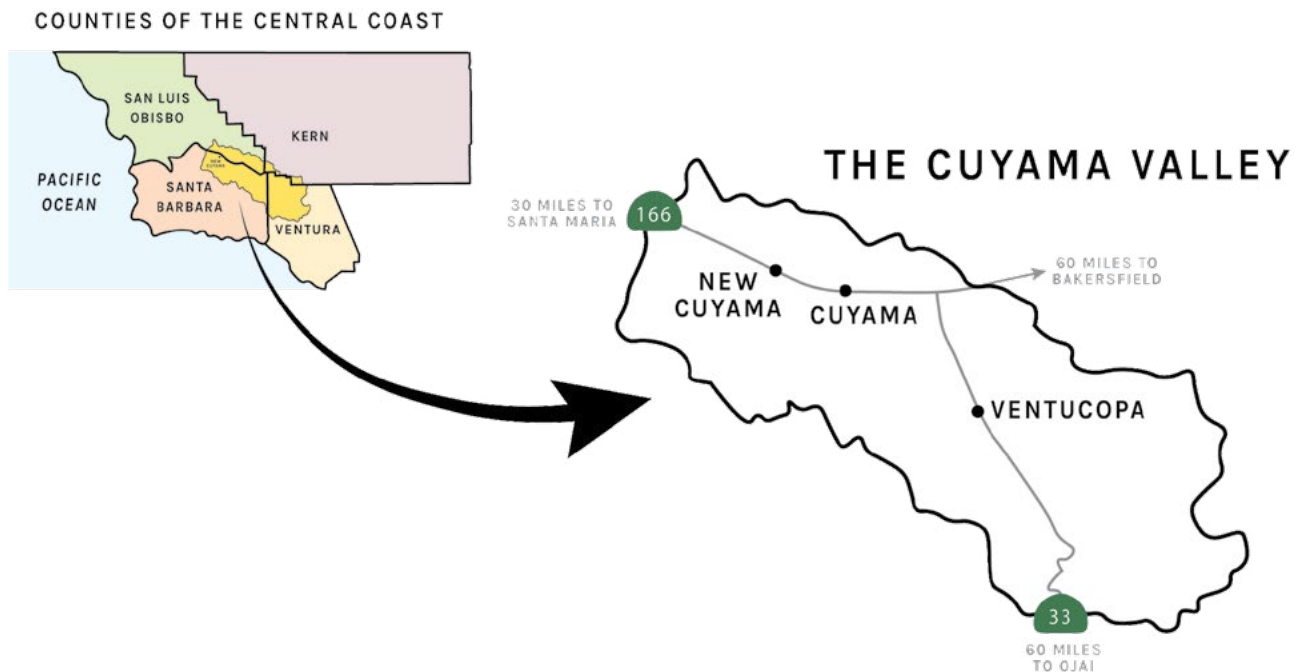
“Housing availability and affordability are requirements for supporting a vibrant and diverse local population. Cuyamans expressed their desire for support programs that improve the quality, durability, and efficiency of the existing homes within the Valley. Any growth in the housing stock will support local businesses, organizations, and provide more students for the local school system.”

As a Cuyama Valley rural economic development organization, Blue Sky Center works to collect information from varied sources and create publications such as this report in our effort to inform the public at large—as well as stakeholders, elected officials, and resource-holders—of the on-the-ground realities and economic opportunities in our home community.



Locating the Cuyama Valley

The 300-square-mile Cuyama Valley is home to an estimated 1,100 residents. Primarily located in northeast Santa Barbara County, the geographically defined Cuyama Valley includes land in four counties: Santa Barbara County as well as Ventura, Kern, and San Luis Obispo Counties. All parts of the Cuyama Valley are unincorporated areas of the respective counties. The townsites of New Cuyama (population 542), Cuyama (population 37), and Ventucopa (population 92) are all located within Santa Barbara County. State Highway 166 heads west out of the Valley to Santa Maria in the Central Coast Region and east to Maricopa and Interstate 5 at the southernmost part of the Central Valley; State Highway 33 orients north-south, connecting to Taft northeast of the Cuyama Valley and to Ojai and Ventura to the south.



More information regarding Cuyama's rural attributes, political boundaries, history, and Valley-wide demographics and development priorities can be found in the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan, found at blueskycenter.org/action-plan or by contacting Blue Sky Center.

The Role of Agriculture in the Cuyama Valley

By land use and employment, agriculture is the largest industry currently operating within the Cuyama Valley:



Large-scale industrial agriculture arrived to the Cuyama Valley in the mid-1980s. A 2019 report produced by the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (see Appendix H) provides context for agricultural operations within the Cuyama Valley:

- The gross farm revenue for the Cuyama Basin is estimated at \$110 million annually (2017 estimate).
- In 2016, a total of 16,045 acres were actively being used for crop production.
- “High value vegetable crops account for roughly three quarters of the basin’s acreage. Carrots, which the basin is known for, are commonly rotated with onions and potatoes. Other crops like wine grapes, pistachios, apples, and wheat make up the remaining agriculture in the region. Apples historically held a larger share of acreage in the basin, but changes in market conditions have caused production to shift to the Pacific Northwest. Other perennial crops such as pistachios and olives have increased in recent years. Wine grape acreage has also increased significantly in recent years.”

The 2019 American Community Survey from the US Census (see data.census.gov) estimates between 24 and 60% of full-time workers are employed in “agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting” (the wide range is due to a high margin of error, common in rural census tracts).

According to the 2020 Water Census Report as produced by the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB, included as Appendix G at the end of this report), their data collected in 2018 from 315 responses provided by Cuyamans indicated the following: “Agriculture employs 29% of working-age adults 18 and over in Cuyama, and 32% of households have someone employed in agriculture. 56% of Latino households have a member working in agriculture, compared to 14% of Non-Latino households.”

Developed and administered by Rural Community Assistance Corporation and Blue Sky Center, the 2019 Cuyama Valley Community Survey presented the results of 143 surveys, producing data provided directly by Cuyama Valley residents; the results of this survey indicate 22% of employed respondents work in the agricultural industry (agricultural employment was polled specifically).

Taking into account these data points and methods of collection, **we are confident in the statement that approximately one-in-four Cuyama workers are employed in agriculture.**

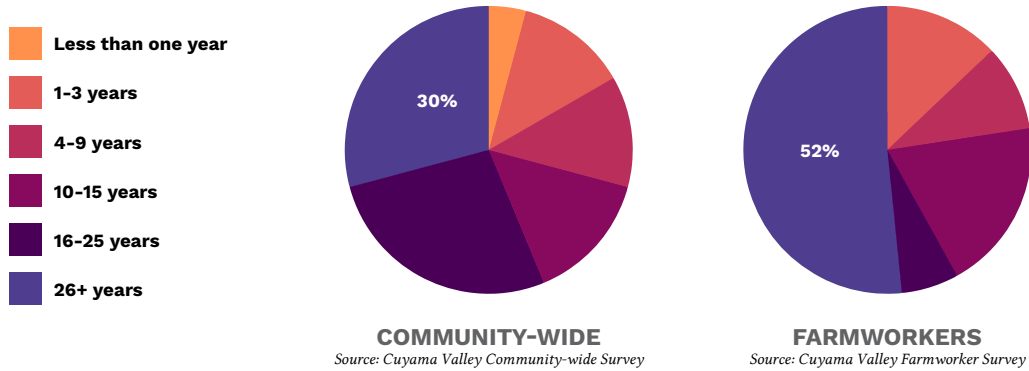
Results from the Farmworker Survey

The survey created and implemented consisted of 27 questions (a copy is provided as an addendum). A total of 34 households completed the survey, all indicating they are current or retired farmworkers working in the Cuyama Valley.

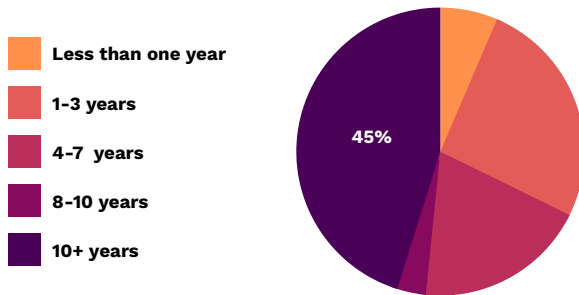
Thirty-one households (91%) are addresses within the Cuyama Valley, while the remaining three are currently living in Taft, a community adjacent to Cuyama. Congruent to the location density of the Cuyama Valley’s housing, of those living within the Cuyama Valley, 55% of respondents live in the townsite of New Cuyama, while 32% live outside of the townsites along Highways 166 and 33, 10% in Old Cuyama, and 3% in Ventucopa.

RESIDENCY DURATION

Surveyed Cuyaman farmworkers have lived in the Cuyama Valley for a duration that exceeds the average Cuyaman.



EMPLOYMENT DURATION



Nearly one-in-two (45%) of respondents have been employed in their present position for over 10 years. Two-in-three (68%) have been in their present position for four years or more.

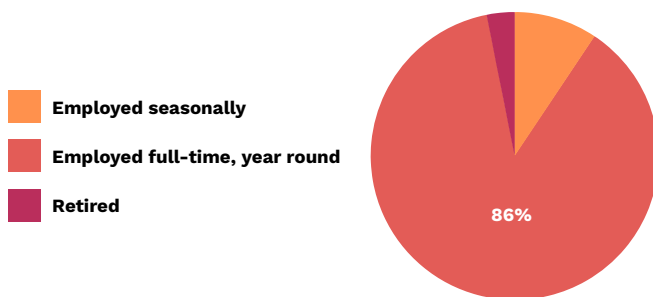


EMPLOYMENT DETAILS

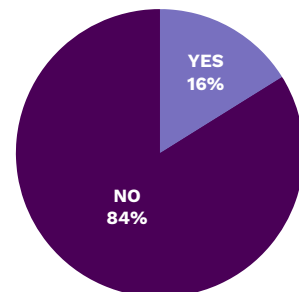
Of the respondents, 88% are employed year-round, with just under 10% seasonally employed.

Of the respondents, beyond their positions working in the Cuyama Valley, 16% also work in the agriculture industry outside of the Cuyama Valley.

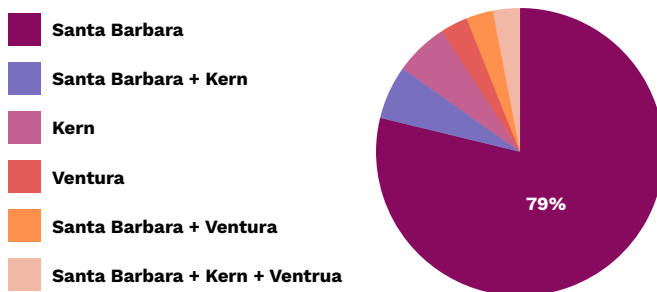
A vast majority (91%) of respondents work in Santa Barbara County, with 12% of that portion working in two or more counties. Just 9% work in either Kern or Ventura Counties primarily.



SURVEY QUESTION
Do you also work in the agriculture industry outside of the Cuyama Valley?



WORK LOCATION(S) BY COUNTY

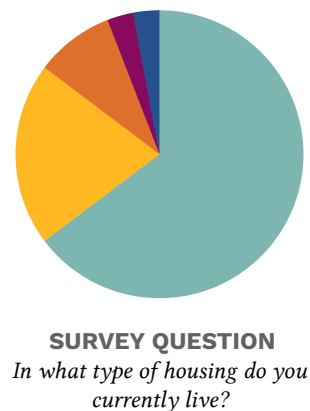
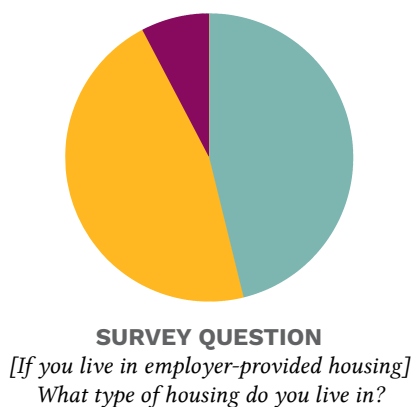
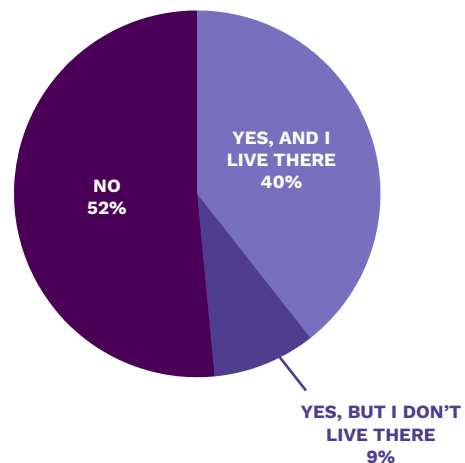


EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HOUSING

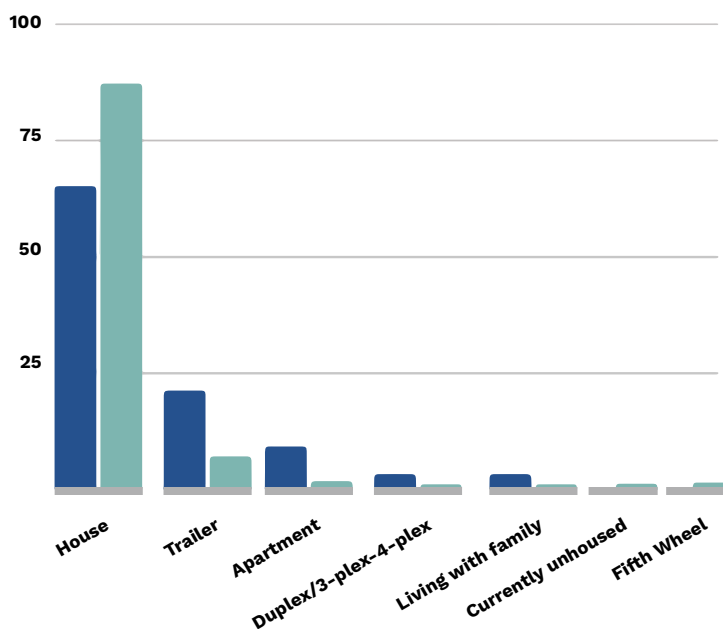
With the farmworker survey, a new question was asked regarding employer-provided housing: 52% of farm employers did not provide employee housing, while 48% did. When employee housing was provided, 81% of those employees chose to live in the employer-provided housing.

The employer-provided housing type was a house 46% of the time, a trailer 46% of the time, and a multi-family house 8% of the time.

Among all farmworker respondents (not just those living in employer-provided housing), a house was more common (65% of farmworkers) and a trailer less common (21% of farmworkers), while 9% live in an apartment.

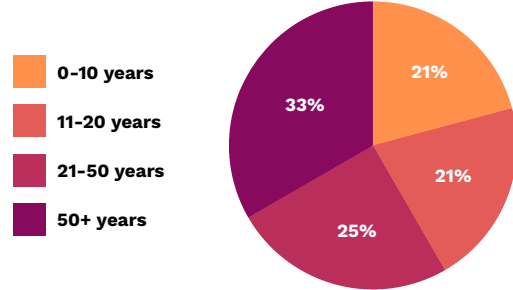


Zooming out to all of Cuyama—regardless of occupation—a significantly higher majority of general population Cuyamans live in houses (87%) and significantly less (by percentage) live in trailers (7% for the general population).



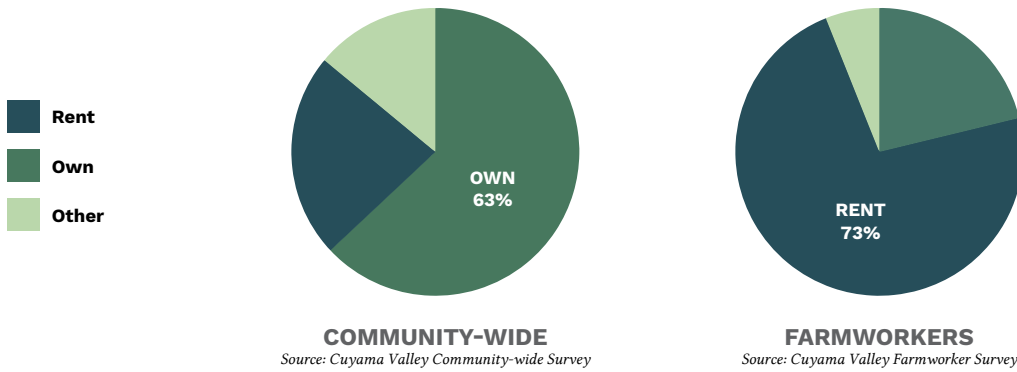
AGE OF HOUSING UNITS

Taking into account that 94% of New Cuyama townsite’s housing was built by Richfield Oil Company in 1950-1953 (70 years ago), and that New Cuyama’s current 216 homes account for 60% of the total housing units across the Cuyama Valley, it is notable that the age of homes housing farmworkers trends lower, with 2-in-3 homes built after 1970. This rings true in that the trailers/mobile homes (where 21% of respondents live) were built after 1970, and, with more relevance, industrial agricultural operations arrived to the Cuyama Valley in the mid-1980s, spurring the need for new housing built on or adjacent to agricultural land.



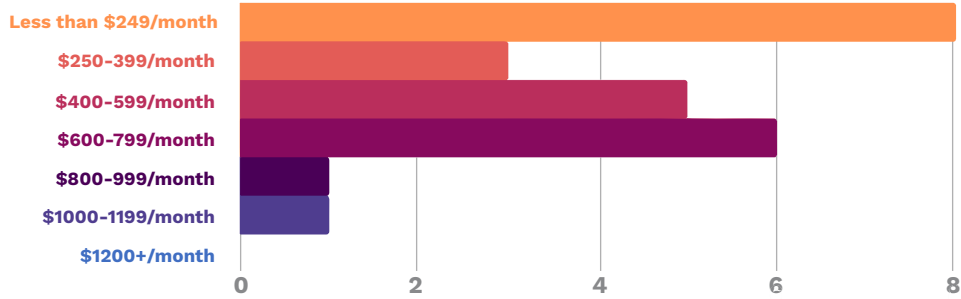
RENT OR OWN

In Cuyama broadly, 63% of residents own their residence, while 23% rent (14% neither own nor rent). For Cuyama farmworkers, just 21% own their residence, 73% rent, and 6% neither own nor rent.

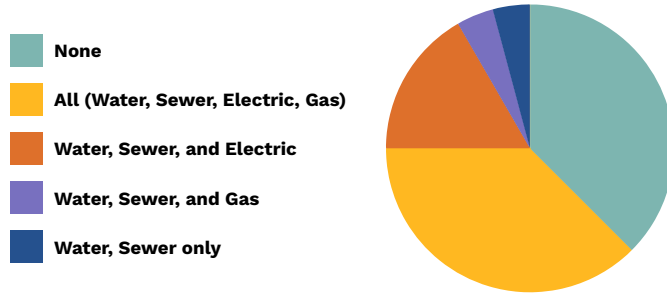


MONTHLY RENT AND UTILITIES

Of the 24 respondents who rent their residence, 2-in-3 pay under \$600 per month in rent.

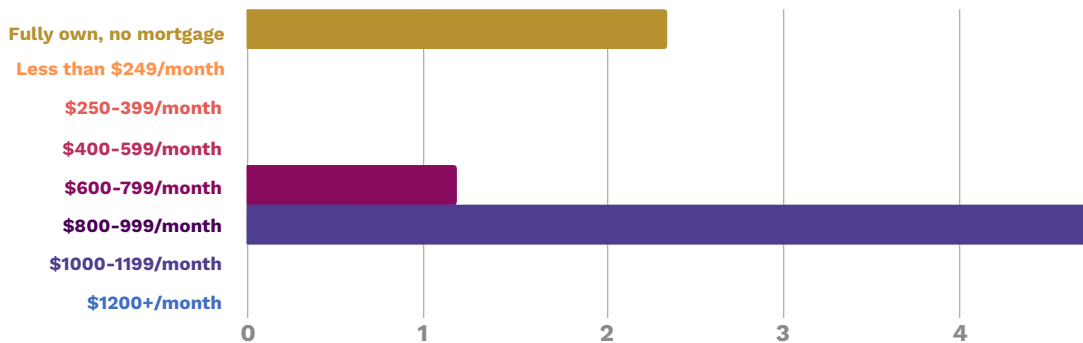


A majority (63%) of renters have at least one utility included within their rent payment, while 38% of renters pay rent inclusive of all utilities (water/sewer, electricity, and gas).



MONTHLY MORTGAGE PAYMENTS

Of the 7 respondents who own their residence, the majority (57%) pay between \$800 and \$999 per month for their mortgage.



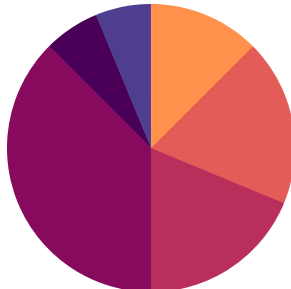
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

AFFORDABLE

- 0-9% of income
- 10-20% of income
- 21-30% of income

UNAFFORDABLE

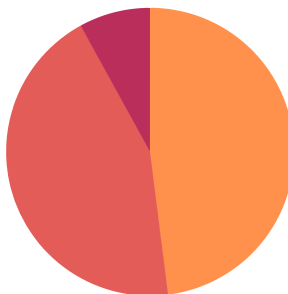
- 31-35% of income
- 36-40% of income
- 41% or more of income



Housing is considered “affordable” if no more than 30% of a household’s gross income is spent on rent/ mortgage and essential utilities combined. For the Cuyama farmworker respondents who paid a rent or mortgage, 50% indicated housing expenses above 30% of their income.

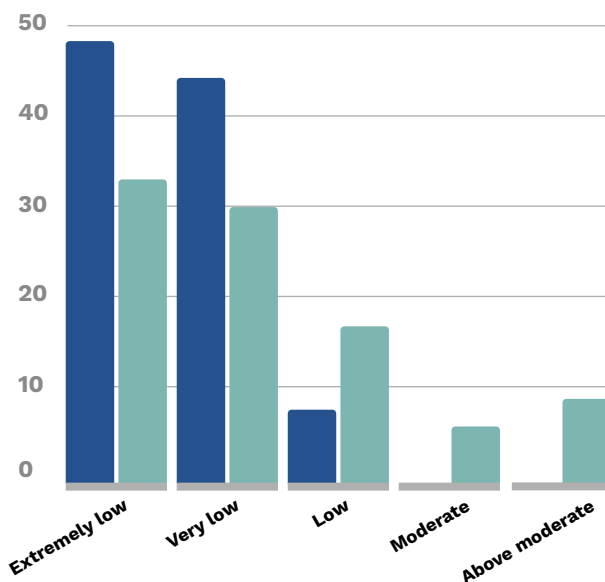
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Using the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD’s) annual assessment of county-level thresholds for household income levels*, 100% of survey respondents are at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI), and therefore would be considered “low income” households.



- \$0-2507 or “extremely low income”
- \$2508-4178 or “very low income”
- \$4179-6691 or “low income”
- \$6692-7957
- \$7958+

*2017 HUD thresholds for Santa Barbara County for a 4-person household

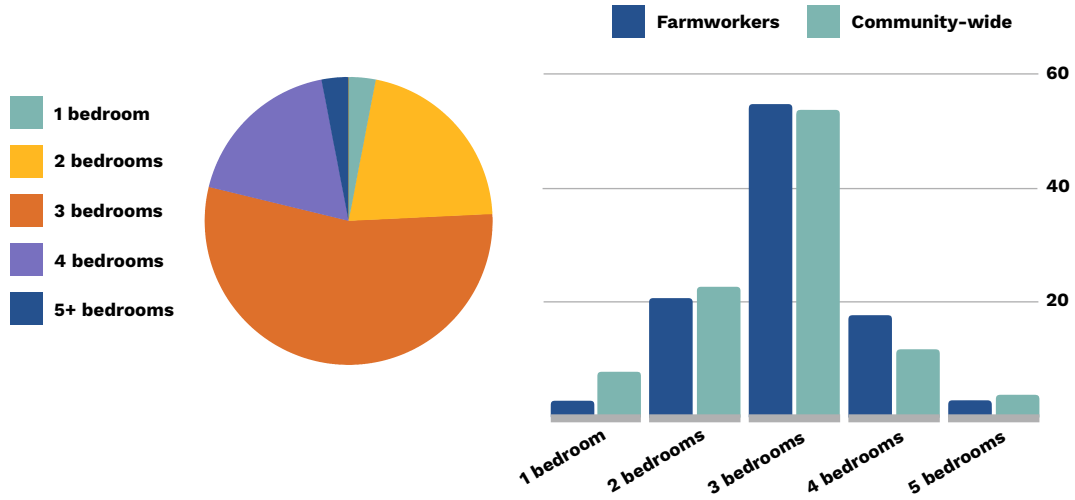


- Farmworkers
- Community-wide

When comparing the Cuyama population as a whole to Cuyaman farmworkers specifically, both household income and housing affordability is lower among farmworker households.

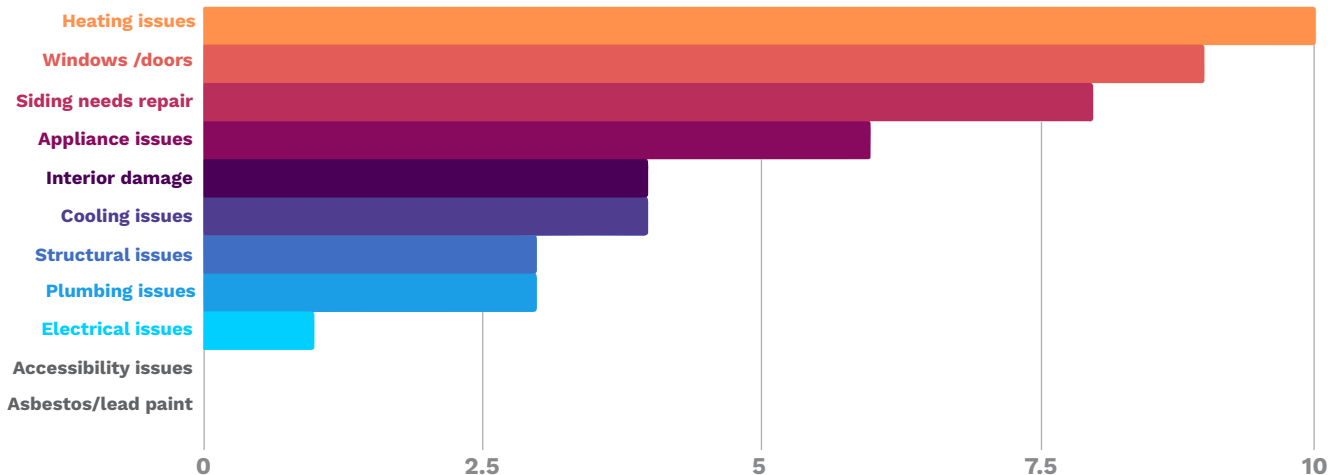
HOUSING SIZE

Cuyama farmworker households are large, with 76% of homes having three or more bedrooms. The size of homes are congruent between the broader Cuyama population and the Cuyama farmworker population.



CURRENT HOUSING CONDITIONS

A series of eight (8) questions sought to understand the current housing conditions of Cuyama farmworkers. Although the overall physical conditions and size of home presented the most satisfaction among most respondents, the heating and cooling systems received the most negative rates of satisfaction. The number of bathrooms, amount of space in general, and quality of water received mid-range concern of respondents as a whole. Specifically regarding more narrowly identified components of the house, heating issues, the conditions of windows and doors, and the need for repairs on exterior siding account for the top three housing needs indicated by respondents.



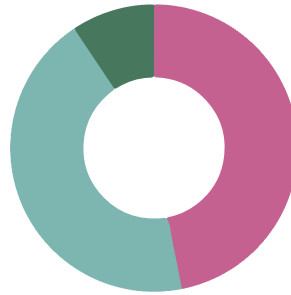
DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?



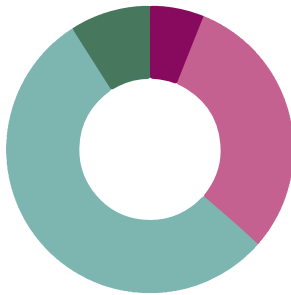
The physical conditions of my home are sufficient.



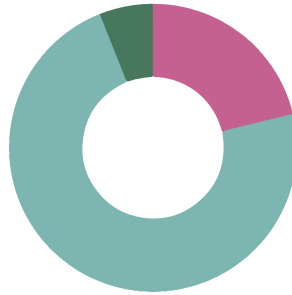
The heating system in my home is sufficient.



The cooling system in my home is sufficient.



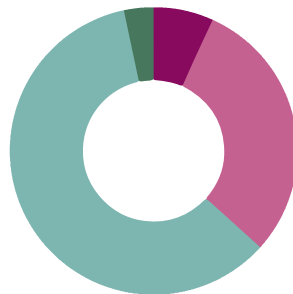
The number of bedrooms in my home is sufficient.



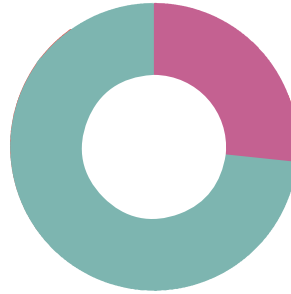
The number of bathrooms in my home is sufficient.



The quality of water in my home is sufficient.



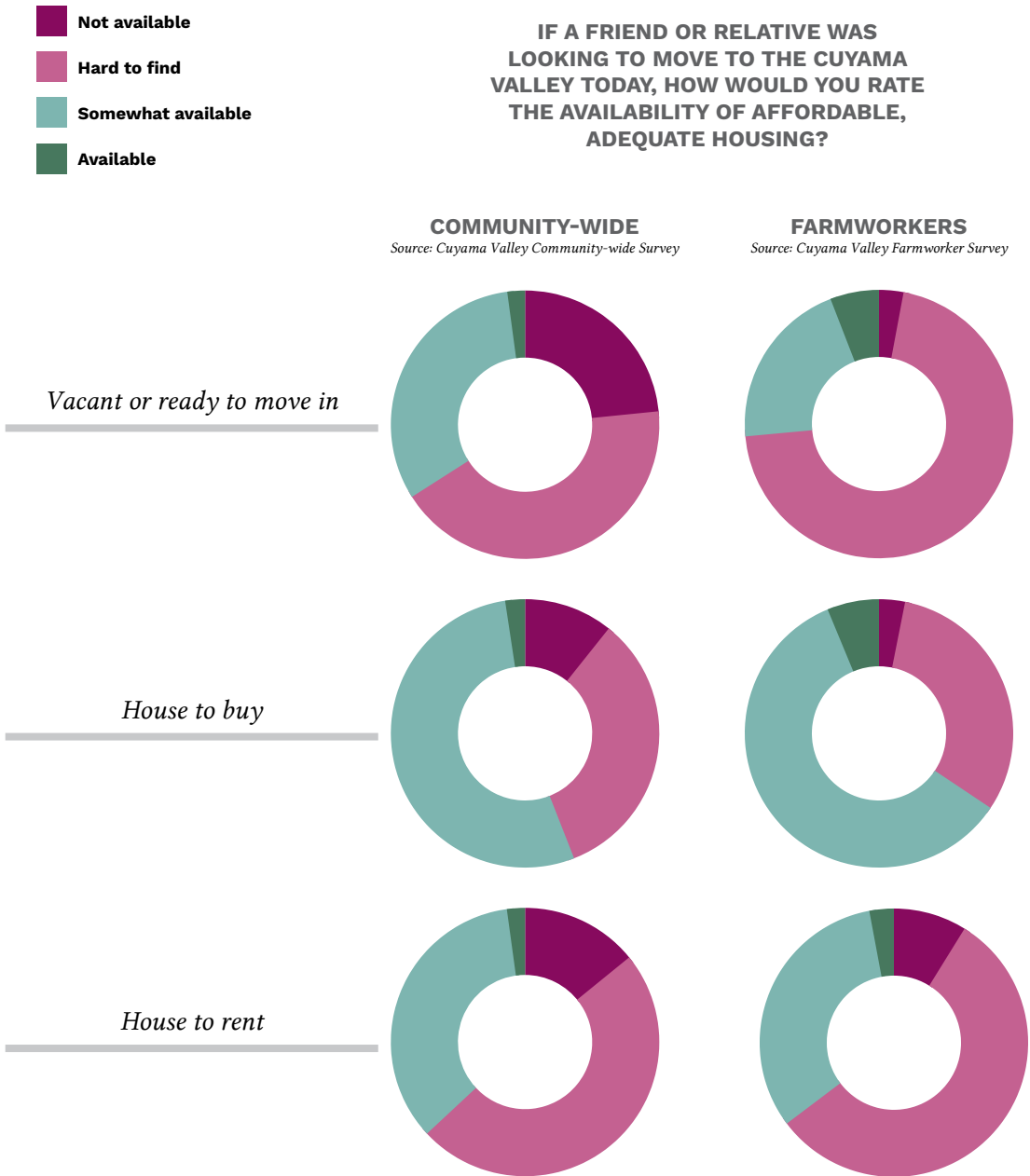
The amount of living space in my home is sufficient.



HOUSING AVAILABILITY PERCEPTIONS

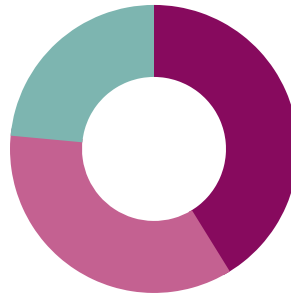
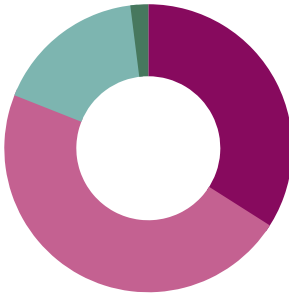
Among the options (from negative to positive) of “poor,” “fair,” “good,” and “excellent,” 59% of farmworker respondents perceive available housing as “poor” and another 35% as fair, with only 3% as “good” and 0% as “excellent.”

With the prompt of, “If a friend of relative was looking to move to the Cuyama Valley today, how would you rate the availability of affordable, adequate housing,” Cuyaman farmworkers closely mirrored the community-wide perceptions collected in the prior survey. **Housing of any type—with the one exception of a house to buy—was perceived by a majority of respondents in both surveys as unavailable.**

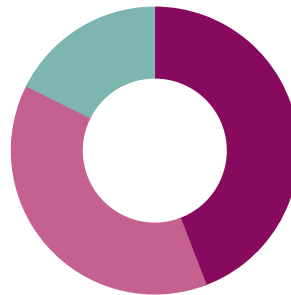
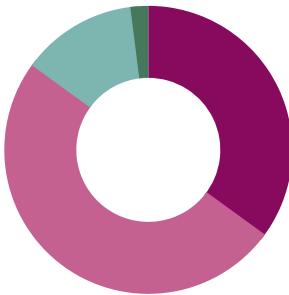


COMMUNITY-WIDE
Source: Cuyama Valley Community-wide Survey

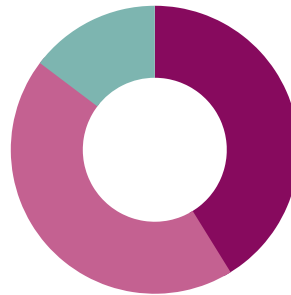
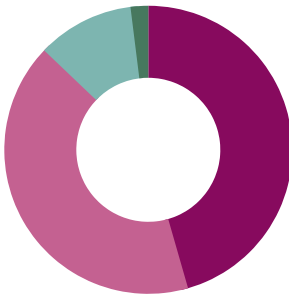
FARMWORKERS
Source: Cuyama Valley Farmworker Survey



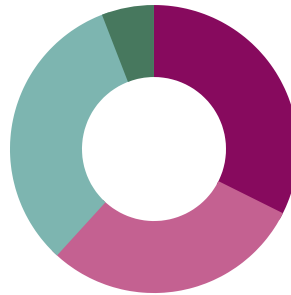
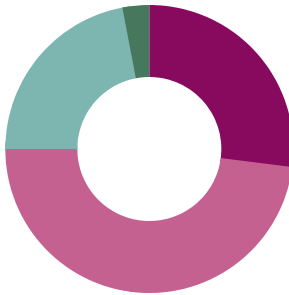
Trailer to buy



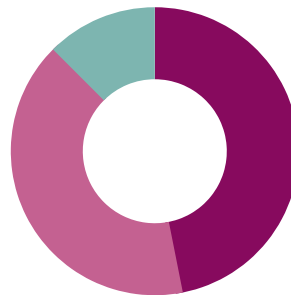
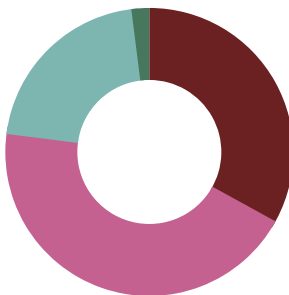
Trailer to rent



Apartment to rent



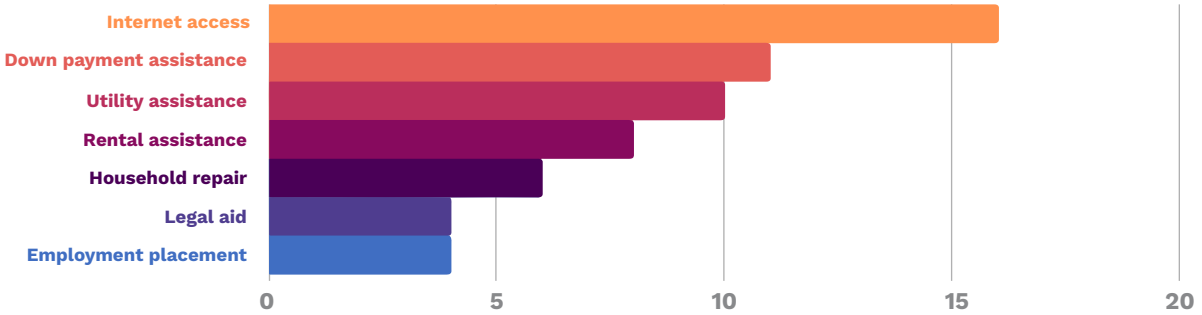
Bedroom to rent



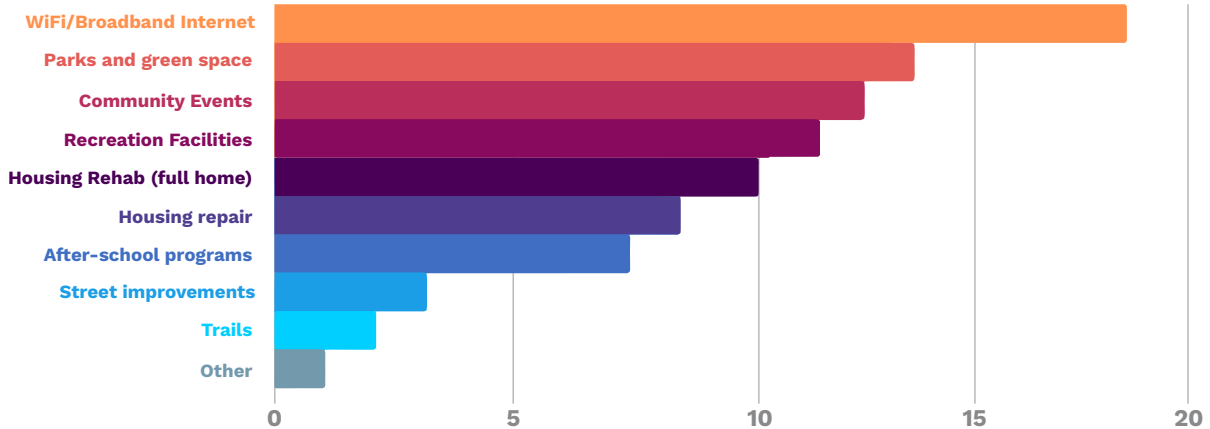
Fifth-wheel to rent

SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE DESIRED

When prompted as to what services are desired, if any, congruent with the community-wide data, internet access is the number one household need. Households would also benefit from down payment assistance to help aid renters looking to become homeowners, as well as utility assistance for either renters or owners and rental assistance for renters.

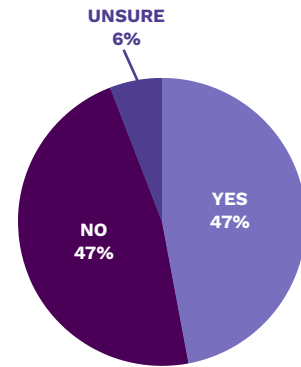


When prompted as to what “service, projects, or infrastructure... would you choose to direct funds toward,” again WiFi/broadband Internet infrastructure was the number one choice by farmworkers. Farmworkers identified as investing in parks/green space, community events, and recreation facilities as their next top desires. Housing improvements (rehab and repair) were 5th- and 6th-most desired, out of the nine (9) options provided by the survey.



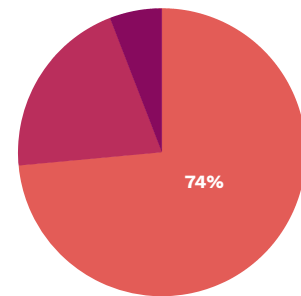
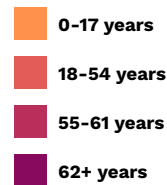
RESIDENCY STATUS

For many housing assistance programs as well as access to bank financing, a person's citizenship or permanent residency status can affect their eligibility. In Cuyama, nearly 1-in-2 respondents indicated their current status may affect their eligibility for federal programs that require permanent residency or citizenship.



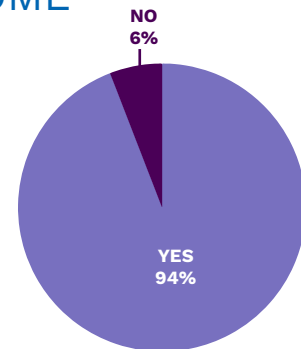
AGE OF RESPONDENTS

The vast majority (74%) of respondents were aged 18-54.



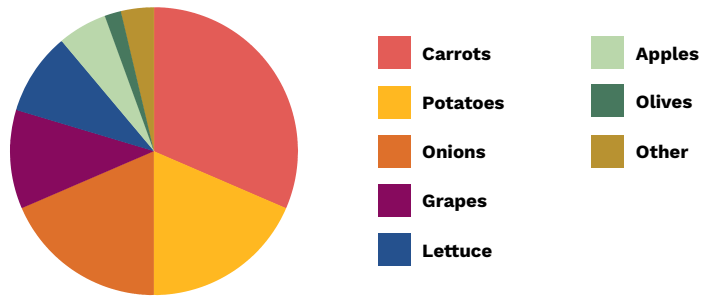
AGRICULTURE AS THE SOURCE OF INCOME

Of respondents, 94% indicated agricultural work was their main source of income, accounting for more than 50% of their household income.



PRIMARY CROPS

The primary products farmed by respondents tracks with the primary agricultural products of the Cuyama Valley.



COMMUTING TO WORK

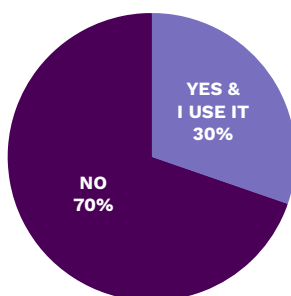
For the daily one-way commute, the average commute is 12.6 miles. Of respondents, 61% commuted 10 miles or less to work.

Employers provided transportation for 30% of respondents, which they used for their commute.

Of those commuting to work, a personal vehicle was used by 100% of the farmworkers. (No buses, hired cars, or other public transportation is available in the Cuyama Valley for commuters.)

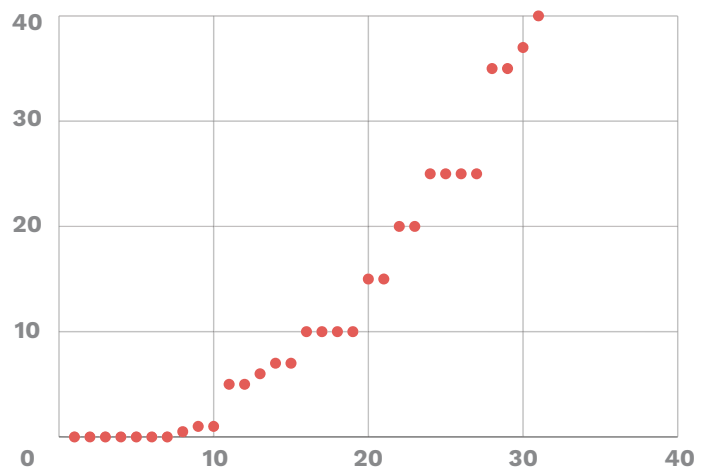
TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED

by the employer



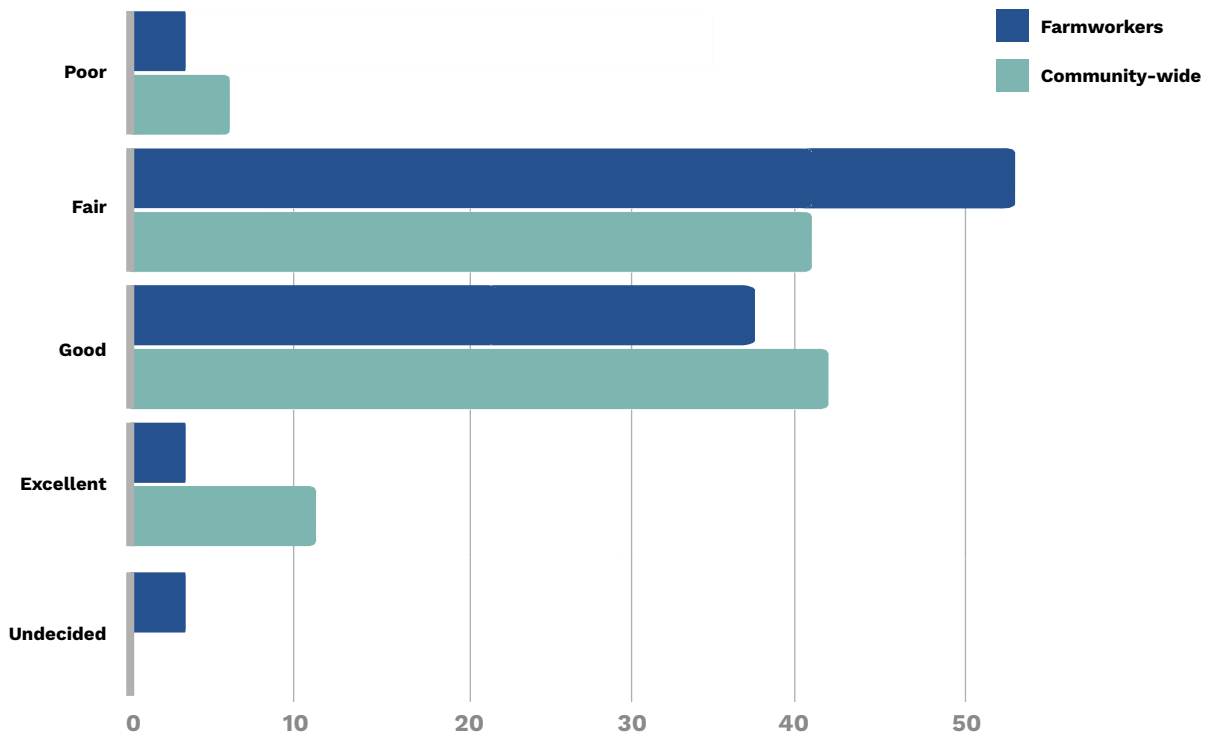
COMMUTE TIME, EACH WAY

Average time, 12.6 minutes



QUALITY OF LIFE

Comparing perception of quality of life between Cuyamans as a whole and Cuyama farmworkers specifically, fewer farmworkers rate their quality of life as “excellent” while a higher percentage rate their quality of life as “fair.”



Housing Partnerships and Funding Options

Partners Contributing to this Process

This report was created by Blue Sky Center (BSC) in partnership with Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC). It is a follow-up report to the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan, itself the result of a multi-year engagement led by Blue Sky Center and RCAC with the Cuyama Valley. The process that led to the development of the Community Action Plan and this special addendum involved input from housing-interested stakeholders including (in alphabetical order):

- California Coalition for Rural Housing: provided special expertise for the housing components of the Community Action Plan; representatives attended community meetings
- California Housing Partnership: representatives provided feedback and helped make other partnership connections; presented with Blue Sky Center at the 2019 Housing California conference on rural data gaps
- California Rural Legal Assistance: presented with Blue Sky Center at the 2019 Housing California conference on rural data gaps; contributed to the Cuyama Valley Resource and Business Directory
- California Strategic Growth Council: representatives attended community meetings
- County of Santa Barbara Department of Planning and Development: produced the Housing Element of the county's General Plan (covering unincorporated areas of the county, including the Cuyama Valley); provided feedback in the planning process; representatives attended community meetings
- County of Santa Barbara Department of Housing and Community Development: representatives attended community meetings
- County of Santa Barbara Community Services Department, Sustainability Division: developed a beautification project in New Cuyama over 2018-2021; representatives attended community meetings
- County of Santa Barbara District 1 Supervisor's Office (Supervisor Das Williams): provided general support and co-hosted the series of public community meetings leading to the Community Action Plan
- County of Santa Barbara Public Health Department: representatives attended community meetings
- Cuyama Community Services District: representatives attended community meetings
- Cuyama Joint Unified School District: representatives attended community meetings
- Cuyama Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency: representatives attended community meetings

- Enterprise Community Partners: provided funding via a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 4 grant to Blue Sky Center for the development of the Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan
- Frank Thompson Housing Consultants: representatives attended community meetings
- GRID Alternatives: representatives attended community meetings
- Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara: representatives attended community meetings
- Housing California: hosts the Housing California annual conference, at which Blue Sky Center presented (in 2019) with housing partners regarding the impact of rural data gaps on access to resources for rural residents
- People's Self-Help Housing: representatives attended community meetings
- Self-Help Enterprises: representatives communicated regarding potential Cuyama housing projects
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA RD): provided complimentary funding for economic development programming within the Cuyama Valley through an Rural Business Development Grant; representatives attended community meetings

Potential Housing Partners Serving the Cuyama Valley

Potential partners for the development of affordable workforce housing in the Cuyama Valley, from existing home repair and rehab to new single-family or multi-family construction, are identified as follows (in alphabetical order):

- County of Santa Barbara Department of Housing and Community Development: responsible for administering federal, state, and local funds for housing
- County of Santa Barbara Department of Planning and Development: the regulatory authority of the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County, including most of the Cuyama Valley
- County of Santa Barbara District 1 Supervisor's Office: local elected official's office for the Cuyama Valley
- Frank Thompson Housing Consultants: for-profit multi-family housing developer with experience and interest in the region
- GRID Alternatives: nonprofit organization that installs solar power systems and provides job training
- Habitat for Humanity (San Luis Obispo, Kern, and Ventura County residences only): nonprofit single-family housing organization with repair/preservation and new home construction programs

- Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara: builds, acquires, owns, manages and maintains residential rental units for persons of very low and low income and obtains rent payment assistance for similar households renting in the private market
- People’s Self-Help Housing: nonprofit multi-family housing developer in the Central Coast
- Self-Help Enterprises: nonprofit multi-family housing developer in the Central Valley
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA RD): provides low-interest loans and grants for home repair, rehab, and new construction for rural residents

Potential Funding Sources

Potential funding sources for housing projects in Cuyama include, but are not limited to, the following:

→ Federal funds:

- [Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) Program](#)
- [HOME Investment Partnerships \(HOME\) Program and County In-Lieu Funds](#)
- [USDA Single Family Housing Direct Home Loans \(502 Program\)](#)
- [USDA Single Family Housing Repair Loans & Grants \(504 Program\)](#)
- [Low-Income Housing Tax Credit \(LIHTC\) Program](#)

→ State funds:

- [Joe Serna, Jr. Farmworker Housing Grant \(FWHG\) Program](#)
- [Permanent Local Housing Allocation \(PLHA\) Program](#)
- [California No Place Like Home \(NPLH\) Program](#)

→ Private and mixed funding:

- Habitat for Humanity’s New Construction and Repair/Preservation programs (San Luis Obispo, Kern, and Ventura County residences only)
- Senior Home Repair Program (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Kern County residences only, via Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara & The Area Agency on Aging, Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo, Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department)
- Weatherization Programs from Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara, Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo, Community Action of Ventura County, and Community Action Partnership of Kern

More Resources

More information on Cuyama Valley-specific housing resources can be found in the Cuyama Valley Resource and Business Directory, available online at blueskycenter.org/resource-directory.



Appendices

This report, along with links to the appendices listed below, can be found at: blueskycenter.org/housing

- A. [Cuyama Valley Farmworker Housing Survey, as administered, presented in Spanish and English](#) (2020, Blue Sky Center and Rural Community Assistance Corporation)
- B. [New Cuyama Housing Assessment](#) (2017, Blue Sky Center)
- C. [New Cuyama Home Value Report](#) (2018, Blue Sky Center)
- D. [Cuyama Valley Community Action Plan](#) (2020, Blue Sky Center, RCAC, and CCRH)
- E. [Cuyama Valley Resource Directory](#) (2020, Blue Sky Center and CVCA)
- F. [County of Santa Barbara Housing Element](#) (2015-2023)
- G. [Water Census Report](#) (2020, Casey Walsh of the University of California, Santa Barbara)
- H. [Direct Economic Impact Analysis of the Cuyama Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Demand Management Program](#) (2019, ERA Economics LLC for the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency)



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