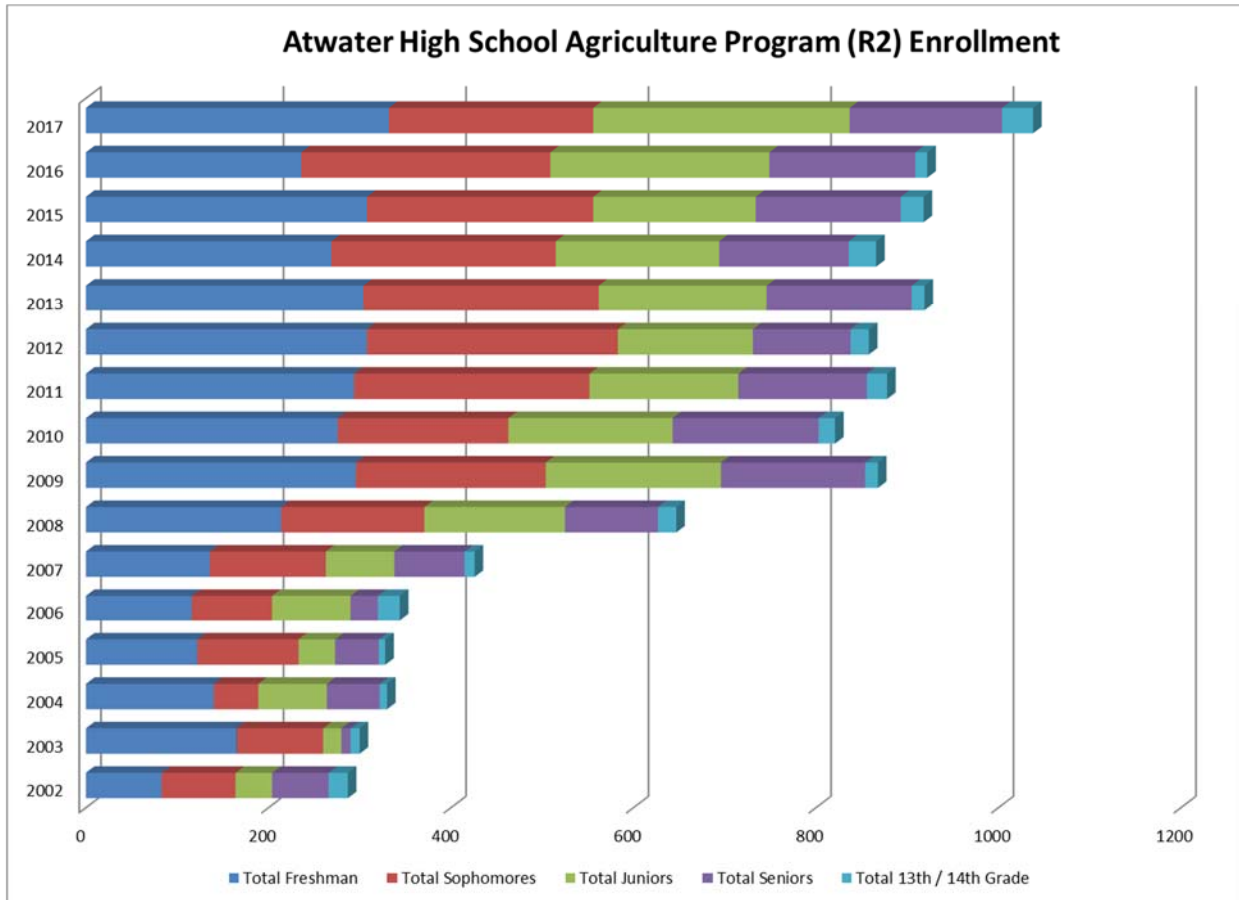


**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Atwater High School Agriculture Program Overview / Data



The above chart represents the growth and development of the Atwater High School agriculture program. Data numbers represent the total INDIVIDUAL agriculture students enrolled in at least one agriculture course within the overall student population of (general current) 1850 individual student population on campus. 2002 – 2017 time frame represents time frame of most senior current agriculture staff within department. “R-2” is associated with the California Department of Education’s (CDE) required data for the state’s Agriculture Incentive Grant which also calls for program review (accountability) by CDE staff every three years. More information is available at [www.calaged.org](http://www.calaged.org).

**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Expanded Agriculture Education Cluster / Course Pathways (Beginning 2017-2018 School Year)



## Agriculture & Natural Resources



### Industry Sector Descriptor

The Agriculture and Natural Resources sector is designed to provide a foundation in agriculture for all agriculture students in California. Students engage in an instructional program that integrates academic and technical preparation and focuses on career awareness, career exploration, and skill preparation in various pathways. The pathways emphasize real-world, occupationally relevant experiences for students in Merced Union High School District. Integral components of classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience projects, and leadership and interpersonal skills development prepare students for continued training, advanced educational opportunities, and entry to a career.

PATHWAY	Ag Mechanics Small Engines	Ag Mechanics Welding	Ag Mechanics Wood	Agri-Business	Agriscience	Animal Science	Ornamental Horticulture
<b>INTRO COURSE</b>	Ag Shop Skills ♦	Ag Shop Skills ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Welding Ag Shop Skills ♦	Ag Shop Skills ♦	Explorations in Ag	Explorations in Ag	Explorations in Ag	Explorations in Ag
<b>CONCENTRATION</b>	Small Engines ♦	Welding Technology 1 ♦	Ag Wood 1	Ag Business Management ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Communications + ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Gov / Ag Econ ++ ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Leadership & Technology ♦	Ag Biology ++ ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Earth ++ ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Environmental Science	Animal Anatomy & Physiology ++	Floral 1 ++ ♦ ♦
<b>CAPSTONE</b>	Advanced Small Engines ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Diesel Ag Mechanics	Welding Technology 2 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Equipment Construction 1 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Equipment Construction 2 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦	Ag Wood 2 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Ag Wood 3	Ag Sales & Marketing + ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Internships in Ag ♦	Ag & Soil Chemistry ++	Veterinary Science ++ ♦ ♦	Environmental Horticulture ++ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ Floral 2

+ Pending A-G Approval    ++ A-G Approved Course  
 ♦ Articulated with Merced College Course.    ♦♦ Articulated with Modesto Junior College Course.    Articulation varies by campus.

The above chart represents an expanded agriculture cluster pathway/sequence of courses that will be offered to students beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. This “expansion” in student access and opportunities results from a recently approved expanded 7 period day regular district/school schedule that was previously a 6 period day schedule. Courses that were not offered during the 2014-2018 school years include (Agri-Business) Ag Business management, Ag Communications, Ag Sales and Marketing, (Agriscience) Ag and Soil Chemistry, (Animal Science) and Animal Anatomy and Physiology. These courses will be offered/expanded to students within our program beginning with the 2018-2019 school year to provide students expanded access and opportunities in agriculture industry related sectors.

Many of the courses identified (coded) represent core graduation credit(s), University of California / California State University application credit, community college articulation credit, and soon-to-be-implemented industry recognized/approved student certification credit/opportunities. More information of our districts/school CTE sectors are available at: [www.muhsd.org/educational-services/cte](http://www.muhsd.org/educational-services/cte)

**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Staff Assignments and Responsibilities at the Atwater High School Agriculture Program

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Years with Atwater High School Agriculture Department</b>	<b>Current Courses Taught</b>	<b>Career Development Events (CDE's) Coached</b>	<b>Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE's) Projects/Programs Advised</b>	<b>California Agricultural Teachers' Association (CATA) Service</b>	<b>National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE) Service</b>
Dave Gossman	16 years	Ag Earth Science, Env. Horticulture	Milk Quality and Dairy Foods, Nursery and Landscape	Swine	Sectional, Regional, and State Chairs/Office  Vision 2030 Director	Regional Public Policy Committee Chair
Sam Meredith	14 Years	Ag Shop Skills, Welding Tech I, Welding Tech II, Welding Tech III, Equipment Construction	Agriculture Mechanics, Land and Soil Evaluation	Ag Mechanics  Poultry	Sectional Office/Chairs  CATA/FFA Adult Board	
Dan Flatt	12 Years	Ag Shop Skills, Ag Wood I, Ag Wood II, Ag Wood III, Advanced Small Engines / Power Mechanics	Poultry	Ag Mechanics  Poultry		
Natalie Borba	8 Years	Ag Biology, Ag Food Science, Ag Leadership	Cotton, Meats, Creed Speaking	Market and Breeding Goats	Sectional Office/Chairs	
Shelby West	5 Years	Exploration in Agriculture, Small Engines, Veterinary Science	Novice/Advance Parliamentary, Procedure Small Engines	Market and Breeding Beef  Rabbits	Sectional Office/Chairs	
Kaylyn Davenport	4 Years	Floral Design I, Floral Design II	Floriculture, Marketing Plan, Prepared Public Speaking	Floral		
Kim Macintosh	4 Years	Ag Life Science, Ag Biology, Ag Economics / Government	Agronomy, Poultry, Extemporaneous Speaking	Dairy Heifers		
Jose Vargas	1 Year	Exploration in Agriculture, Ag Shop Skills, Ag Earth Science	Vegetable Crops Job Interview Best Informed Greenhand	Market and Breeding Sheep		

Our staff is assigned to teach, supervise, and advise based on each of the staff's strengths. We all have different experiences that allow for us to teach our students industry-related skills they can use to ensure and develop career success. Additional help/resources are obtained through community/industry relations.





**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Program Marketing and Promotion - Website

**Atwater FFA**  
 Atwater High School Agriculture Department  
 Atwater FFA  
 PO Box 835 / 2201 Fruitland Ave  
 Atwater, CA 95301  
 Office: 209-357-6025  
 Fax: 209-357-6067

Home | About Us | Agriculture Courses | Ag Links | Atwater High School | Calendar

**Academic Success, Premier Leadership, Skill Development, and Career Exploration.**

**News / Photos**  
 Our accounting firm is here to help you and your business. From any accounting needs you might have to tax planning for your upcoming goals and dreams, we're here to help you achieve your dreams.

**Fundraisers**  
 Our Atwater FFA Take-Out BBQ #2 is on Thursday, December 14th. Tickets go on sale at the end of November. For more information on this fundraiser and all other upcoming fundraisers, please click below.

**Program Supporters**  
 Need assistance with your tax planning? Don't we all. We've got you and your business goals and objectives in mind. You and all your tax planning needs are in expert hands. Leave it to us.

**FFA links**  
**The Ag Experience Tracker**  
 The premiere job-based online system for tracking experiences in agriculture/education.

**California FFA**  
 California FFA is a high school youth leadership and career development organization.

**California FFA Chapter Web Links**  
 This list provides a list of all the California high schools with an agriculture/FFA program. Links to their chapter websites are available by clicking the school.

**National FFA**  
 FFA is an international student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership.

**Teach Ag**  
 Agriculture education is in HIGH DEMAND in California. Agriculture program enrollment continues to rise.

**Cal Ag License Plate**  
 You can help support agricultural education and the California program by purchasing a special interest license plate.

**Upcoming Events**

- FFA Greenhand Officer Interviews  
Mon, Nov 13, 2017
- FFA Greenhand / Chapter Degree Banquet  
Wed, Nov 15, 2017
- Ag Staff Department Meeting  
Wed, Nov 15, 2017 2:45pm - 3:00pm
- Cal Poly Student Teacher Field Trip Visit  
Thu, Nov 16, 2017 1:30pm - 3:30pm
- Thanksgiving Recess - No School  
Mon, Nov 20 to Fri, Nov 24, 2017
- Take-Out BBQ #2 Ticket Sales Begin  
Mon, Nov 27, 2017
- Ag Staff Department Meeting  
Wed, Nov 29, 2017 7:30am - 8:00am
- Mariposa FFA Speaking Invitational  
Sat, Dec 2, 2017
- NAAE Conference

**Live Commodities**

U S Coffee C	127.47
U S Sugar #11	14.98

Copyright © Atwater High School FFA  
 About Us | Agriculture Courses | Home | Ag Links

The Atwater High School Agriculture Program and the Atwater FFA created a website in 2006 ([www.AtwaterFFA.org](http://www.AtwaterFFA.org)) to help promote, inform, and communicate with students, families, communities, and industry.

The components of the website include:

- \* Student Leadership
- \* Staff Information
- \* Calendar of Events/Activities
- \* Program Information
- \* Industry Support
- \* Industry / Agriculture Links
- \* Agriculture Courses
- \* CTE / Pathway / Curriculum
- \* Events / Press Releases
- \* Links / Access to Various School/Industry Sites and resources.

The webpage is currently being updated/revised (seen on left) and will be released December 2017.

The website is managed and operated by staff and students within the Atwater High School Agriculture/FFA Program.

**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Central Region Agricultural Education Career Pathways Consortium ([www.craeccpt.org](http://www.craeccpt.org))



The Central Region Agricultural Education Career Pathway Consortium, the recipient of a California Career Pathways Trust grant of \$15,000,000 to improve, expand and initiate Agricultural Mechanics, Agriscience and Ornamental Horticulture career pathways.

The CRAECP Consortium consists of twenty-three high school districts which include thirty-six high schools; three community colleges; and three universities. This regional partnership is one of 40 consortia across California that comprise the second round recipients of grants provided through the California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) program. This is the largest program of its kind in the nation. The program is providing nearly \$500 million in career tech grants over two rounds of grants.

The focus of the CRAECP consortium grant is to blend academic and agricultural career technical education, connect employers with schools, and train students for jobs in high-demand fields associated with Agricultural Mechanics, Agriscience and Ornamental Horticulture.

The Atwater High School Agriculture Program staff had directly involvement in the writing and submission of the grant to the state. Beginning in 2015-2016, numerous grant writing committee workshops were created to write the grant and gather/implement data.

Currently, the program staff has 5 of the (current 8) program staff serving directly in the agriculture mechanics, agriscience, and ornamental horticulture sectors involved in creating NEW agriculture and industry-recognized certifications. The development of a "Tier" certification program is currently in place with a pilot implementation scheduled to be initiated and implemented Spring 2018. The staff and agriculture program at Atwater High School has been directly involved in the leadership and effort regarding this expanded aspect of industry relationships and industry-recognized certifications.

**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Evidence of Program and Student Success

California Agriculture Teachers Association Outstanding Agriscience Teacher- 2011  
California Agriculture Teachers Association Outstanding Secondary Agriculture Education Program- 2010  
California Agriculture Teachers Association Outstanding Secondary Agriculture Education Program- 2014  
California Agriculture Teachers Association Outstanding Young Member Teacher- 2015  
National Outstanding Agriscience Teacher- 2011  
National Outstanding Secondary Agriculture Education Program- 2014  
National Outstanding Young Member Teacher- 2015

FFA Degrees 2005-Present

American FFA Degrees – 13  
State FFA Degrees – 202

State Star Awards

Star Advisor, Star Administrator, Star Councilor, Star Reporter

Proficiency Awards and Star Awards

- National Finalists: Landscape Management - Gold 2016
- State Winners: Landscape Management - 2016
- Regional (Sectional) Winners:
  - Poultry Production- 2016, 2017
  - Small Animal – 2016, 2015
  - Landscape Management – 2016, 2015
  - Ag Education – 2016
  - Ag Sales - 2016
  - Small Animal Production - 2017

FFA Officers

17 Merced Mariposa FFA Sectional Officers  
8 Central FFA Region Officers  
4 State Officers – 2014 State FFA President  
Merced Mariposa Sectional Advisor

Career Development Events

*Teams coached*

- Ag Mechanics- State Champions 2014
- Agronomy- State Champions 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017
- Best Informed Greenhand
- Cotton Judging- State Champions 2013, 2014
- Creed Speaking
- Dairy Products- State Champions- 2005, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016
- Extemporaneous Speaking- State Champion 2016- National Winner 2016

- Floriculture- State Champions 2006, 2017
- Horse Judging- State Champions- 2010
- Job Interview Team
- Land and Soils Evaluation
- Marketing Plan- State Champions 2016, National Champion 2016
- Meats
- Nursery and Landscape- State Champion 2009, 2017
- Opening Closing Ceremonies Team
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Poultry Judging
- Prepared Public Speaking
- Scrapbook- State Champions 2009, 2016
- Small Engines
- Vine Judging – State Champions 2015

### FFA Leadership Activities

Advanced Leadership Academy  
 Chapter Officer Leadership Conference  
 Greenhand Conference  
 Made for Excellence Conference  
 National Convention  
 Sacramento Leadership Experience  
 State Conference  
 Washington Leadership Conference

### National Chapter Award

State Level 2012-Present  
 National Level 2012-Present  
 Superior Chapter Award 2002-Present

### California Agriculture Teachers Association

100% participation CATA Summer Conference  
 100% participation Sectional and Regional Meeting  
 CATA Governing Board Meetings  
 CATA Member (All Staff Members)  
 Central Region Agricultural Education Career Pathways Consortium- Grant Writers  
 Central Region CATA Region Chairs  
 Central Regional Road Show Attendees  
 CRAECPC- CTE Certification Committee Writers  
 New Professional Leadership Institute Attendees  
 Served through Merced Mariposa CATA Sectional Chairs (4 of 8 teachers)  
 State CATA Committee Chairs  
 State FFA Adult Board Member  
 State FFA Advisory Committee Member  
 Teacher of Excellence Award Winners



Professional Development Presenters

CATA Sectional, Regional, and State Workshops  
CATA Summer Conference CDE Chairs  
CATA Summer Conference In-Service  
NAAE Region I Conference  
National Agriculture Association of Educators Conference  
National FFA Convention  
New Professionals Leadership Institute  
State FFA Conference  
Various Region Roadshows

National Association of Agriculture Educators

Member (8 of 8 teachers)  
NAAE Convention Delegate  
Region I Public Policy Committee Chair (1 member)

Cooperating Teacher

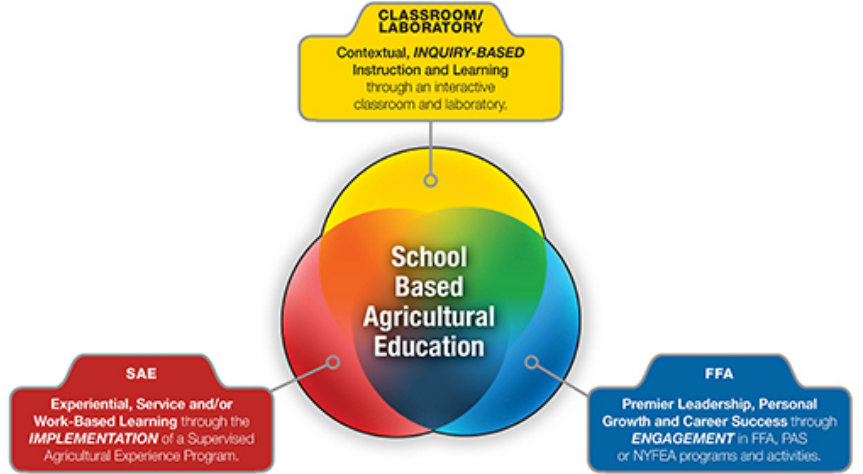
CSU, Fresno Cooperating Teacher – 18 Student Teachers  
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo- 10

Other Professional Memberships held by our Instructors

American Dairy Goat Association  
Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE)  
Atwater High School Site Council Members  
CA Association of Nursery and Garden Centers (CANGC)  
California Association of Nurserymen  
California Pork Producers  
California Science Teachers Association  
California Teachers Association  
California Women for Agriculture  
Farm Bureau  
Fresno State Ag Advisory Committee  
Merced Union High School District CTA Association  
National Association of Agriculture Educators (NAAE)  
National Association of Landscape Professionals  
National Educator Association  
Sports Turf Management Association  
WASC Accreditation Committee  
Young Farmers and Ranchers

**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

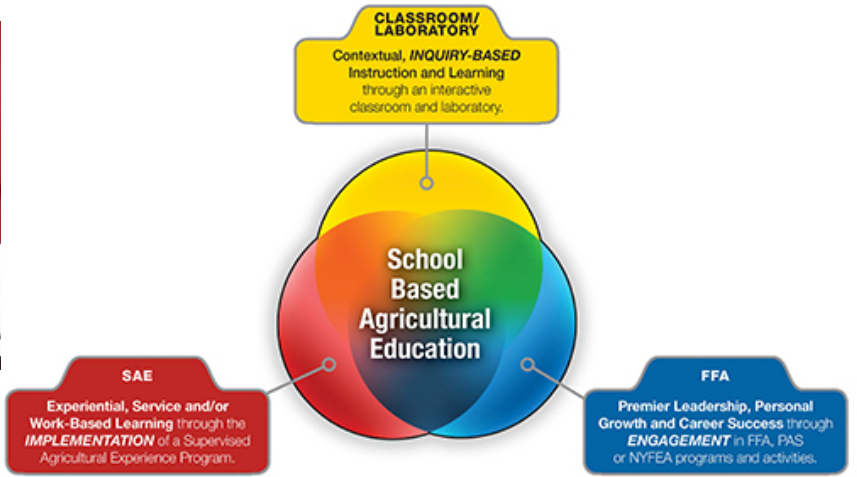
Evidence of Program and Student Success - Classroom





**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

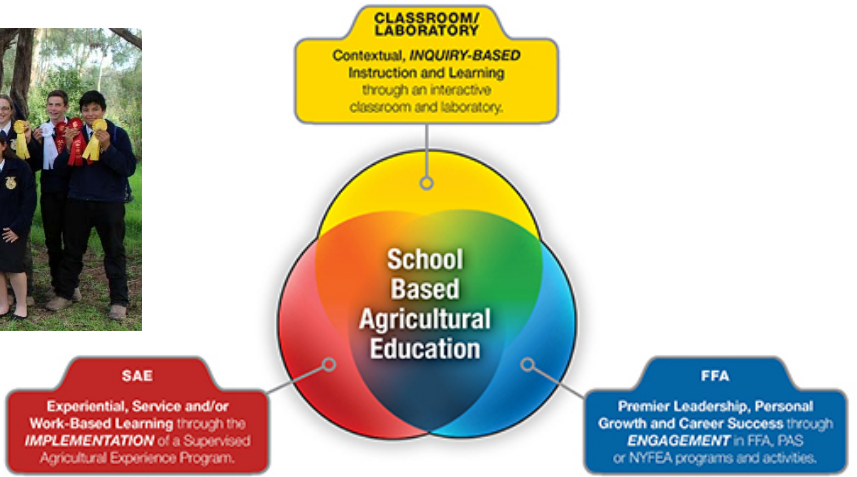
Evidence of Program and Student Success - SAE





**Excellence in Action Application – Supporting Documents**  
 Atwater High School – Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Career Cluster

Evidence of Program and Student Success - FFA





CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

**TOM TORLAKSON**

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

November 15, 2017

Excellence in Action Award Selection Committee

National Association of State Directors of CTE Consortium

8484 Georgia Ave., Suite 320

Silver Springs, MD 20910

Dear Selection Committee:

It is a pleasure and honor for me to write this letter of recommendation for the Atwater High School Agriculture Program for consideration as the Excellence in Action Program of the Year Award recipient in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Cluster.

The Atwater High School Agriculture Program is without question one of the premiere secondary agriculture programs in California! It features a tremendous instructional program and one of the best student leadership programs in the state. Under the guidance of Dave Gossman, Agriculture Department Chairman, the program over the last five years has earned an impressive number of state and national awards which includes: 86 State FFA Degree recipients, 5 American FFA Degree recipients, 16 State FFA Championship teams, 1 State Proficiency winners, 3 State FFA Officer, 2 National Championships, and 9 National FFA Scholarship winners.

The Atwater High School Agriculture Program has an innovative and exemplary instructional program that features nine integrated courses that meet University of California "a-g" admission requirements. The seven-member staff is very experienced and highly talented which is one of the reasons the program has produced numerous outstanding student success stories and grown to its present size of 915 FFA students which makes Atwater the fifth largest FFA chapter in the nation. Further, this agriculture program is very ethnically diverse with over 50 percent of their agriculture students Hispanic.



What I most admire about agriculture staff at Tulare is their "determination" and "drive" to ensure that each and every agriculture student that they teach is provided with the necessary educational foundation to achieve success. Their goal-oriented approach to education is refreshing and has produced scores of outstanding curricular results with students at Atwater High School.

Finally, I can think of no better or qualified program to receive this prestigious award than the Atwater High School Agriculture Program. They are simply the best in the business in California!

I wholeheartedly recommend the Atwater High School Agriculture Program for your consideration as the Excellence in Action Program of the Year Award recipient in the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Cluster. If you require any additional information on this outstanding and innovative agriculture program, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. McCabe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a stylized "M" at the end.

Dr. Lloyd L. McCabe, State AgEd Supervisor

Agriculture Education Unit

California Department of Education

(916) 319-0673

lmccabe@cde.ca.gov

5641 Mulberry Ave.  
Atwater, CA 95301

November 13, 2017

Career Technical Education  
Award Selection Committee

Dear Review Committee,

It is my honor to write this letter to urge you to select Atwater High School Agricultural Program for the Excellence in Action Award. I have witnessed the continued growth and improvement of the Atwater High School agriculture program as an involved agricultural industry member (Director of Education & Public Relations with Hilmar Cheese Company, a leading cheese and whey processor) and then as a parent of twins.

Atwater High School has developed relationships with local businesses, agriculture businesses, media and elected officials. Once you contribute (time, talents or resources), it is easy to see why the community supports the program. Continuous communication about program success, students contributing back to the local community and helping local ag businesses and most importantly genuine appreciation from teachers and students make Atwater FFA a solid investment.

Atwater High School offers a large variety of judging team and career technical events along with relevant coursework to align with local career needs and also prepare students for college. There are courses articulated with Merced Junior College to jump start a student's college career.

As a parent of Atwater High ag program graduates, I know the ag teachers are actually better than the school counselors at teaching the students about college applications, scholarships and requirements. The students are also supported by teachers as they transition to college.

Atwater High Ag program involves students in a variety of local work-based learning experiences. Hundreds of the students, many for the first time, participate in supervised agricultural experience. The program aligns to the workforce. This last summer, my daughter had the opportunity to be hired by a local sweet potato grower and work in the office. There were many students placed in local ag businesses and farming operations learning first-hand the skills needed for the future.

California is one of only five agricultural regions in the world that has a Mediterranean growing climate, producing more than 400 commodities, more than any other state in the nation. California agricultural production was valued at more than \$47 billion accounting for more than 17.3% of total U.S. agricultural output. Merced county where Atwater High School is located is the sixth largest agriculture county in the state. The need for an informed population along and quality workforce is great and Atwater High school ag program answer that need.

If you have an questions regarding the high quality programs at Atwater High School Agricultural Program, please contact me. 209-631-4146.

Thank you,  
Denise Skidmore

