



News Release

February 13, 2017

AgPLUS, partners kick off 2017 Food Processing Expo at Workforce Summit

SACRAMENTO – Central Valley AgPLUS in partnership with California League of Food Processors and Zenith Insurance kicked off the 2017 Food Processing Expo following the Food Processing Workforce Summit on February 7. More than 70 participants attended the event, which addressed many challenges for Central Valley food processors including recruiting, training and retaining a strong workforce as well as how human resource managers can keep up with various regulation requirements. Trish Kelly, presenting for AgPLUS, moderated the morning session which featured an overview of the AgPLUS Consortium and the IMCP designation.

Summit panel discussions were represented by industry, education and government, and featured keynote speakers Tim Rainey, executive director of California Workforce Board, and Matthew Roberts, dean of Field Operations for Workforce and Economic Development Division, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Results of a survey conducted by CLFP were released at the event. The survey covered workforce issues for Central Valley food processors and how these can potentially affect initiatives dedicated to solving the skills gap in the industry. Fourteen companies indicated the positions they have the greatest need to fill include maintenance mechanics (93%), electricians (70%), boilers/process heater operators (55%), automation and controls/mechatronic specialists (44%) and machine operators (33%). Many of the positions listed also were named as ones anticipated as having a significant number of vacancies to fill within the next five years due to retirements and departures. You can view the results of the survey [here](#).

AgPLUS was one of 260 exhibitors at the Food Processing Expo on February 8 and 9. Thousands from around the world attended the Food Processing Expo making it the largest food processing tradeshow in California. Featured exhibits included machinery, equipment, supplies and other services, as well as informative sessions and industry-networking opportunities.

###

Central Valley AgPLUS Food and Beverage Manufacturing Consortium (AgPLUS) is an Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) designated region in Central California. Through a strategic partnership between the Office of Community and Economic Development at Fresno State, the Center for Economic Development at Chico State, and Valley Vision, AgPLUS is an unprecedented effort to bolster California's food manufacturing economy.

Contact:

Erik Cherkaski, Project Coordinator
559-278-4575
echerkaski@csufresno.edu

Office of Community and Economic Development
California State University, Fresno
550 E Shaw Ave, Suite 230
Fresno, CA 93710