

Program Endorsement Brief: 0109.10/Landscape Design and Maintenance **Wellness Gardening**

Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence, February 2019

Summary:

The Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to landscape design, **specifically, wellness gardening**. This report is intended to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from community college programs that align with relevant occupations.

Wellness or therapeutic gardens involve design methods that go beyond the typical landscape design process. Wellness gardens place an emphasis on designs that include plants that add therapeutic value. Concepts and themes include, but are not limited to, growing non-toxic plants, using fewer chemicals, water conservation, functionality, and ease of maintenance. This style of gardening is also intended to promote a healthier lifestyle by encouraging gardeners to grow natural vegetables and herbs, according to Shawna Coronado, the author of *The Wellness Garden*.¹

In recent years, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have promoted the development of wellness gardens in urban areas that are economically and socially disadvantaged. These areas include poor neighborhoods in Baltimore, Chicago, and Los Angeles, among others. The USDA and EPA programs tend to focus on growing healthy food to combat malnourishment in urban communities. An additional benefit is the development of community ties among local residents that maintain the gardens. One program in Chicago, the Windy City Harvest Program, employs at-risk adults who gain practical gardening skills to better prepare them for green jobs. In 2012, the Windy City Harvest Program grew nearly 70,000 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables, which was donated to the local Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).² Due to wellness gardening's relationship with landscape design, this report will focus on gardening design occupations within the larger landscape design occupation group.

Summary:

Traditional labor market data sources do not separate wellness gardening from traditional landscape design; therefore, it is difficult to determine the actual demand for wellness gardening occupations. Because there is not a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code that directly translates to the work for which this proposed program will prepare students, three related occupations ("First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers", "Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers", and "Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and

¹ <https://www.ewellnessmag.com/article/the-wellness-garden-grow-eat-and-walk-your-way-to-better-health-part-1>

² <https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2013/03/22/usda-and-epa-make-peoples-garden-blossom>

Applicators, Vegetation”) will be analyzed in this report using traditional labor market information and real-time job postings data. It should be noted that figures in the following exhibits are not exclusive to the jobs for which this proposed program prepares students.

The following summarizes key findings from this data brief:

- Wellness gardening-related occupations are projected to **increase by 3% through 2022**. Nearly **7,400 job openings** will be available annually due to new job growth and replacement need.
- In 2018, there were **31 online job postings** for wellness gardening-related occupations in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.
- **Zero related program recommendation requests under the same TOP Code** were received between January and December 2018.
- Between 2014 and 2017, community colleges in the region conferred an average of **58 awards annually** (associate degrees and certificates) in related training programs under the same TOP Code.

Occupational Demand—In Los Angeles/Orange County, the number of jobs related to wellness gardening is projected to increase by 3% through 2022. There will be nearly 7,400 job openings per year through 2022.

Exhibit 1: Occupational demand in Los Angeles and Orange Counties³

Geography	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2017-2022 Change	2017-2022 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	38,420	39,864	1,444	4%	4,927
Orange	19,884	20,451	567	3%	2,456
Total	58,304	60,315	2,011	3%	7,384

Wages—Average entry-level and median hourly wages for wellness gardening-related occupations are \$11.26 and \$13.63, respectively. Average entry-level wages for wellness gardening-related occupations are lower than the MIT Living hourly wage estimate for one adult in the region (\$13.51 in Los Angeles County and \$15.31 in Orange County). Experienced workers earn between \$20.37 and \$39.56, which is higher than the living wage estimate. Regional average wages are below the average statewide wage of \$15.70 for these occupations. Wage information, by county, is included in Appendix A.

Job Postings—In order to identify job postings closely related to wellness gardening, the following keywords/search terms were used across all occupations and industries: garden and landscape design. There were 31 online job postings related to wellness gardening listed in the past 12 months. The highest number of job postings are for landscape designer, gardener, and landscape foreman. Top specialized skills are: landscape design, customer service, and sales. The

³ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

top three employers, by number of job postings, in the region are: Armstrong Garden Centers Incorporated, The Farm Project, and Garden View Landscape Nursey & Pools.

Educational Attainment—The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists no formal educational credential or high school diploma or equivalent required as the typical entry-level education for these occupations. The national-level educational attainment data indicates that between 19% and 33.6% of workers in the field have completed some college or an associate degree. In Los Angeles/Orange County, 13% of job postings request a high school diploma and zero job postings requested an associate’s degree; however, 87% of postings did not include a specified level of education.

Community College Supply –Exhibit 2 shows the three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP code: Landscape Design and Maintenance (0109.10). The colleges/programs with the most completions in the region are: Mt. San Antonio and Saddleback. Though the other colleges listed in the table below have programs with the same TOP code, none of those programs have a specific emphasis on preparing students for wellness gardening. Between January and December 2018, there were no other related program recommendation requests from regional community colleges.

Exhibit 2: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2014-2017

TOP Code	Program	College	2014-15 Awards	2015-16 Awards	2016-2017 Awards	3-Year Award Average
0109.10	Landscape Design and Maintenance	Fullerton	6	6	8	7
		LA Pierce	7	3	0	3
		Mt San Antonio	43	25	20	29
		Saddleback	29	7	21	19
Total/Average			85	41	49	58

Appendix A: Occupational demand and wage data by county

Exhibit 3. Los Angeles County

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers (37-1012)	3,774	3,837	63	2%	392	\$13.87	\$16.62	\$38.66
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers (37-3011)	33,978	35,360	1,382	4%	4,452	\$11.04	\$13.19	\$20.98
Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators, Vegetation (37-3012)	668	667	(1)	(0%)	668	\$14.97	\$17.37	\$32.08
Total	38,420	39,864	1,444	4%	4,927			

Exhibit 4. Orange County

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers (37-1012)	1,771	1,804	33	2%	177	\$14.58	\$19.58	\$40.01
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers (37-3011)	17,956	18,485	529	3%	2,259	\$10.50	\$11.22	\$14.37
Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators, Vegetation (37-3012)	157	162	5	3%	21	\$13.63	\$16.37	\$19.69
Total	19,884	20,451	567	3%	2,456			

Exhibit 5. Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	2022 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers (37-1012)	5,546	5,641	95	2%	569	\$14.00	\$17.12	\$39.56
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers (37-3011)	51,934	53,845	1,911	4%	6,710	\$10.91	\$13.20	\$20.37
Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators, Vegetation (37-3012)	824	829	5	1%	104	\$14.48	\$16.91	\$30.63
Total	58,304	60,315	2,011	3%	7,384			

Appendix B: Sources

- O*NET Online
- Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)
- Economic Modeling Specialists, International (EMSI)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- Employment Development Department, Unemployment Insurance Dataset
- Living Insight Center for Community Economic Development
- California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- MIT Living Wage
- Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

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