



# County of Monterey

## Item No.4

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

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May 22, 2025

Introduced: 5/9/2025

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: General Agenda Item

- a. Receive a presentation from Reservoir Farms; and
- b. Consider providing support to Reservoir Farms for their funding request to the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Economic Development Committee:

- a. Receive a presentation from Reservoir Farms; and
- b. Consider providing support to Reservoir Farms for their funding request to the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors.

#### SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Reservoir Farms serves as a cutting-edge Research and Development facility tailored to the needs of rural startups. This unique resource provides startups with access to testing fields, enabling them to refine their products in a controlled environment before entering the market. Additionally, Reservoir Farms acts as a meeting ground for startups and growers, fostering collaboration and trust through real-world demonstration. With validation from the Western Growers Association, startups gain the credibility needed to build confidence within the agriculture community, helping to bridge the gap between innovation and adoption.

The Salinas Valley AgTech Alliance brings together Hartnell College, The Reservoir, Digital NEST, Rancho Cielo, Mujeres en Acción, and over a dozen major employers and growers to tackle a generational opportunity to make Salinas the global hub for agricultural automation while building a stronger, more inclusive economy for Monterey County.

With \$3M already committed for 2025 - including \$895K from the State of California via Uplift Central Coast and \$1.9M in private investment- Reservoir Farms is positioned to launch the world's first on-farm robotics incubator in Salinas in August 2025. The project is already catalyzing private sector involvement from industry leaders like Western Growers and Taylor Farms, while anchoring inclusive workforce efforts led by Hartnell College and community partners.

Over the next five years, the Alliance plans to support 50+ startups, create 500+ new jobs, engage 1,000+ students in AgTech, and drive over \$100M in capital investment.

Reservoir Farms is requesting that the County match either the \$1.9M in private commitments or the \$895K in state funding already secured for 2025.

County support will:

- Enable the August opening of Reservoir Farms and the expansion of Hartnell-led programming
- Demonstrate strong local commitment as they pursue additional state and federal support
- Fund critical planning, permitting, and implementation needs not covered elsewhere
- Signal to the private sector that Monterey County is serious about AgTech and the future of farm jobs

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County Counsel has reviewed this staff report.

FINANCING:

Receiving this report does not impact the County budget.

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Attachments:

Salinas Valley Ag Tech Alliance Letter