



Labor Market Analysis: 0102.40 – Equine Science

01.0307 – Horse Husbandry/Equine Science and Management

Equine Science – Associate of Science (A.S.) degree

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, August 2026

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met	☐	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met	☒	Not Endorsed	☐
Program Endorsement Criteria						
Supply Gap:	Yes	☒	No	☐		
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25 th)	Yes	☐	No	☒		
Education:	Yes	☒	No	☐		
Emerging Occupation(s)						
Yes		☐	No	☒		

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupations¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the four identified middle-skill occupations in the region. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, more than one-third of workers in the occupations with the majority of annual openings have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to two of three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 3,251 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2030. This number is greater than the three-year average of 52 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

- However, the occupations in this report work with all types of animals, including horses. Since these SOC codes do not solely represent equine science occupations, **the number of annual job openings is likely overstated.**
- Over the past 12 months, there were **2,253 online job postings related to these target occupations, and 35 job postings that specifically mentioned “horse” or “equine”.** The highest number of job postings for equine-related occupations were for groomers, bathers, and ranch hands.

Living Wage

- All four occupations have entry-level wages **below** Los Angeles County’s self-sufficiency standard hourly wage (\$24.03/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- A high school diploma is the typical entry-level education for the target occupations in this report, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- 30%-37% of *farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers* and *animal caretakers* working in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.
 - While only 15%-22% of *first-line supervisors of farming, fishing, and forestry workers* and *animal breeders* have completed some college or an associate degree, 88%-92% have completed a high school diploma or less educational attainment.

Community college supply

- 3 community colleges issued awards related to equine science in the greater LA/OC region.
- 52 awards (degrees and certificates) were conferred on average each year between 2023 and 2025.

Other postsecondary supply

- Currently, there are no other post-secondary institutions in the greater LA/OC region that have conferred sub-baccalaureate awards for equine science in the past three years.

TARGET OCCUPATIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to four middle-skill occupations. [For full occupation descriptions, please see Appendix.](#)

- ***Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers (11-9013)***³
- ***Animal Caretakers (39-2021)***⁴
- ***First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011)***⁵
- ***Animal Breeders (45-2021)***⁶

² Center for Women’s Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024.* <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

³ *Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers (bls.gov)*

⁴ *Animal Care and Service Workers (bls.gov)*

⁵ *First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (bls.gov)*

⁶ *Agricultural Workers (bls.gov)*

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these middle-skill equine science occupations. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 7% through 2030. There will be more than 3,200 job openings per year through 2030 due to job growth and replacements. It is important to note that the occupations in this report work with all types of animals and not solely horses. Therefore, the data in Exhibit 1 is likely overstated for equine science occupations. The majority of jobs in 2025 for these middle-skill equine science occupations (76%) were located in Los Angeles County.

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁷

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	13,608	14,515	907	7%	2,448
Orange	4,212	4,599	387	9%	803
Total	17,820	19,114	1,294	7%	3,251

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for each of the target occupations in Los Angeles County. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time. Occupations with a lower-than-average percentage of full-time workers may have less employment security but may see increased activity in the gig economy.

Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County⁸

Occupation	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Aged 55 and older	% Full Time Workers
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	1,318	1,276	(3%)	135	42%	63%
Animal Caretakers	11,748	12,712	8%	2,244	22%	55%
First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	454	447	(1%)	57	31%	86%
Animal Breeders	87	79	(9%)	12	26%	Data unavailable
Total	13,608	14,515	7%	2,448	-	-

⁷ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

⁸ Ibid.

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these middle-skill equine science occupations in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below in order to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

All four occupations have entry-level wages below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$16.50 and \$20.02. (Exhibit 3). Experienced *animal caretakers* can expect to earn \$23.15, which is lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage. However, experienced *animal breeders; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; and first-line supervisors of farming, fishing, and forestry workers* can expect to earn wages between \$29.37 and \$38.19, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupations in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	\$16.50	\$19.30	\$32.83	\$40,100
Animal Caretakers	\$17.87	\$19.25	\$23.15	\$40,000
First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	\$20.02	\$29.47	\$38.19	\$61,300
Animal Breeders	\$16.59	\$21.16	\$29.37	\$44,000

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

All four occupations have entry-level wages below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$16.50 and \$19.70 (Exhibit 4). Experienced *animal caretakers* can expect to earn \$20.32, which is lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage. However, experienced *animal breeders; farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers; and first-line supervisors of farming, fishing, and forestry workers* can expect to earn wages between \$32.32 and \$37.46, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

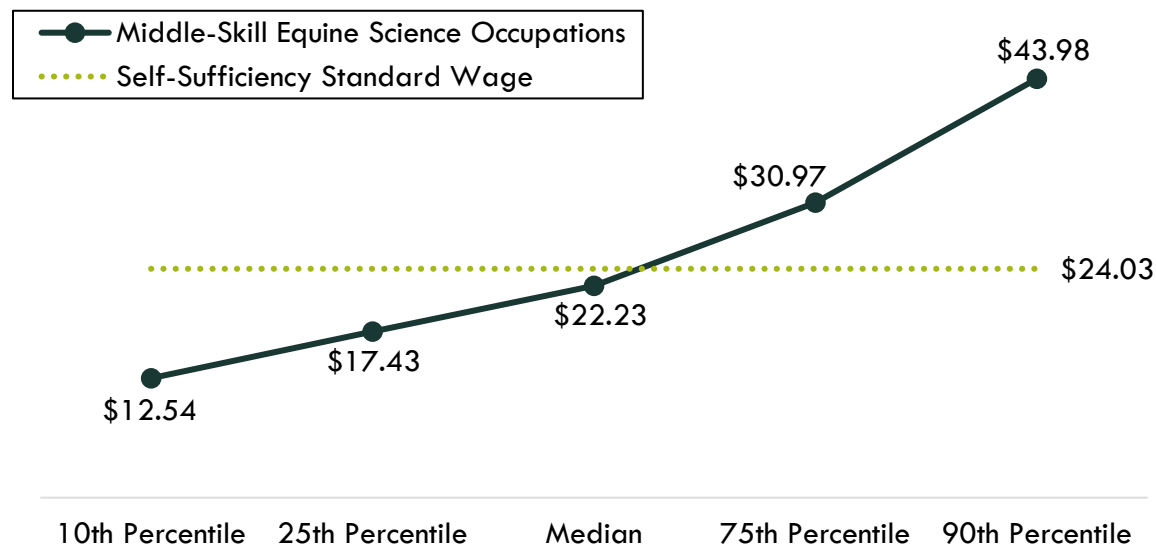
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	\$16.50	\$19.02	\$33.34	\$39,600
Animal Caretakers	\$16.50	\$16.66	\$20.32	\$34,600
First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	\$19.70	\$28.94	\$37.46	\$60,200
Animal Breeders	\$18.25	\$23.30	\$32.32	\$48,500

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupations in this report are \$17.43; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupations in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

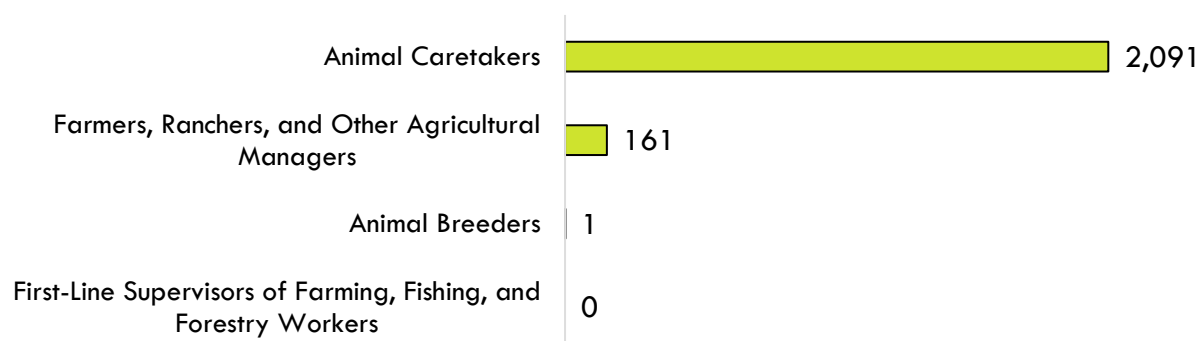
Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for target occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS BY OCCUPATION

There were 2,253 online job postings related to the target occupations listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Exhibit 6 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The majority of job postings (93%) were for *animal caretakers*, followed by *farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers* (7%).

Exhibit 6: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months), Los Angeles and Orange counties



Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
• Dog/Pet Groomers • Dog Bathers • Dog daycare attendants • Kennel attendants • Dog walkers • Animal care technicians • Animal care attendants • Animal care specialists	• Petcare • Animal care • Lifting ability • Sanitation • Pet ear cleaning • Disinfecting • Animal handling • Safe restraining techniques	• PetCo • Best Friends Pet Care • Destination Pet • Wag Hotels • Pawridise Grooming Salon Spa • Barks N' Purrs Pet Care • Dogs On The Run

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 25% of the target job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 8 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

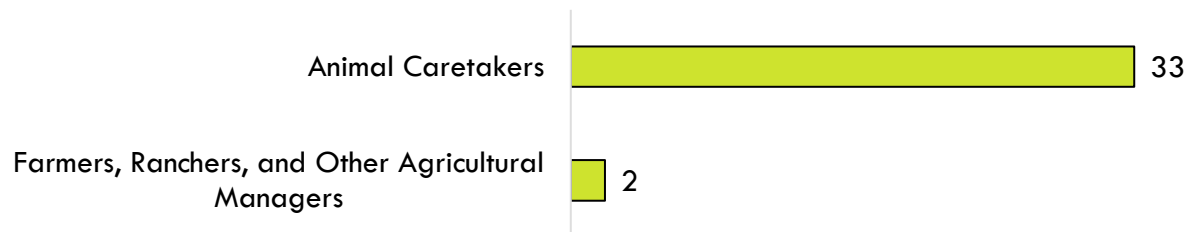
Exhibit 8: Education levels requested in job postings for target occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	75	13%
Associate degree	12	2%
High school diploma or vocational training	480	85%

JOB POSTINGS BY SKILL

Of the 2,253 online job postings related to the target occupations, 35 job postings listed “horse” or “equine” as a specialized skill. Exhibit 9 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The only job postings were for *animal caretakers* (94%), and *farmers, ranchers and other agricultural managers* (6%).

Exhibit 9: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months), Los Angeles and Orange counties



Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
• Dog/pet Groomers • Dog bathers • Ranch hands • Grooming assistants • Walkers • Barn managers • Ranch managers	• Horse care • Lifting ability • Animal handling • Dog training • Safe restraining techniques • Animal care • Petcare	• Kat’s Pawz N’ Clawz Dog Walking • Bow Wow Beautiful Pet Spa • Fluffy Puppy • Pets R Us • Hanaeleh Horse Rescue

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists a high school diploma or equivalent as the typical entry-level education for all four of the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 11). National-level data indicates that the two occupations in this report with the largest number of annual openings (*farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers* and *animal caretakers*) count 30% and 37% of workers in the field who have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. While only 15%-22% of *first-line supervisors of farming, fishing, and forestry workers* and *animal breeders* have completed some college or an associate degree, 88%-92% have completed a high school diploma or less educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

Exhibit 11: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
Farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers	High school diploma or equivalent
Animal caretakers	High school diploma or equivalent
First-line supervisors of farming, fishing, and forestry workers	High school diploma or equivalent
Animal breeders	High school diploma or equivalent

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY**Community College Supply**

Exhibit 12 shows the annual and three-year average number of awards conferred by community colleges in the related TOP codes: Animal Science (0102.00) and Equine Science (0102.40). The only colleges with completions in the region are Mt. San Antonio, LA Pierce, and Santiago Canyon. Currently, there are no other post-secondary institutions in the greater LA/OC region that have conferred sub-baccalaureate awards for equine science in the past three years.

Exhibit 12: Regional community college awards (certificates and degrees), 2023-2025

TOP Code	Program	College	2022-23 Awards	2023-24 Awards	2024-25 Awards	3-Year Average
0102.00	Animal Science	LA Pierce	-	1	-	0
		Mt San Antonio	33	37	33	34
		LA Subtotal	33	38	33	35
		Santiago Canyon	-	5	8	4
		OC Subtotal	-	5	8	4
Supply Subtotal/Average			33	43	41	39
0102.40	Equine Science	LA Pierce	5	8	3	5
		Mt San Antonio	8	8	8	8
		LA Subtotal	13	16	11	13
Supply Subtotal/Average			13	16	11	13
Supply Total/Average			46	59	52	52

Exhibit 13 displays the community college awards broken down by award type. In this case, the majority of awards issued by community colleges are certificates (56%).

Exhibit 13: Community college awards by award type, 2023-2025

Award Type	# of Awards	% of Awards
A.A./A.A.-T./A.S./A.S.-T degrees	19	36%
Certificates	29	56%
Noncredit awards	4	8%
Total	52	100%

APPENDIX: OCCUPATION DESCRIPTIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to these target occupations:

- **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers (11-9013)** Plan, direct, or coordinate the management or operation of farms, ranches, greenhouses, aquacultural operations, nurseries, timber tracts, or other agricultural establishments. May hire, train, and supervise farm workers or contract for services to carry out the day-to-day activities of the managed operation. May engage in or supervise planting, cultivating, harvesting, and financial and marketing activities.⁹
- **Animal Caretakers (39-2021)** Feed, water, groom, bathe, exercise, or otherwise provide care to promote and maintain the well-being of pets and other animals that are not raised for consumption, such as dogs, cats, racehorses, ornamental fish or birds, zoo animals, and mice. Work in settings such as kennels, animal shelters, zoos, circuses, and aquariums. May keep records of feedings, treatments, and animals received or discharged. May clean, disinfect, and repair cages, pens, or fish tanks.¹⁰
- **First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers (45-1011)** Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of agricultural, forestry, aquacultural, and related workers.¹¹
- **Animal Breeders (45-2021)** Select and breed animals according to their genealogy, characteristics, and offspring. May require knowledge of artificial insemination techniques and equipment use. May involve keeping records on heats, birth intervals, or pedigree.¹²

⁹ [Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers \(bls.gov\)](#)

¹⁰ [Animal Care and Service Workers \(bls.gov\)](#)

¹¹ [First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers \(bls.gov\)](#)

¹² [Agricultural Workers \(bls.gov\)](#)

Contact information:

Luke Meyer, Director

Los Angeles Center of Excellence

Lmeyer7@mtsac.edu

If for any reason this document is not accessible or if you have specific needs for readability, please contact us and we will do our utmost to accommodate you with a modified version.

DATA SOURCES

POWERED BY



- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

© 2026 California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office,

Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research, Economic and Workforce Development Program