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**BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE BREAKS GROUND ON STATE OF THE ART FACILITY SET TO TRANSFORM THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE IN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS**

BAKERSFIELD, CA - Bakersfield College celebrated a significant milestone today with the groundbreaking ceremony for its new Agriculture Sciences building. The event marked the commencement of construction on a cutting edge, 3-story facility that will revolutionize the learning experience for students within the College’s top-ranked agriculture program.

Funded by Measure J, a $502 million bond passed in November 2016, the new Agriculture Sciences building is planned to include an impressive 49,546 square feet of total building area, which includes exterior covered areas. Designed as an all-electric building, it will exceed Title 24 standards by more than 24%, showcasing BC's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

This state-of-the-art learning space will be a hub of innovation, providing students and faculty with cutting-edge resources to advance research and education in agriculture. The building will house food production and sciences facilities, a mechanized agricultural workshop, and a range of agricultural sciences labs, including those for tissue/growth, animal studies, vet tech, horticulture, soils, plant science, and forestry.

This groundbreaking is a big step forward for the college and is all thanks to the community, says BC’s Acting President, Steven Watkin. “The passing of Measure J in 2016 has been instrumental in making our vision for the new Agriculture Sciences building a reality. This state-of-the-art facility will not only transform the landscape of Bakersfield College but will also serve as a testament to the collective understanding that the power of education shapes our future. Because of our community voting yes on J, we are cultivating and continuing a rich legacy of excellence for our students at BC.”

In addition to the building itself, the project includes extensive site improvements aimed at creating a dynamic and conducive learning environment. New greenhouses, shade houses, storage bays, seating areas, planters, and accessible routes throughout the site will further enhance the overall experience for students and faculty alike.

Agriculture Department Chair and Faculty member Heather Baltis, whose expertise lies in Agriculture Business, emphasized the potential of the new facility to shape the future of agriculture education at BC: "I am thrilled about the possibilities that the Agriculture Sciences building opens up for our students. The cutting-edge labs, and collaborative spaces will foster innovation and hands-on learning, ensuring our graduates are well-equipped for success in the dynamic field of agriculture."

The event this morning included remarks by Kern Community College District Trustee Romeo Agbalog, Acting President Steven Watkin, Associate Vice President Jessica Wojtysiak, Agriculture Faculty Heather Baltis, Kern County Farm Bureau Representative Rachel Nettleton, and Agriculture student at Bakersfield College, Jesus Rojas.

During his remarks, Rojas said, “as a Plant Science major with an emphasis in crops, I see this new building as a greenhouse for our dreams. It is here that students just like me will nurture our passion for agriculture and watch it grow into something amazing.”

The new Bakersfield College Agriculture Sciences building is scheduled to be completed in December 2025.

*Bakersfield College provides opportunities for students from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds to attain Associate and Baccalaureate degrees and certificates, workplace skills, and preparation for transfer. Our rigorous and supportive learning environment fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world.*

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