

**CAHRC**  
Canadian Agricultural  
Human Resource Council



**CCRHA**  
Conseil canadien pour  
les ressources humaines  
en agriculture

# BENCHMARKING AGRICULTURAL COMPENSATION: **DAIRY INDUSTRY**





## Overview

To ensure human capital success in our sector, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council recently partnered with agricultural talent solutions experts AgCareers.com to gather compensation insights, salary benchmarking and market research. The highly competitive nature of the talent marketplace across Canada has become an increasingly difficult landscape for agricultural producers to navigate. This salary survey and human resource benchmarking initiative equips producers with relevant and practical data resources to better compete in today's workplace.

## Industry Key Findings

- In the dairy industry, permanent full-time employees were most likely to receive housing assistance.
- Permanent full-time employees were most likely to receive health, dental and vision benefits.
- Over 38 per cent of producers reported performance bonuses as the most common bonus type offered.
- More than half of dairy producers offered both vacation and sick time.



## Wage Analysis

Dairy industry wage data was collected from six industry participants and 40 employees. Provinces represented were British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Quebec. Wages were commensurate with experience, with Farm Manager roles paid the highest, followed by Farm Supervisors, Farm Workers and Farm Labourers.

Job Title	Industry	Simple Average	Weighted Average	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
<b>Farm Labourer</b>	Dairy	\$17.82	\$19.02	\$16.55	\$18.00	\$20.00
<b>Farm Manager</b>	Dairy	\$25.68	\$25.77	\$20.84	\$26.00	\$29.50
<b>Farm Supervisor</b>	Dairy	\$22.02	\$21.32	\$17.50	\$20.25	\$25.00
<b>Farm Worker</b>	Dairy	\$20.03	\$21.17	\$17.00	\$20.00	\$25.00



## Wage Analysis Key Definitions

Definition of Key Terms	
<b>No. of Organizations</b>	The number of contributing organizations for the complete data set.
<b>No. of Employees</b>	The number of employees included in the data set.
<b>Weighted Average</b>	Weighted company average is each company's simple company average times the number of company incumbents over the total number of incumbents.
<b>25th Percentile</b>	The 25th percentile represents what the bottom 25 per cent of companies would pay for the selected benchmark position. For the data set, 25 per cent would pay below this point and 75 per cent would pay above this data point.
<b>Median</b>	The median, or 50th percentile, represents the middle data point of what companies pay for a selected benchmark position.
<b>75th Percentile</b>	The 75th percentile represents what the bottom 75 per cent of companies would pay for the selected benchmark position. For the data set, 75 per cent would pay below this point and 25 per cent would pay above this data point.



## Non-Monetary Benefits

Producers across the dairy industry were asked to share details about their medical plans, employee assistance programs and other employee programs and supports. A total of 30 completed this portion of the survey.

### **Medical Benefits**

#### **Health Insurance**

Thirty-two per cent of dairy producers reported offering health insurance. For 13 per cent of producers, this benefit was offered to both the employee and their family. Twenty-six per cent of employers who provided health insurance offered this benefit to permanent full-time employees only, while some permanent part-time employees also received this benefit.

#### **Health insurance offered by surveyed dairy producers**

Type of Coverage Offered	Employee-Only Health Coverage	Family Plan Health Coverage	Both Employee and Family Coverage	Do Not Offer Coverage
<b>Percentage Offered</b>	6%	13%	13%	68%
<b>Employee Type Covered</b>	All Employees (Full-time, Part-time)	Permanent Full-time Employees	Permanent Part-time Employees	Do Not Offer Coverage
<b>Percentage Offered</b>	0%	26%	3%	71%





**Dental Insurance**

Seventy-one per cent of dairy producers stated they did not offer dental insurance, while 16 per cent offered dental coverage for both employees and their families, and 27 per cent provided coverage for permanent employees (full-time and/or part-time).

**Dental insurance offered by surveyed dairy producers**

Type of Coverage Offered	Employee-Only Health Coverage	Family Plan Health Coverage	Both Employee and Family Coverage	Do Not Offer Coverage
<b>Percentage Offered</b>	3%	10%	16%	71%
<b>Employee Type Covered</b>	All Employees (Full-time, Part-time)	Permanent Full-time Employees	Permanent Part-time Employees	Do Not Offer Coverage
<b>Percentage Offered</b>	0%	17%	10%	73%



### Vision Insurance

Like health insurance, vision insurance was most likely to be offered through an employee and family plan and to permanent full-time employees.

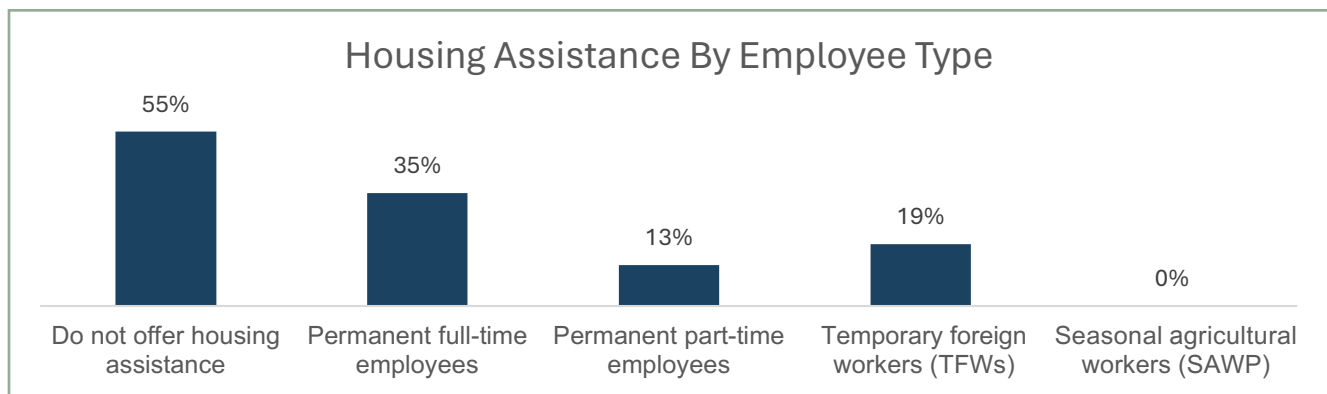
### Vision insurance offered by surveyed dairy producers

Type of Coverage Offered	Employee-Only Health Coverage	Family Plan Health Coverage	Both Employee and Family Coverage	Do Not Offer Coverage
Percentage Offered	6%	13%	6%	74%
Employee Type Covered	All Employees (Full-time, Part-time)	Permanent Full-time Employees	Permanent Part-time Employees	Do Not Offer Coverage
Percentage Offered	0%	17%	3%	80%

### Allowances

#### Housing Assistance

Housing assistance can be an attractive benefit as it can ease the serious challenge of finding the labour necessary to perform farm operations. For the dairy industry, 45 per cent of producers reported offering housing assistance. Permanent full-time employees were most likely to receive the benefit, followed by Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs), who are legally mandated to receive this benefit, and permanent part-time employees.

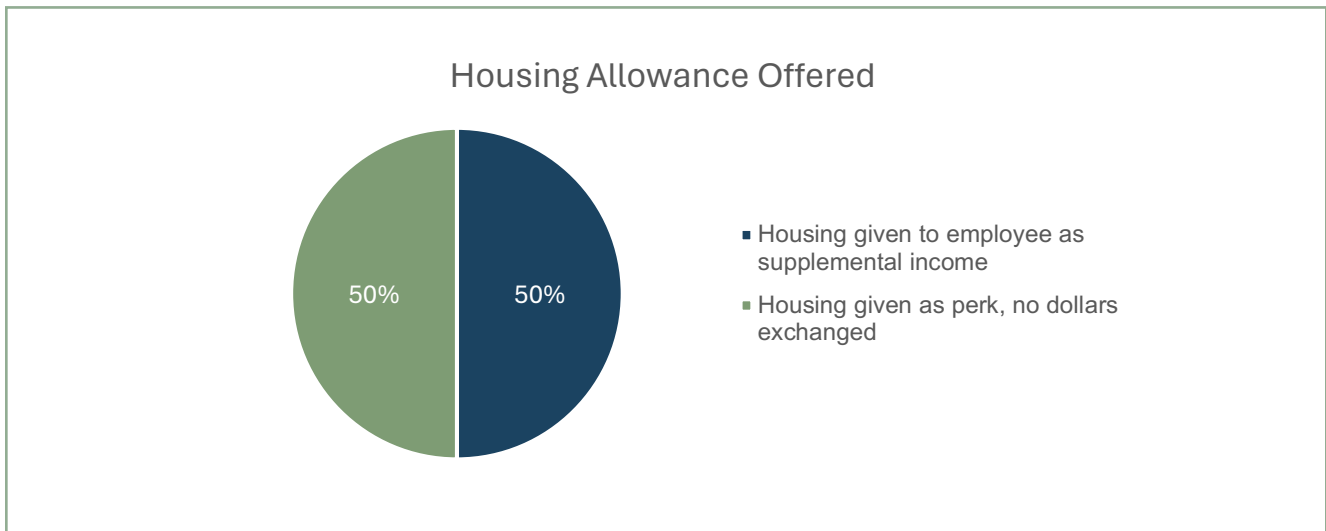


*\*Percentages do not total 100% as respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Results are calculated by dividing the number of responses by respondents.*



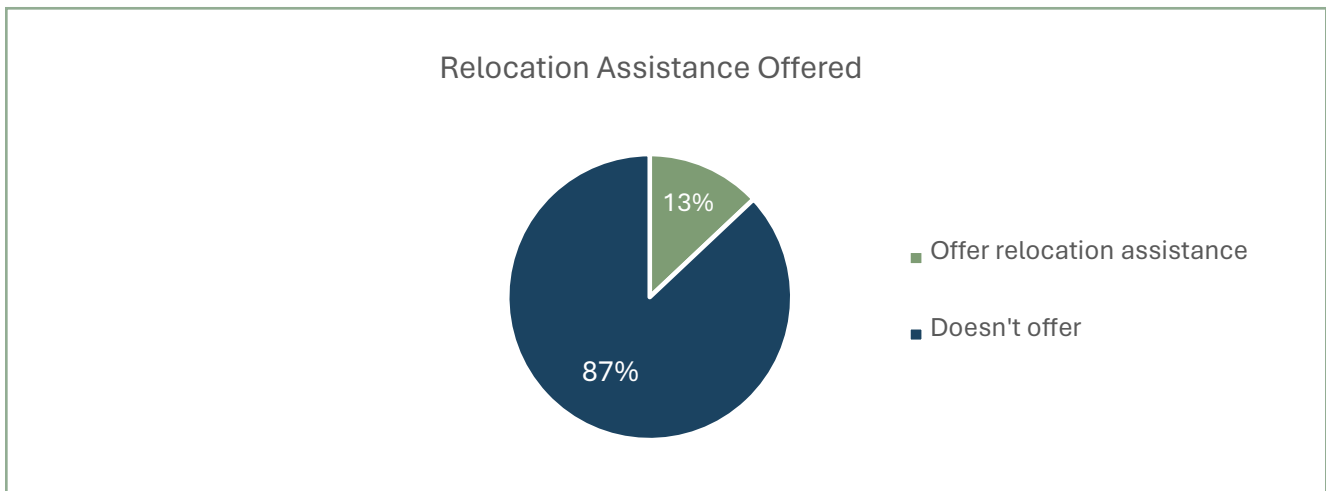
### Housing Allowance Payment Terms

Of the producers who indicated they offered housing assistance, 50 per cent provided this benefit as supplemental income, while 50 per cent offered the benefit without an exchange of money. The median housing amount offered by dairy survey participants was \$200. The industry median reported by all survey participants was \$500 per month.



### Relocation Assistance

Relocation assistance can reduce the burden of moving for employees. Specific to the dairy industry, 13 per cent offered this benefit. The average amount of relocation offered was \$600, as compared to an average of \$2,030 for all other surveyed industries.

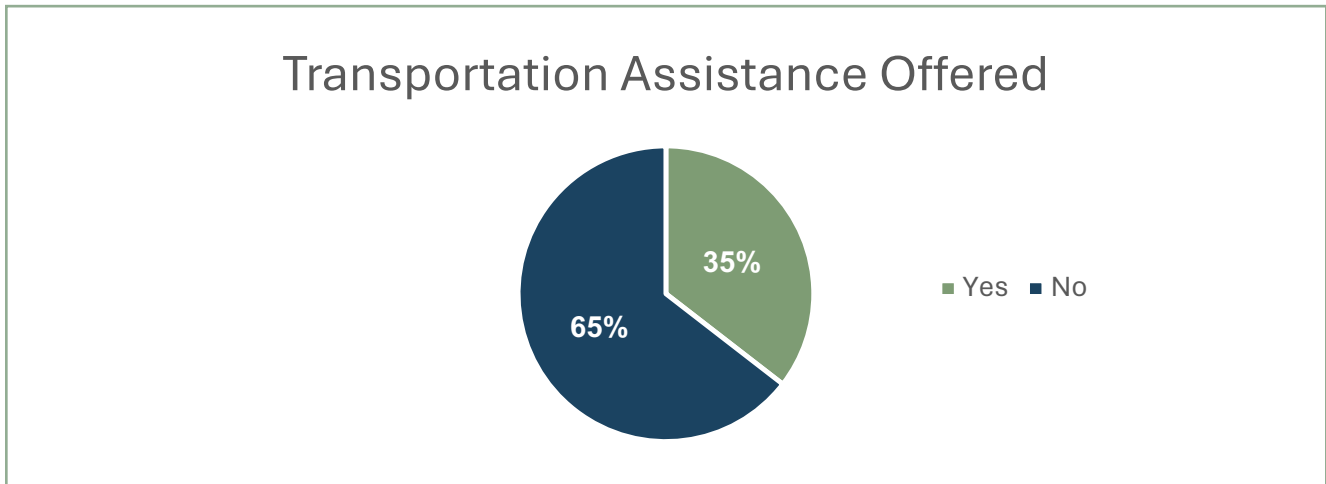






### Transportation Assistance

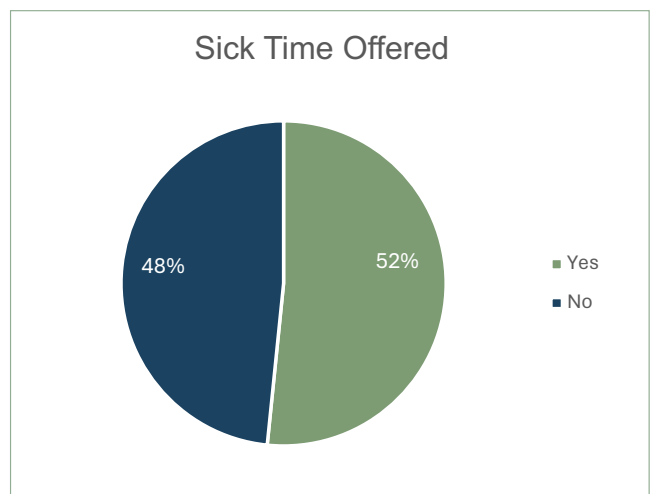
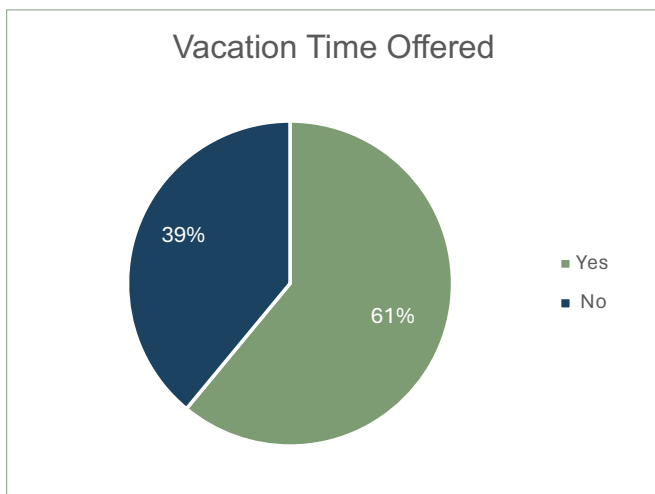
Transportation to and from farming operations can be a barrier for potential employees. Employers who can provide a safe and reliable mode of transportation to and from work may see an increase in employee retention. Thirty-five per cent of dairy producers offered transportation assistance to their employees.



### Time Away

Providing employees with time away can be essential to ensuring they can properly recover from sickness, as well as have opportunities to take a break by having personal time away. Over half of the surveyed dairy producers provided their employees with vacation and sick time. Employees with one year of service received an average of 13 days of vacation time per year and slightly less than seven days of sick time.

### Vacation Time and Sick Time

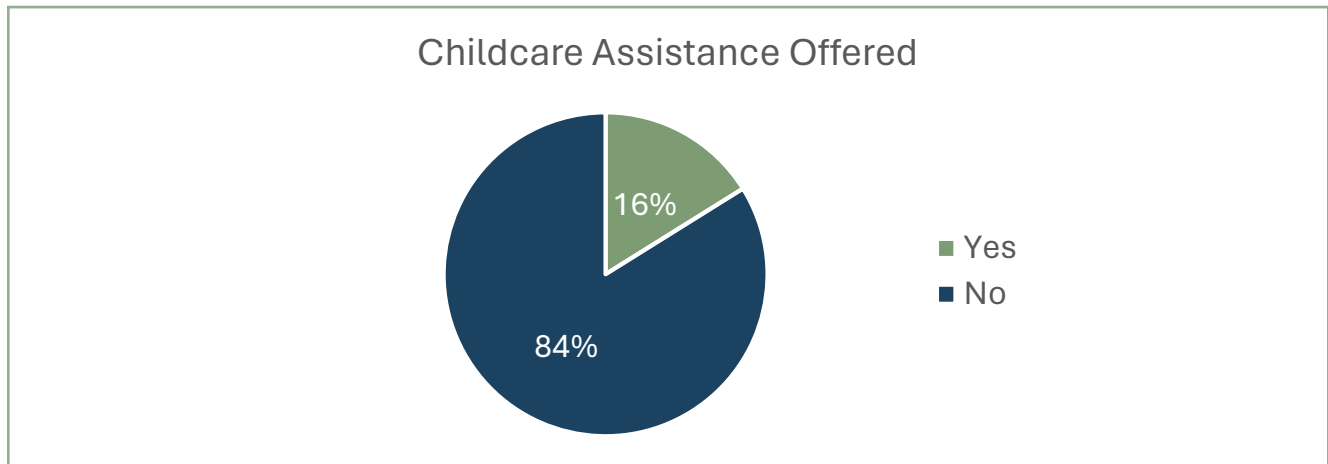




## Employee Programs and Support

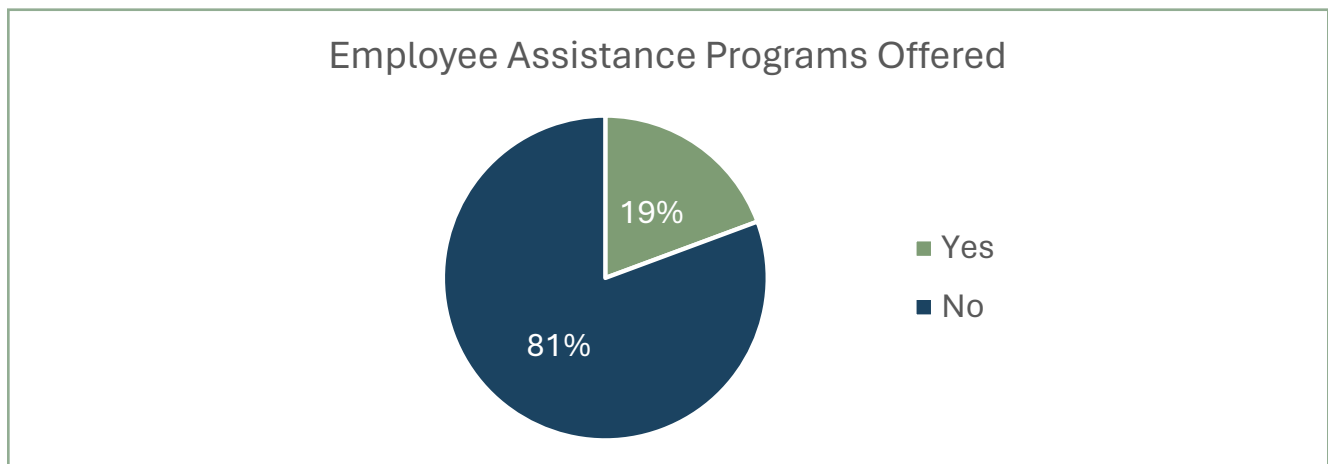
### Childcare Assistance

While the demographics of each farm may vary, for those employees with children, childcare assistance can provide relief for those who need support. Sixteen per cent of producers in the dairy industry indicated they offered childcare assistance to employees.



### Employee Assistance Programs

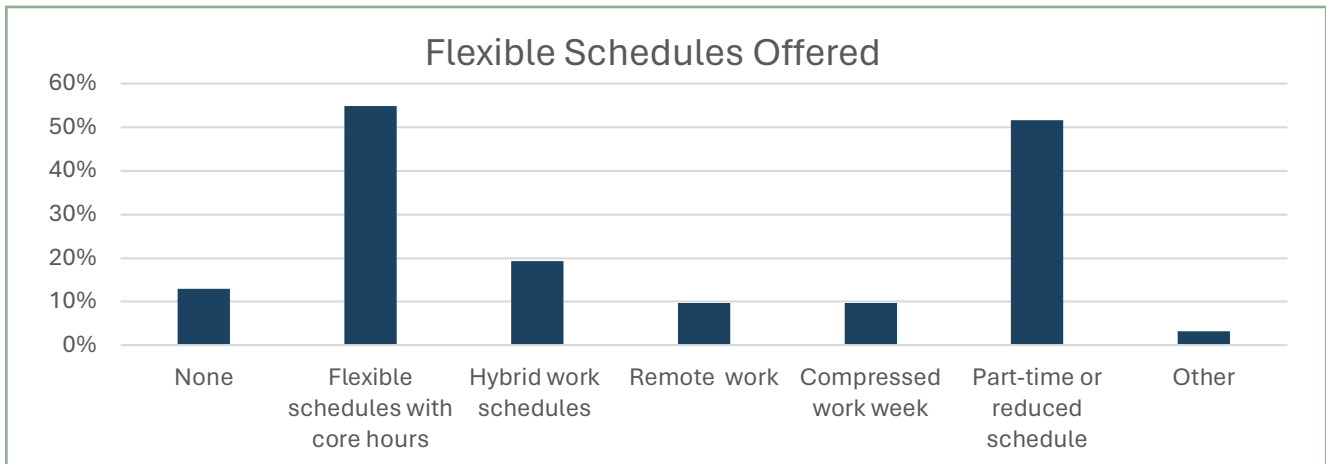
Employee assistance programs, such as counselling services, can be beneficial in helping employees who need assistance with personal problems or issues. Nineteen per cent of producers in the dairy industry indicated they offered access to employee assistance programs.





### Flexible Schedules

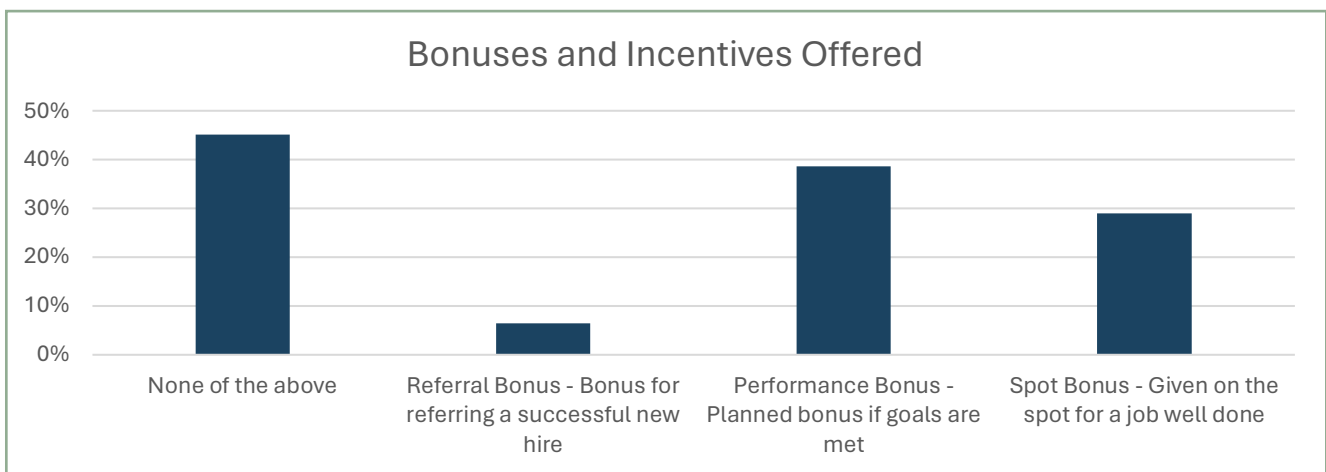
Flexible schedules can be challenging for producers to offer as farming operations run 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. However, 50 per cent of dairy producers were more likely to offer a flexible schedule with core hours or a part-time or reduced schedule.



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### Bonuses and Incentives

Bonuses and incentives can be a powerful motivator for employees and can also reinforce positive behaviours. Performance bonuses were the most common bonus type reported by over 39 per cent of dairy producers. Additionally, “spot bonuses” were offered by 29 per cent of producers. This type of bonus acknowledges employees “on the spot” for a job well done.

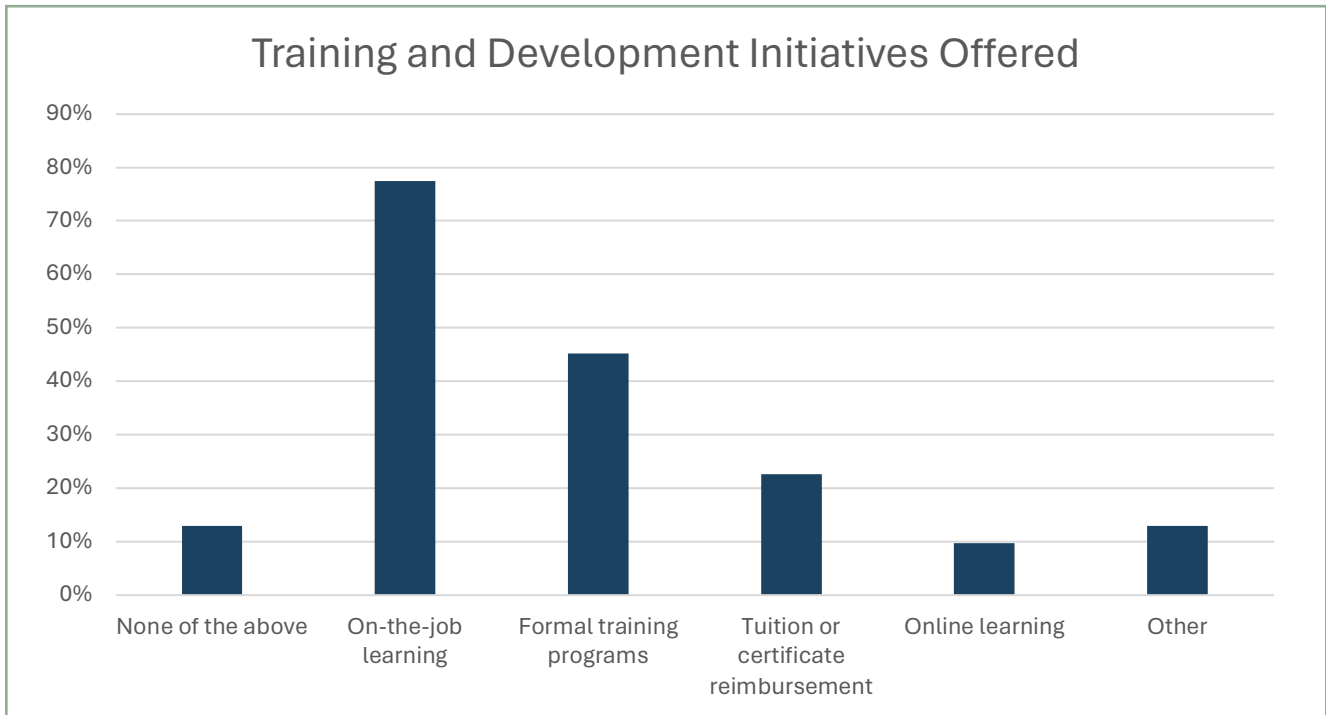


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### Training and Development Initiatives

Training and development can help attract and retain employees by helping build employees' skills and knowledge. The majority of reporting dairy producers offer on-the-job learning. Formal training or tuition certificate reimbursement programs were also common among producers.





### **About the Research**

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council partnered with AgCareers.com, agricultural talent solutions experts, to provide compensation insights, salary benchmarking and market research to ensure human capital success in our industry.

## **Methodology**

In collaboration with the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, AgCareers.com developed an understanding of the immediate compensation data needs of producers.

The following roles were identified as those most needed for labour market benchmarking:

- Farm Manager
- Farm Supervisor
- Farm Labourer
- Farm Worker
- Specialty Roles

The dairy industry was identified as one of the target markets for data collection. A survey was created to collect data on both monetary and non-monetary compensation factors for these commodity types by role. Producers were surveyed during the period of February 19 – March 17, 2024. The survey was also structured to capture demographics including province, number of employees and employer size.

To encourage producer participation, the survey was promoted nationally to CAHRC members, AgCareers.com industry contacts and through multiple social media channels. Producers anonymously submitted employee-level record data benchmarked individually to each role target. The collected data was then validated and analyzed using a specialized compensation platform to aggregate and report statistically relevant data. Monetary and non-monetary results were collated and reported into both compensation benchmark reports and executive summary formats.

For more information about the Agricultural Producers Compensation Benchmark Review please see the [Executive Summary](#).



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### **About CAHRC**

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) is a national, non-profit organization focused on addressing human resource issues facing agricultural businesses across Canada. CAHRC works with industry leaders, governments and educational stakeholders to research, develop and communicate solutions to the challenges in employment and skills development in primary agriculture.

The Council represents farming in all its forms: raising traditional and non-traditional livestock; producing, cultivating, growing, harvesting or collecting conventional and non-conventional agriculture commodities; and any practices performed as an integral part of an agricultural operation. For more information, visit [www.cahrc-ccrha.ca](http://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca).

### **About AgCareers.com**

The AgCareers.com mission is to provide global talent solutions in agriculture and food. They strive to “Feed the World with Talent” in the industries they serve. AgCareers.com’s passion is agriculture, demonstrated through their investment in time and resources that engage candidates and employers in the industry. They work to build the pipeline of talent to the industry by expanding knowledge about the breadth of career opportunities in agriculture. For more information, visit [www.AgCareers.com](http://www.AgCareers.com).



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**Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council**

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T: 613.745.7457 | E: [info@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:info@cahrc-ccrha.ca)

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