

INDUSTRY NEWS | PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES | SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURE | AND MORE

# AGRI WORKFORCE MATTERS

JUNE 2024

**USE OUR SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE TO HELP YOU ADOPT TECHNOLOGY**

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**A new program for women to advance in agriculture**

**THE RURAL-URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE GAP AND WHY IT MATTERS**

**A NEW TOOL TO HELP YOU STAY COMPETITIVE**

**Taking the pulse on horticulture**

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**PARTNERSHIP PACKAGES FOR YOUR AG ASSOCIATION OR ORGANIZATION**



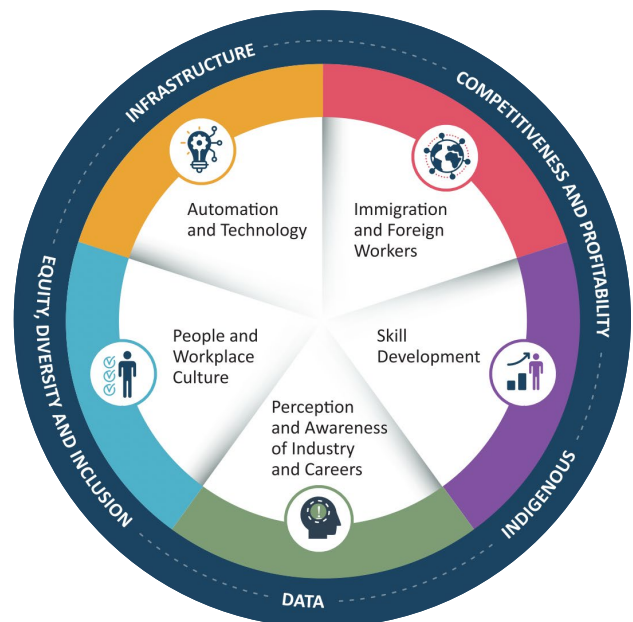
**CAHRC-CCRHA**  
Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council  
Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines en agriculture



# OUR NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

## A National, Actionable Roadmap

Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors are experiencing severe chronic labour and skills shortages while growing one of Canada's largest employment and economic sectors. A national, actionable roadmap will create the desired workforce of the future that addresses immediate labour gaps and systemic issues. The National Workforce Strategic Plan has entered its next phase of work. Over the next two years, industry stakeholders will embark on a new set of action items while continuing to amplify the great work already happening.



# OUR VISION AND NEXT STEPS



## Perception and Awareness of Industry and Careers

*By 2030, the number of people entering the sector has increased due to positive perceptions of employment in the industry and greater awareness of the variety of occupations suited to various skill sets, the diverse communities in which careers are available and the paths to career advancement.*

Understanding the perception of the industry and providing awareness of the opportunities in the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors is crucial to the growth and sustainability of the industry. The Perception and Awareness of Industry and Careers Working Group will amplify programs, bringing greater awareness of career opportunities in agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing to potential employees — either newcomers to Canada, members of underrepresented groups or high school and post-secondary students. The group will also work toward increasing the awareness of the importance of the sector's GDP contribution with government and other leading industry stakeholders.

CAHRC conducted perception and awareness research to investigate perceptions of job seekers who have not

traditionally considered careers in the agriculture sector. Industry stakeholders are using this information to promote the importance of the sector and have gained insight on how to better tailor messaging. Strategies for promoting work in the sector to job seekers who have had no connection to the sector have been developed.



## People and Workplace Culture

*By 2030, the sector is viewed as a desired choice for work in Canada by job seekers and workers.*

The People and Workplace Culture Working Group is focused on increasing recruitment of underrepresented groups to the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors. By providing a safe and healthy workplace culture, a generation of employees will desire to join the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors. As an industry that has been built on networking, it is paramount that we expand the network and invite those new to our industry in to gain expertise, knowledge and understanding on our common goal to feed people both in Canada and abroad.

This group has developed a set of resources and case studies to help outline some of the best management practices the industry is using to build the best workplace culture.



## Immigration and Foreign Workers

*By 2025, foreign workers are publicly recognized as a valued pillar of Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing workforce.*

*By 2025, Canada has publicly accepted programs to facilitate the entry of foreign workers and new Canadians into Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors.*

The Immigration and Temporary Foreign Workers Working Group understands the importance of temporary foreign workers to Canada's agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing workforce. The working group will address policy changes that provide employers with a streamlined approach to gaining access to the workforce while remaining competitive in the agriculture sector.

The working group conducted research to inform the development of the workforce strategy. Now, through this work, the working group will develop policy recommendations to build understanding for the importance of the TFW programs. Recommendations will also look at ensuring there are clear paths to permanent residency for those who wish to use it, as well as the need for ensuring the proper infrastructure and supports are available for both employers and employees.



## Skill Development

*By 2030, a National Skills Strategy ensures that the sector's workforce is appropriately skilled.*

The Skill Development Working Group will develop the National Skills Strategy as a registry of the current and future skills needs of the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors.

CAHRC has conducted skills research to clarify the potential impact of technology and automation in the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing industry on future skill requirements and labour demand. The investigation provided information that will inform skills development, training and education for the industry and ensure that workers have the right skills for employment in the industry now and in the future.

A skills inventory framework is in the final stages of development. Using the National Occupational Standards, CAHRC will outline in varying details what is required of a job. The aim is to provide this information to stakeholders, potential employees seeking job opportunities and employers looking to build job postings and develop responsibilities, as well as curriculum designers to ensure the full set of skills are covered over the course of a program.

CAHRC is also conducting research to understand the geographical location of skills, where the skills needs are and if there are skilled individuals available to fill that gap.





## Automation and Technology

*By 2030, automation and technology decreases labour demand and increases productivity and competitiveness.*

The industry will see an important transition to automation and technology in each sector as it continues to experience shortages in labour. Although it is not the only answer to the falling labour supply, the Automation and Technology Working Group will understand the increase in capital investments and its correlation to labour productivity. They will also examine the need for upskilling and re-skilling due to changes in technology.

Research was conducted to investigate the capacity of members of the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors to increase their use of automation and technology. Next, the working group will investigate funding opportunities to increase the adoption of automation as well as the legal obligations and regulatory environment on automation and technology in the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors. It is important to note the increase in automation and technology, while a solution to the chronic shortage of labour, may not lead to a decreased demand for labour but could help improve the productivity and competitiveness of Canada's agricultural and food and beverage manufacturing sectors.



**To learn more about the issues and CAHRC's plan to address them, [click here](#).**

Due to reduced funding capacity to produce this publication, this issue of Agri Workforce Matters will be available in English only.



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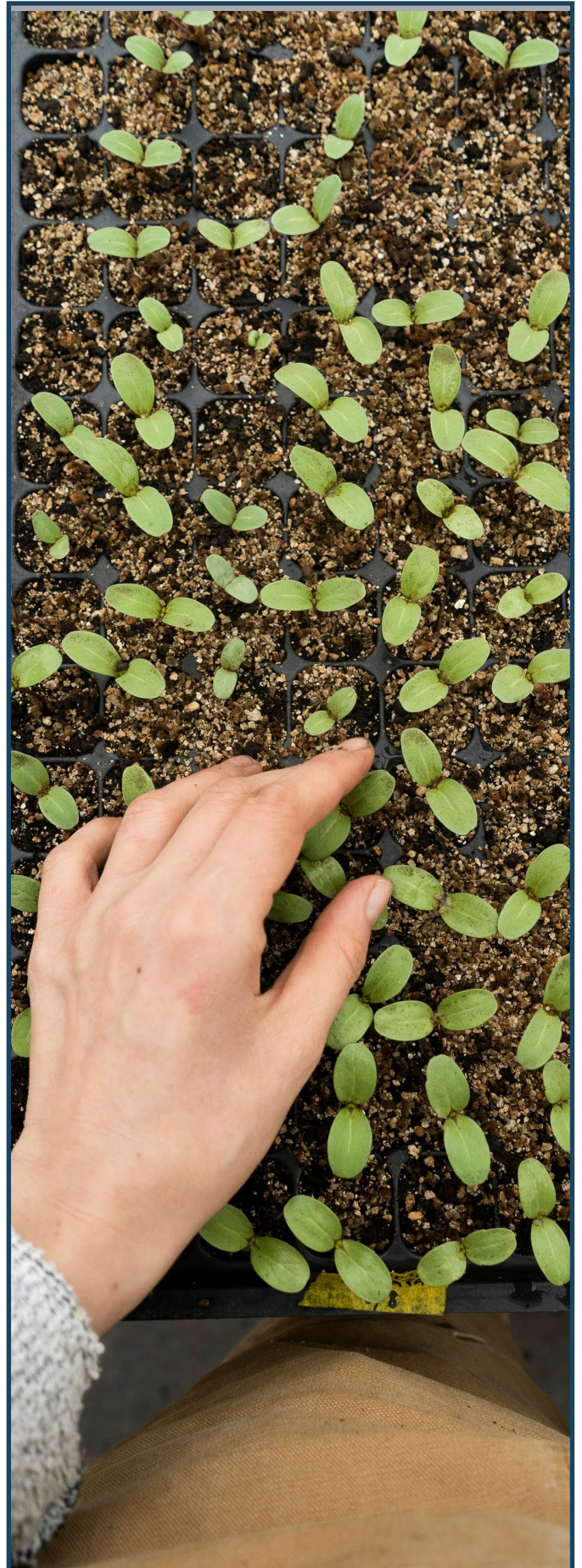
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# GET INVOLVED



613-745-7457  
[info@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:info@cahrc-ccrha.ca)



# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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**Dear readers,**

It's that time of year when the hustling and bustling of the season is in full force.

Many of you will have finished seeding and started to think about the inputs required to make your crop grow. Others might be hitting the tail end of lambing season and devoting some extra TLC to newborns. Whatever tasks are keeping you occupied, I want to recognize how vitally important your work is to our country's economic future. Without you, we cannot put food on the table for families here at home and abroad.

As an organization whose very existence depends on creating a viable future for agri-business owners, operators and workers, I would also like to remind you that CAHRC is not just a resource, but a community for the industry. Whether you're an agricultural association, business or HR professional, we are here to support you. Every day, we aim to create solutions that will develop better outcomes for our industry's future. Many of us on the team have a background in agriculture and use our experiences to inform this path forward. We also understand the value of partnerships and believe that we can get closer to reaching our full potential as an industry when we work together.

Related to this, I'm pleased that this current issue of Agri Workforce Matters will feature a profile about our ongoing partnership with the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association. You will hear directly from Leslie Sison, CNLA's Industry and Government Relations specialist, about what working with CAHRC

means to her and how it has been helping CNLA advance the interests of its members.

In the spirit of other close-knit working relationships, we're launching a new initiative to support and advance career opportunities for women in agriculture. This robust program has an ambitious goal, and it's the first of its kind in Canada. I encourage you to read all about it in the following pages.

CAHRC continues to provide one-on-one consulting, customizable labour market data and webinars to help inform businesses and organizations about the most up-to-date labour practices. For example, our self-assessment tool, also included in this issue, helps individuals understand where they are in their technology adoption journey compared to how quickly the industry at large is progressing.

These are just a few highlights of this issue of Agri Workforce Matters. I hope you also enjoy reading and learning about the other important work that CAHRC is involved in.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your invaluable support and interest in ensuring our sector thrives. With your help, we can continue to build a strong future workforce in Canadian agriculture that is resilient in the face of any challenge.



Yours in collaboration,

**Jennifer Wright**  
Executive Director  
**Canadian Agricultural  
Human Resource Council**





# ABOUT CAHRC

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The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) is a national, non-profit organization focused on addressing human resource issues facing agricultural businesses across Canada.

This means representing and supporting agriculture in all forms, from farmers and ranchers to processors, packagers, food scientists, mechanics, veterinarians and much, much more.

We offer expertise and tools that can be tailored to meet the needs of owners, operators and workers throughout the sector.

This includes:

- Up-to-date HR training
- Wage subsidy and skill development programs
- Industry networking opportunities
- 1:1 consultation
- Insight on emerging issues like succession planning, finding skilled workers and improving farm safety.

**Contact us** to learn more about how you can take advantage of our services.



## CAHRC-CCRHA

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council  
Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines  
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# CAHRC'S CORNER

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## CAHRC'S CORNER

# STAYING CONNECTED

### GET INVOLVED

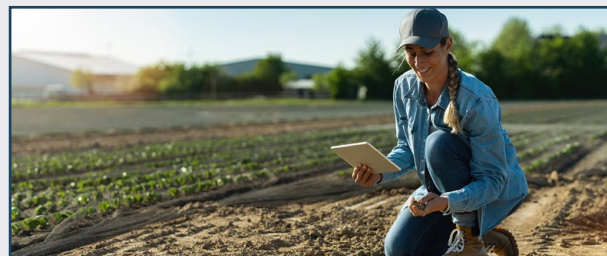
Do you support CAHRC's work on the National Workforce Strategic Plan? You can help us amplify the important role of the NWSP by showcasing our supporter badge! Learn more [here](#).



INNOVATION • COLLABORATION • AWARENESS  
INNOVATION • COLLABORATION • SENSIBILISATION

### JOIN US AT CAHRC CONNECT

CAHRC Connect is an online community of leaders, learners and employers in agriculture, and you can be part of it too. It emerged from a shared vision to create a dynamic platform where agricultural professionals could come together, collaborate and drive innovation. Discover our vibrant online hub designed to empower professionals in the agricultural sector and provide tailored solutions to meet their needs. [Join now](#).



### DATA AND RESEARCH THAT MEETS YOUR NEEDS

Did you know we offer sector- and region-specific findings on the agriculture labour market? If you are a business, association or agricultural organization looking to understand the job market based on the sector or province you represent, we've got you covered. We also provide presentations on research to ensure you too can become an expert on the issue you seek insight on. Contact us at [outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca).

### NEW LABOUR MARKET SURVEY COMING SOON

At CAHRC, we pride ourselves on being a source of knowledge and insight on labour and HR issues facing our sector. But we know the work we do, including the data we provide, cannot be as accurate and precise without your involvement. In the following weeks, we will have a rapid results survey available for employers and workers in agriculture to fill out. Stay tuned for more information on this.

## CAHRC'S CORNER

# GROWING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE OF AG

Recruiting young people into agriculture careers is an ongoing challenge for employers across the country. Vacant positions inevitably lead to lost sales, production delays, and stress across the entire value chain with no end in sight. Hearing the industry calling for creative solutions, CAHRC began partnering with the **Government of Canada's Student Work Placement (SWP) Program** in 2021 to connect post-secondary students with agriculture-focused employment opportunities in their communities.

This initiative, called Growing Opportunities, provides Work Integrated Learning (WIL), or on-the-job learning, for people interested in exploring a career path in agriculture. For the last three years, Growing Opportunities has allowed employers in agriculture to attract students with academic backgrounds in agriculture and other disciplines, with the added benefit that their wages are subsidized.

Since launching the program, CAHRC has received substantial feedback about Growing Opportunities and its positive impact on the industry.

Karen Woolley at Critter Visits of Woolley Wonderland Farm in Ontario is one example of an employer participant who says the program eased her administrative burdens and kept operations running smoothly.

"As a small farm in the rural area of the Kawarthas, we have had such grief in getting people to travel to our farm to work.... I was able to pay an attractive wage and get an employee who stayed the full season," she says. "It was such a blessing to our farm last summer as COVID was still holding back our main income stream."

Students who have enrolled in the program have also indicated the experience has left a lasting impression.

Elise Saatchie, who spent a summer on Maude Island Farm in British Columbia, calls her employment "one of the most rewarding experiences of [her] life."

"[It's] given me a new perspective on what I hope to achieve in the future," she says. "Working on the farm was challenging at times living off the grid and dealing with bugs and garden pests, but at the end of the day, I always felt stronger, more resilient, and so proud of what we had accomplished... Living on the farm, I felt happier and healthier in my body and mind and connected to the land in a way I had never experienced before."

Want to learn more about this program and read the stories of others who have taken part in Growing Opportunities? [\*\*Click here.\*\*](#)



## CAHRC'S CORNER

# THE HR TOOLKIT IS YOUR RESOURCE FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

At CAHRC, we've always said that people are your most valuable resource. This is especially true in agriculture, where there are high vacancy rates for labour. Our labour market report stated that more than two in every five agricultural employers (44 per cent) could not hire the workers they needed in 2022.

These labour shortages are fueled by challenges such as attracting younger workers, managing retirements and addressing retention difficulties. Applying good HR practices that foster a positive work environment is a critical part of ensuring more people will choose our industry as a place to carve out a career path and remain part of its long-term future.

That's why we created the **HR Toolkit**. This is a go-to resource for employers

across Canadian agriculture, designed to provide guidance and insight into HR, people management and the most up-to-date practices. This includes support that is specific and directly related to recruitment and retention.

### TAILOR-MADE SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR SUCCESS

The **Toolkit** will provide employers with a one-stop access point to meet their short-term, medium-term and long-term goals. It has industry-specific guides, legal obligations and up-to-date information. In addition to recruitment and retention, the Toolkit covers other topics such as compensation and benefits, succession planning, workplace wellness, diversity and inclusion and foreign workers.

These resources and subject-matter support are designed to be adaptable for every business so that no matter the size of an operation or number of employees, you can find solutions that are a fit for you.

### KNOWING YOUR OPTIONS

Want to access the **AGRI HR Toolkit** today?

**You can do so in the following ways:**

- 1) Through a CAHRC membership
- 2) Through your association
- 3) At a flat rate

Build a better future for your business and take advantage of it now.

Questions? Reach out at [hrtoolkit@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:hrtoolkit@cahrc-ccrha.ca) – we're happy to help.



**Do you have a story that  
needs to be told in the next issue  
of Agri Workforce Matters?**

**LET US KNOW!**

**Our team can be reached at [outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca)  
to discuss sponsored content and other opportunities  
you can take advantage of.**



## CAHRC'S CORNER

# SPOTLIGHT: IN CONVERSATION WITH LESLIE SISON AT CNLA

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In her own words, Leslie Sison “wears many hats.” As the industry and government relations specialist at the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association (**CNLA**), it’s her job to work with like-minded associations and players in government to ensure the horticulture industry is heard and that the appropriate action is taken with stakeholders to benefit CNLA’s membership.

Over the last few years, building a strong workforce for employers in horticulture has been top of mind for Sison and her organization. That is why Sison, representing CNLA, has been working closely with CAHRC. For this issue of Agri Workforce Matters, she took some time to discuss what the partnership between our two organizations looks like, what it means to get closer to closing the labour gap and why she hopes that the next generation will consider a career in agriculture.

*The following interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.*

### **How would you describe CNLA’s larger partnership with CAHRC and the work you have accomplished?**

CNLA’s mission statement is: “CNLA, with the Provincial Associations, will develop programs, undertake initiatives and form alliances in order to achieve sustainable prosperity for members and stakeholders.” I personally sit on many stakeholder groups with CAHRC, mostly those focused on labour. CNLA has been a huge supporter of CAHRC and provides resources to assist in their work in any way that we can. We feel their work is so important. Over the years, we have developed a strong partnership and understand that we will continue to support each other for the betterment of all.



CNLA supports a full value chain from primary producers to greenhouse and nursery to landscape businesses. While some aspects of our value chain have an obvious fit, the whole value chain is a part of agriculture. Because we are not primarily food-based, we are often not viewed as agriculture. Our partnership with CAHRC ensures we are part of important conversations, and we provide CAHRC with perspectives that may not necessarily be on the traditional agriculture radar.

**Where do you see the most overlap and the opportunity to collaborate with CAHRC on behalf of your members?**

There are two things: the work we have done on the Labour Market Information (LMI) studies and the ongoing work on the development of the National Workforce Strategic Plan. Both projects provide information that can assist members with an understanding of the future of labour needs. This allows us to speak intelligently on behalf of the industry and work on solutions for future labour issues. This includes information on automation, workplace culture and foreign labour opportunities.

**What has your involvement with the NWSP and LMI advisory group consisted of?**

I was selected to be a part of the Immigration and Foreign Workers pillar of the National Workforce Strategic Plan. The participants on this pillar are very passionate about the work on this file, and everyone is very invested in this topic. While labour is a key issue for agriculture, we are also looking to ensure there is a fair program for all involved. The truth is that Canada is one of the most highly educated countries and many do not understand agriculture enough to see work in ag as a viable career.

We need to change the narrative, but until that happens, we need a way to fill the positions that Canadians simply don't want. We need to ensure the safety of all workers, ensure positions are filled and ensure that Canadians can continue to reap the benefits of all that agriculture has to offer.

**What makes you hopeful about the future of agriculture as we work together toward building a better workforce?**

The work done by CAHRC has highlighted just how disconnected Canadians have become from the farm and agriculture





as an industry. There are so many job opportunities in agriculture which most Canadians have no idea about. When recently asked in a survey what jobs are available in agriculture aside from “farmer,” the majority could not name one.

We need to educate the public and the government and have our educational institutions provide a better understanding of everything agriculture offers. There is a whole world of opportunities out there for people to discover and a whole new generation who want to work with and support nature and the planet.

I hope that this generation will start to turn this around. Not everyone wants to (or should) work behind a desk their whole lives, and it's time we stopped telling our kids this is the only path to success.

### **Why do you believe the next generation of Canadians should choose agriculture as a profession to work in?**

Canadians have been told the only measure of success is a university degree, a big office and a fancy title. What about the people who crave the outdoors, those who want to work with their hands or those who want to physically see the change their work creates on a daily basis?

We are seeing a generation of youth who want to care for their planet and to make a change. I have faith that this is the generation that will rediscover the value of working with nature and all that entails. We need to get the message out that there are many careers in agriculture for everyone. You can be an engineer or a scientist, or you can be leading a landscape company to help green our cities. The opportunities are really endless.

### **Do you have anything to add?**

You know that feeling you get when you walk away from the hustle and bustle of the city? When you go for a walk in a big park,



out in the country or even at your favourite garden centre? That feeling that you can take a deep breath, the air feels fresher and you can feel the stress melt away? All of this is agriculture.

The ornamental landscaping industry actively participates in the development of green infrastructure projects in urban areas. This includes the establishment of green roofs, living walls, rain gardens, bioswales and other nature-based features that promote biodiversity and ecological connectivity. Plants provide various ecosystem services that are vital for human well-being. Trees and vegetation in urban areas help mitigate air pollution, regulate temperatures and reduce the urban heat island effect. They also contribute to stormwater management and carbon sequestration, thereby mitigating the impacts of climate change.

### **All of this is agriculture.**

CNLA and CAHRC were created to support this industry, and I am proud to be a part of work with both associations and support many proud business owners who provide the public with important experiences, food and health benefits.



# Introducing Partnership Packages



## Let's build a stronger future for agriculture, together.

Let CAHRC be a resource for your organization or association. We want to ensure you can support your membership by having access to the most up-to-date information and insights on industry practices and issues.

That's why we've launched partnership packages. See our list of offerings below and access tailor-made services that will propel you toward meeting your mandate and guarantee the industry reaches its full potential.

### COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT AGRIWORKFORCE ISSUES • \$5,000

#### Agri Partnership Package

- Partner briefings: updates on AgriWorkforce issues impacting your membership (newsletter)
- AgriWorkforce Weekly Roundup: access to the latest weekly news headlines
- AgriWorkforce Matters articles: 4 articles per year on HR best practices
- AgriWorkforce social: Social media package to easily inform members of benefits from CAHRC, programs and tools available.
- One month of free access for Members to Communities of Practice
- AgriHR Toolkit access – 50% off coupons for Members

### CUSTOMIZED COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT • \$10,000

#### AgriCommunications Package includes all AgriPartnership items PLUS:

- Customized presentation on emerging labour issues for your association event (AGM, conference) – travel for in-person meetings may be extra
- Targeted communications support for labour issues facing your association members (custom factsheets or infographics) – 3 per year
- Coordination and support for association meetings with officials to discuss emerging labour issues (meeting requests, confirmations, agenda preparation, briefing notes)
- Three webinars for your members on Quality HR Management\*\*
- One month of free access for Members to Communities of Practice
- AgriHR Toolkit access – 50% off coupons for Members

\*\* Webinars are from a select list to be customized for association or industry \*\*

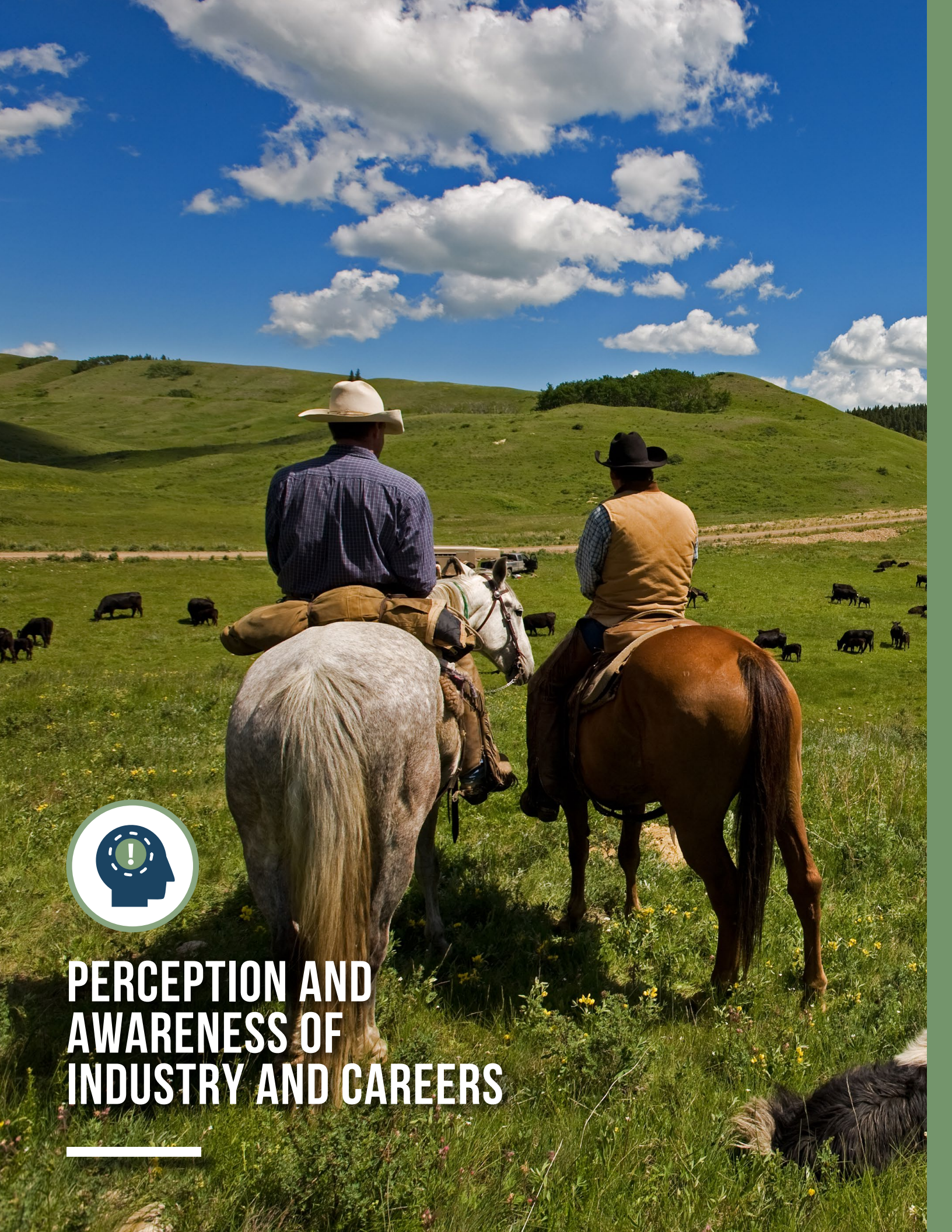
Interested in becoming a partner? Contact Rebecca Balsdon at [rbalsdon@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:rbalsdon@cahrc-ccrha.ca) to discuss how we can meet your needs.

**CAHRC**  
Canadian Agricultural  
Human Resource Council



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





# PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF INDUSTRY AND CAREERS

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# STAY COMPETITIVE BY BEING AWARE OF INDUSTRY STANDARDS

We can only improve our agricultural workforce and business operations when we have a snapshot of the industry at large. CAHRC, the national non-profit for labour and HR-related issues in agriculture, prides itself on being a source of insight so that employers have all the information they need to understand where they are thriving or have opportunities to grow based on widespread trends and practices.

This is why we are pleased to introduce our compensation benchmarking tool. This document was meticulously crafted to provide a deep dive into various facets of compensation across select agricultural industries.

Start with our summary to get a sense of overarching themes shaping agriculture's compensation landscape, before moving on to our detailed summaries on finfish farming, swine production, dairy, apiculture or grain & oilseed.

Here are some ways you can use this content, whether it be for your association membership, your business or the operation you are managing:

- Utilize the compensation benchmarking tool to compare your compensation practices against industry standards in the report and identify areas for improvement.
- Gain strategic advantages in talent acquisition by offering competitive wages, benefits and training opportunities based on what is outlined in the reports.
- Learn how to enhance retention strategies through insights on bonuses, flexible work options and employee support programs.

This resource is designed to benefit agriculture because, at CAHRC, our top priority is to build a future workforce that the next generations — at home and abroad — can depend on.

## **Access this tool now**

and empower your organization or business with the information you need to thrive in today's agricultural landscape.





## Struggling to attract skilled workers?

# The **LMI Dashboard** can help.

Our labour market information (LMI) dashboard is your one-stop shop for agricultural data, helping you stay up-to-date and aligned with the latest industry standards and workforce needs.

Find data by province, by sector and by occupation on:

- **Average salary or rates of pay**
- **Other standard compensation (daycare, housing, transportation)**
- **Skill needs**
- **Labour force vacancies**

## Success starts with a strong, supported workforce.

## Take the first step to understand how your business stacks up.

[CLICK HERE](#)



**Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council**

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# PEOPLE AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

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# INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL CANADA: A CRITICAL FACTOR IN ENSURING PEOPLE CHOOSE AGRICULTURE

Build it and they will come! Access to quality infrastructure is directly correlated to the success of our industry. We depend on well-built and maintained bridges, roads and railways to ensure the reliable flow of goods to and from market. We need access to essential services like internet and cellular connections to ensure our business operations are efficient and evolving with the rapid development of technology. But what is often overlooked is a strong social infrastructure: hospitals that are supplied with doctors, childcare that exists in proximity and housing that's accessible and affordable. These are critical pieces for establishing strong communities and attracting people who want to work and live in them.

## We still have work to do

In rural Canada, where the majority of agricultural businesses are based, we need municipalities to support a growing workforce, and we simply cannot afford a reality in which this is not the case. CAHRC's most recent labour market information forecast noted that \$3.5 billion was lost from the economy in 2022 because employers in

agriculture could not find the workers they needed. It also projected the domestic labour gap will reach 100,000 by 2030 with more than 30 per cent of the workforce retiring during that time.

CAHRC's research, "Building a Solid Foundation," sought to understand specific infrastructure needs in rural Canada and what will be required to fill the gap between what exists in urban and rural regions of the country. It may or may not be surprising that rural Canada is not on the same playing field as its urban counterpart.

## Key findings

Our report found that for every six suitable private housing units in urban areas, there is only one unit in a rural community. It also highlighted how 24 per cent of rural residents are unable to find affordable housing of sufficient quality — more than double the rate of those who live in urban and suburban areas. Rural Canada also receives roughly \$115 less per capita in federal government infrastructure investments compared to urban regions. And much of the spending in

rural areas is on repair and maintenance of existing buildings (53 per cent) rather than constructing or expanding the housing stock (42 per cent).

Our report notes that rural communities are generally in short supply of housing, especially options that go beyond private single-family homes. This means they are generally inaccessible or supportive to newcomers, young people looking for work in agriculture or businesses that need to house temporary foreign workers — all key demographics the industry has sought and seeks to attract.

CAHRC's report also found rural communities lack the childcare, healthcare, energy and utility infrastructure required for new residents to live healthy lives. For example, 100 per cent of children in rural Saskatchewan, 100 per cent in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, 99 per cent in rural Alberta and 97 per cent in rural Manitoba live in childcare deserts. And while 18 per cent of Canadians live in rural areas, only eight per cent of physicians practicing in the country serve rural Canada.

On other infrastructure matters, only 59 per cent of households in rural and remote areas have access to the target speed for high-speed internet, compared to the 90.9 per cent average across Canada. Nearly 180 remote communities are neither connected to an electricity grid nor to natural gas. And almost 30 per cent of rural households experience high energy costs, which means they pay more than six per cent of their after-tax income on energy.

## What now?

At CAHRC, we're all about evidence-based solutions for agriculture. Our report outlines several recommendations to close the infrastructure gap to drive agri-workforce growth throughout rural Canada.

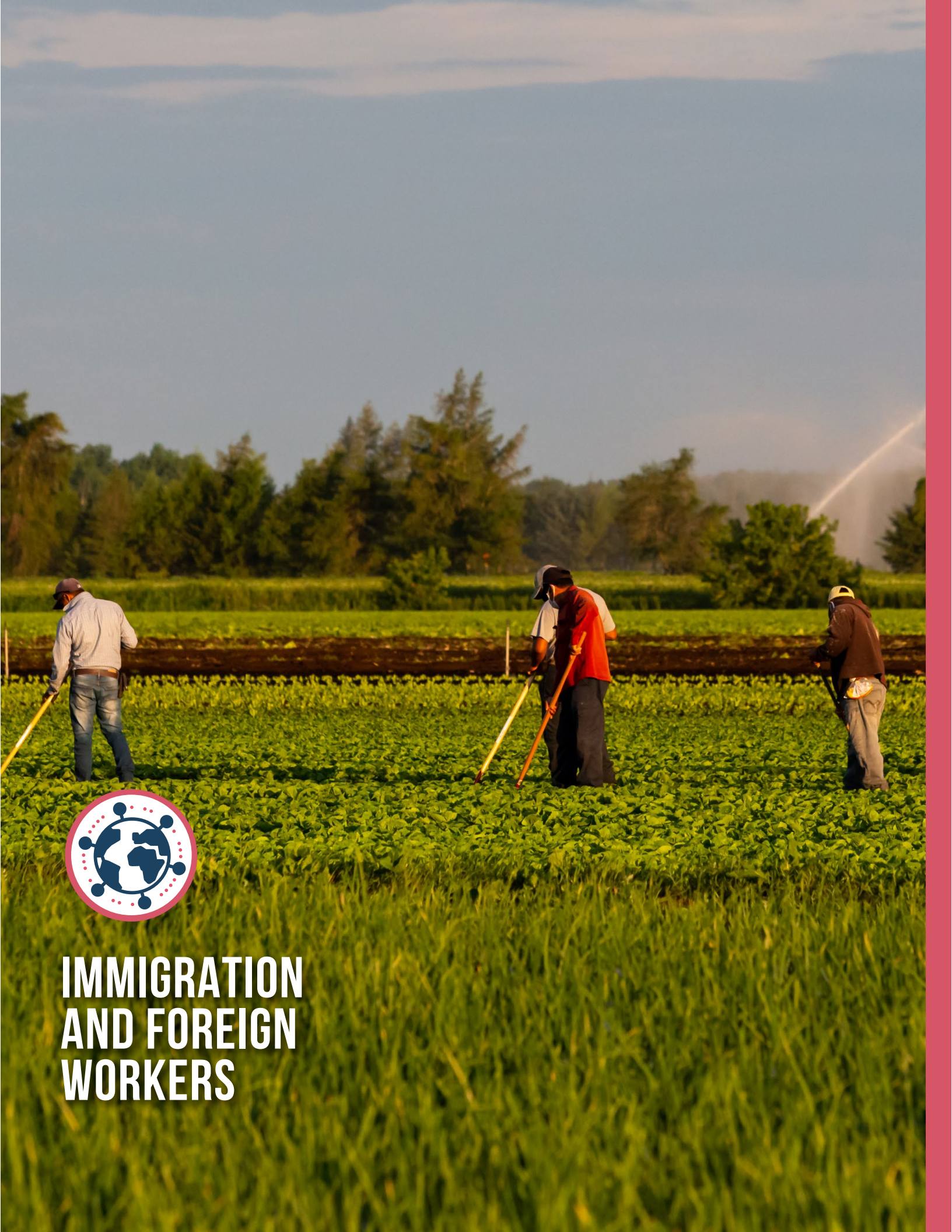
### These include:

- **Municipalities taking greater control over the planning and design of infrastructure projects with provincial financing**
- **Provinces investing in and building social, affordable housing for renters in rural areas**
- **Provinces and the federal government collaborating to implement universal cellular and broadband coverage**
- **Provinces taking action to create childcare projects and elder-care projects that would reduce service deserts in rural areas as well as affordable virtual and/or in-home care services**
- **Provinces taking part in data collection to determine rural Canada's healthcare needs**
- **Provinces incentivizing workers in social infrastructure to work and live in rural areas**
- **Businesses working together privately or with local municipal governments on accessible transit options to help workers get to and from their workplaces**

We know there is no better time than the present to act and drive favourable outcomes. Our industry deserves it, our workforce needs it and our future depends on it.

If you'd like to access a copy of our infrastructure report, please email us at [\*\*outreach@cahrc-ccrhc.ca\*\*](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrhc.ca).





# IMMIGRATION AND FOREIGN WORKERS





## TAPPING INTO THE OPPORTUNITY OF NEWCOMERS TO BUILD OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE

It is no secret that most employers in agriculture are stretched for staff. At the same time, research CAHRC conducted last fall tells us that newcomers to Canada are one of the groups most open to a career in agriculture.

The federal government has said it plans to welcome more than 1.45 million new Canadians over the next three years. These individuals bring their own diverse skill sets, many of which are desperately needed in the agriculture sector. We know that the industry offers the chance to make an impact for those with a background or interest not just in farming but also in business, science, marketing or manufacturing.

This pairing presents a chance to further encourage newcomers to choose agriculture as the industry in which to pursue a career as part of their fresh start.

To help better facilitate this, CAHRC created Welcome to Canadian Agriculture.

**Welcome to Canadian Agriculture** is an online, self-paced, e-learning initiative that provides participants with a general overview of the agriculture sector.

With approximately 12 hours of course material that includes access to job profiles, virtual farm tours and other interactive modules, participants will learn about:

- The opportunities available in agriculture
- The short- and long-term potential of the industry
- Careers that are favourable matches for individuals based on specific backgrounds, education, experience, previous training and language skills

Content comes in the form of virtual farm tours, interactive modules and educational videos. this course is available to anyone.

For those interested in learning more about this initiative, please contact **outreach@cahrc-ccrhc.ca**.





# DO YOU HAVE A STORY THAT NEEDS TO BE TOLD IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF AGRI WORKFORCE MATTERS?

**Let us know!**



**Our team can be reached at [outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca)  
to discuss sponsored content and other opportunities  
you can take advantage of.**



**SKILL  
DEVELOPMENT**

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# BREAKING BARRIERS: NEW NATIONAL NETWORK FOR WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Women bring a unique perspective to the world of agriculture, yet they account for only 30 per cent of our workforce. Not only that, but when we look at the proportion of women who go on to assume leadership roles, it is much smaller than the proportion of men who do so. With our sector facing a worker and skill gap crisis, we know that growing the industry and ensuring more women advance on a career path in agriculture will help address this challenge.

At CAHRC, we are committed to achieving better outcomes to create a stronger future workforce. That's why we're pleased to introduce the **National Women in Agriculture Network. Launched this month**, this initiative aims to advance women in Canadian agriculture through research, collaboration and knowledge mobilization. The first organization of its kind to exist in Canada, the network is made possible by the participation

of provincial and regional groups in the sector, which are largely volunteer-led.

The project will involve taking four critical actions toward the goal of ensuring all women hold at least 30 per cent of leadership positions by 2030. They are as follows:

- Working collaboratively with regional and provincial women in agriculture organizations to develop a comprehensive Action Plan. This will involve creating a mission, vision and value statement with stakeholders to guide the National Women in Agriculture and Agri-Food Network while establishing an interim organizational governance structure. A series of webinars in both official languages will be hosted to validate the plan in its draft form.

- Supporting community-led regional events in Canada designed to develop women in agriculture. This includes technical sessions and networking events.
- Measuring the progress of women in agriculture in Canada since 2015, when CAHRC's foundational Supporting the Advancement of Women in Agriculture report was released.
- Mobilizing knowledge and understanding where progress has been made and where opportunities exist to ensure women continue to move forward in the industry.

CAHRC will manage the initiative through an existing digital platform. This virtual network will serve as a central location

to host webinars, post about community activities and generally network with like-minded individuals. It will also serve as a database of women in leadership roles within the agricultural industry, such as C-suite executives, directors, board members and executive committee members in agricultural organizations across Canada.

We know that our industry is better off when everyone can thrive. The National Women in Agriculture Network will make tangible strides toward widespread success across the workforce.

Interested in learning more about this program and how you can participate? Email us at [outreach@cahrc-ccrhc.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrhc.ca).







# AUTOMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

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# ASSESS AND IMPROVE YOUR JOURNEY TOWARD TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

Is your business or agricultural organization on a journey towards technology adoption? It's important to know how you stack up compared to the way our industry is advancing. It allows you to stay competitive and understand what strides are required to make your operation more efficient.

This is why CAHRC developed a self-assessment tool. We want you to have the information you need that will empower you to take action to expedite the adoption process.

## How to use it:

Businesses should read through each row and identify which of the four options best describes their current operations. The four columns available each have a number at the top, which indicates the number of “points” a company receives for each response (i.e., a response in column 1 is 1 point, column 2 is 2 points, etc.).

The user should select the option that best describes where they are currently at, recognizing that selecting option 3 means they will already have completed options 1 and 2. Once the organization has gone through all the rows in this framework, they should compile the number of points they scored and identify where within the four categories they fall:

- **1-13 points:** Limited development - work must be done to plan and build a foundation before adopting new technologies to the workplace.
- **14-26 points:** Beginner - early-stage in the technology adoption journey; some basic technologies are used but there is still much to improve upon.
- **27-39 points:** Intermediate - a solid foundation is in place and some advanced technologies have been implemented.
- **40-48 points:** Expert - many advanced technologies have been successfully implemented.
- **49-52 points:** Cutting-edge - ready to assess and adopt emerging technologies as needed.

If an organization is mostly in column 3, then the rows where they may have scored themselves a 1 or 2 are where they should target their improvement efforts. Technology adoption should be understood as a process, and improving your score can be done through investment, focus, generating employee buy-in and leadership.



	1	2	3	4
<b>Strategic plan</b>	<b>Technology adoption is not included in the organization's strategic plan</b>	<b>Technology adoption is mentioned</b>	<b>There is an explicit technology adoption component to the strategic plan</b>	<b>There is a comprehensive and adaptable strategy for technology adoption and a clear digital vision</b>
<b>Planned technology upgrades</b>	<b>No upgrades planned</b>	<b>Some new technologies are being implemented</b>	<b>New and improved technologies are replacing old ones</b>	<b>New technologies are evaluated and adopted as needed</b>
<b>Budget/ investments</b>	<b>There is no budget dedicated to technology adoption</b>	<b>Some funds are set aside for technology adoption</b>	<b>Technology adoption is budgeted relatively well</b>	<b>Budget items are detailed according to the strategic plan</b>
<b>Examples of technology types in use - internal</b>	<b>Technology is used for communications, file sharing and editing</b>	<b>Business management and productivity tools</b>	<b>Analytical, data storage and data management tools</b>	<b>Digital production tools, big data analytics, enterprise resource planning, artificial intelligence (AI), 3D printing, systems are integrated (especially using Internet of Things systems), smart sensors, biotechnology, geomatics or geospatial technologies</b>
<b>Examples of technology types in use - external</b>	<b>Informational website, some social media presence, emails</b>	<b>E-commerce/ transactional website, electronic invoicing, digital marketing strategy</b>	<b>Website with customer accounts, personalized content and offers for customers; supply chain and logistics technologies</b>	<b>Customer service tools have been optimized, new ones are evaluated and integrated as needed</b>

<b>Data collection and use</b>	<b>No data collection occurs</b>	<b>Data is collected and sometimes used in decision-making</b>	<b>Data is collected and used in decision-making</b>	<b>Data is collected and analyzed in real-time, used extensively in decision-making</b>
<b>Current cybersecurity measures</b>	<b>No cybersecurity measures are in place, simple passwords with no time limits may be used for devices and accounts</b>	<b>Training and awareness (minimum annually), secure passwords that are regularly changed, up-to-date anti-virus and anti-malware software, regular updates of all IT systems</b>	<b>Limited access to secure servers, policy for content sharing, end-to-end encryption of sensitive data, incident response plan, record retention strategy, advanced authentication systems</b>	<b>Best practices are followed, new methods are adopted as needed</b>
<b>Data backup</b>	<b>No data backup procedures are in place</b>	<b>Data is sometimes backed up</b>	<b>Data is regularly backed up physically</b>	<b>Data is frequently backed up physically and to the cloud</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Technology adoption is not on the radar</b>	<b>Technology adoption is somewhat valued</b>	<b>Technology adoption is a priority</b>	<b>There are technology adoption champions leading initiatives</b>
<b>Culture of change</b>	<b>No work toward fostering a culture of change</b>	<b>A plan to build a culture of change has been developed and is starting to be implemented</b>	<b>Change is encouraged; culture, strategy, actions and structure are aligned</b>	<b>Strong culture of change in the organization, change management strategy is in place, everyone is on board</b>
<b>People - current technology skills</b>	<b>Communicate and coordinate electronically</b>	<b>Find and read documents on the Internet, complete digital forms and commercial transactions online</b>	<b>Use new technologies for coordination, collaboration and training; use Internet research skills to problem solve</b>	<b>Continually learn new skills; use appropriate cybersecurity measures; can use, maintain and troubleshoot different technologies</b>



<b>People - support and training opportunities</b>	<b>None offered</b>	<b>Changes are communicated, training resources are shared</b>	<b>Changes are communicated, training tools are offered</b>	<b>Impact assessment of changes is conducted, proposed changes are a conversation with staff, training modules are developed and offered</b>
<b>People - technology perceptions and attitudes</b>	<b>New technology is seen as not useful, difficult to learn and not welcome</b>	<b>New technology is seen as somewhat useful, might take some time to learn and is welcomed to an extent</b>	<b>New technology is seen as useful, might take a bit of time to learn and is welcomed</b>	<b>New technology is seen as very useful, easy to learn and is embraced</b>

# AROUND TOWN

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We've got our fingers on the pulse of all events in Canadian agriculture, so you don't have to.

**CALGARY STAMPEDE:**  
**JULY 5-14**

**INTERNATIONAL FARM MANAGEMENT CONGRESS:**  
**JULY 7-12**

**SEEDS CANADA AGM:**  
**JULY 8-10**

**AG IN MOTION:**  
**JULY 16-18**

**CFA SUMMER MEETINGS AND FPT ROUNDTABLE:**  
**JULY 16-17**

**AG RISE SKILLS WORKSHOP:**  
**JULY 17**

**AG SMART EXPO:**  
**JULY 30-31**

**AGRI-BUSINESS CANADA INTERNATIONAL EXPO:**  
**AUGUST 10-11**

**THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE:**  
**AUGUST 16-17**

**ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO AGM:**  
**AUGUST 18-21**

**CANADIAN BEEF INDUSTRY CONFERENCE:**  
**AUGUST 19-22**





**CAHRC-CCRHA**

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council

Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines  
en agriculture

**[WWW.CAHRC-CCRHA.CA](http://WWW.CAHRC-CCRHA.CA)**