

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

# AGRI WORKFORCE MATTERS

DECEMBER 2025

**HOW CAHRC AND NSFA ARE  
STRENGTHENING NOVA SCOTIA'S  
AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE**

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**IMPORTANT REMINDERS  
FOR TFWP EMPLOYERS**

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**SHAPING THE NEXT  
GENERATION'S VIEW OF  
AGRICULTURE**

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**HIRING DEMAND REPORTING**

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**BRINGING STUDENTS INTO YOUR  
OPERATION IS THE SMARTEST  
HIRING MOVE YOU CAN MAKE  
FOR SUMMER 2026**



**CAHRC-CCRHA**

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council  
Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines  
en agriculture



# OUR NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

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 (NWSP) has entered its next phase of work. The initiative remains the same, industry stakeholders will embark on a new set of action items while continuing to amplify the great work already happening. Moving forward, the NWSP will maintain three working groups. As we acknowledge the shift toward AI, digitalization and automation, the workplan will reflect that and pursue actions that will better prepare the sector for adoption.





# 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.*

The perception of the industry and awareness of opportunities in the sectors is crucial to its growth and sustainability. This working group will amplify programs and bring greater awareness of career opportunities in agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing to potential employees — including newcomers to Canada, job seekers not already connected to the industry, members of underrepresented groups and secondary and post-secondary students.

Likewise, support will be given for employers looking to recruit a generation of employees 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.



## **People and Workplace Culture**

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

Industry initiatives are underway to identify workers coming from other sectors who have a valuable skill set for agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing. Industry is also working to highlight the technological opportunities to high school and post secondary graduates. Additionally, the expansion of work integrated learning opportunities allows students to explore career opportunities prior to entering the workforce. By crafting a narrative to show a pathway to success in the agriculture industry, recruitment will be less challenging. This working group will continue to develop resources and case studies to help outline best management practices the industry is using to support a safe and inviting 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 has conducted research to develop policy recommendations to amplify the importance of the TFW programs. Recommendations also looked 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.

At this time the Immigration and Temporary Foreign Worker Working Group has concluded its strategic work. The members continue to meet when necessary to advance any new discussion pieces.



## Skill Development

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

While research shows the sector is well situated to make advancements in technology, there still remains some significant hurdles to overcome, both for primary producers and further down the supply chain in food and beverage manufacturing. It is important to note the increased use of automation and technology, while a proposed solution to the chronic shortage of labour, may not lead to a decreased demand for labour but instead change the skills sets required. It would also help improve the productivity and competitiveness of Canada's agricultural and food and beverage manufacturing sectors.

Many of the projects in this working group are ever green, each step of improvement, moving the industry forward. The development of the National Skills Strategy continues as a registry of the current and future skills needed for the agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing sectors. Using the National Occupational Standards, CAHRC has developed the Skills Inventory Framework





## Skill Development

which outlines in varying detail what is required for 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. It will also be promoted to curriculum designers to ensure the full set of skills are covered over the course of a program. This project was developed to support agricultural career as Food Processing Skills Canada has a well developed Learning and Recognition Framework for food processing careers!

CAHRC has also launched its geographical mapping of skills, highlighting where the skills needs are and if there are skilled individuals available to fill that gap.



## Automation and Technology

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

The industry is experiencing a critical 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 Working Group will continue to examine the increased need for capital investments and its correlation to labour productivity. They will also investigate funding opportunities to increase the adoption of automation. Moreover, they will explore current programming available for upskilling and re-skilling of employees due to changes in technology.

As we make advancements in technology, we must also examine the risk along the way. Legal obligations and the regulatory environment on automation and technology is constantly adapting, so an environmental scan will be commissioned to understand what is currently regulated and where the gaps are.

## OUR PARTNERS



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



Food and  
Beverage  
Canada



Aliments  
et boissons  
Canada



# AGRI WORKFORCE MATTERS

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**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.*





**GET INVOLVED:  
A STRONG WORKFORCE  
STARTS WITH YOU.**

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Dear readers,

As we close out another year in Canadian agriculture, one message resonates clearly throughout this issue of *Agri Workforce Matters*: building a strong, resilient workforce depends on meaningful partnerships grounded in solid research. Across regions, commodities, and communities, no single organization can solve the workforce and skills challenges facing our sector alone. Progress happens when we work together, share insights, and align efforts around evidence and impact.

At the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC), partnerships are foundational to our work. Collaboration with provincial organizations, national partners, and community-based groups supporting students, women, newcomers, and internationally trained professionals ensures workforce solutions are practical, relevant, and responsive to real-world needs. By combining local knowledge with national labour market intelligence, we reduce duplication, stretch resources further, and deliver tools that support both employers and workers.

Research plays a critical role in this work. Reliable labour market information, hiring demand data, and skills analysis allow us to move beyond anecdotes and design programs that address real gaps. Understanding today's skill needs—and anticipating future demands as automation, digitalization, and new technologies reshape agriculture—helps employers plan with confidence and educators prepare the next generation of talent. Research also informs policy discussions, ensuring training, immigration, and workforce programs reflect realities on farms and in agri-food businesses. In 2026, CAHRC looks forward to expanding our labour market intelligence efforts with more detailed, real-time workforce and skills data.

This issue highlights the intersection of research and partnerships in action. Work-integrated learning initiatives connect students to agriculture through hands-on experience, while collaborations such as those with ACCES Employment strengthen the ag-tech workforce. National initiatives like the National Workforce Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Food and Beverage Manufacturing bring stakeholders together to align actions and address systemic challenges. The National Women in Agriculture and Agri-Foods initiative is illustrative of how collaboration is essential for attraction, retention, and long-term sustainability.

CAHRC is also pleased to deliver micro-credentials and e-learning focused on HR, leadership, supervision, and Temporary Foreign Worker Employers, supporting skills development across the industry.

As we look ahead to 2026, by continuing to invest in research, training, and collaboration, we will turn insight into action and ensure Canadian agriculture has the people and skills it needs to thrive.

Thank you for your continued collaboration and commitment to building a strong agricultural workforce.

Have a wonderful holiday season and all the best in 2026.



**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.



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## CAHRC'S CORNER

- STAYING CONNECTED
- HOW CAHRC AND NSFA ARE STRENGTHENING NOVA SCOTIA'S AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE
- CANADA'S 2026—2028 IMMIGRATION LEVELS PLAN: WHAT IT MEANS FOR AGRICULTURE



## CAHRC'S CORNER

# STAYING CONNECTED

### BUILD YOUR TEAM'S SKILLS

Looking for flexible, focused training? CAHRC's microcredentials are designed for agriculture employers and employees who want practical skills without the long timelines. Current offerings include:

- **Women in Agriculture Leadership Development**
- **HR Management in Agriculture**
- **Temporary Foreign Worker Program School**

Thanks to the support of RBC and FCC, funded seats are available for selected programs. [Learn more.](#)



Foundation  
Fondation



### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

These **monthly one-hour conversations** will bring together farmers, employers, educators, and more across the industry to:

- Reflect on what we've learned through this initiative
- Share how tools and training have made a difference in real communities
- Explore how we bring these services to more rural and remote areas
- Identify gaps and co-create solutions

Register [here](#) for **January 15** and watch the past sessions [here](#).



### LEARN MORE ABOUT SEEDING DIGITAL SKILLS

Discover if the upcoming training is right for you!

Held in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, this program is a hands-on opportunity for agri-food and food processing businesses to adopt digital twin technology.

[Register now](#) for one of the last cohorts of **2026**.



Funded by



### BECOME A PARTNER

Want to strengthen Canada's agri-food workforce while showcasing your leadership? CAHRC's partnership program connects you with tailored HR solutions, exclusive industry insights, and national visibility. Join us in building a stronger, more resilient sector.

Contact us at [outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca) to learn more.





An Ontario Chamber of Commerce Training Program

# STOP GUESSING. START SIMULATING.

Free training in Digital Twin technology for agri-food businesses

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

- **Duration:** 12 weeks, online & flexible
- **Format:** Hands-on training with Unity
- **Includes:** Digital credential
- **Cost:** Fully funded (valued at \$15,000 USD)

## WHO IT'S FOR

Agri-food and food processing businesses looking to:

- Test changes before investing
- Boost efficiency
- Adopt innovation with confidence



## BUSINESS BENEFITS

- **Cut waste & downtime:** streamline your operations and save resources
- **Boost efficiency & profitability:** make smarter, data-driven decisions
- **Strengthen your workforce:** upskill employees with in-demand digital tools
- **Innovate with confidence:** test ideas safely before investing

Free training. Limited seats. Apply today. ➡ [outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:outreach@cahrc-ccrha.ca)

Last chance to register for 2026 - Limited seats available.



## CAHRC'S CORNER

# WORKING BETTER TOGETHER: HOW CAHRC AND NSFA ARE STRENGTHENING NOVA SCOTIA'S AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE

Across Canada, agriculture is evolving quickly and with it, the challenges facing farmers and employers. In Nova Scotia, workforce shortages, shifting skills needs, and the demand for more sustainable employment practices have become increasingly urgent. Addressing these issues requires more than an isolated effort. It requires coordination, shared expertise, and a commitment to working together.

This is exactly what has shaped the long-standing partnership between the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA) and the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC). What began as a practical recognition of shared challenges has grown into a collaborative relationship grounded in both local insight and a national perspective. As NSFA reflects, "The collaboration between our organizations was inspired by a shared recognition that workforce shortages and labour-market complexities were becoming major barriers to growth in agriculture. Whereas both organizations saw the overlap in goals, the value of not duplicating work led to a natural partnership."

Both organizations are driven by the same core priority: supporting farmers and strengthening the agricultural workforce. NSFA brings deep provincial knowledge and direct relationships with producers, while CAHRC contributes to national labour-market data, HR tools, and research that help fill in a broader context. Together, this creates more coherent and accessible support for producers. The Federation notes that "The NSFA-CAHRC partnership has increased the accessibility of resources and HR planning tools and allowed us to draw on further-reaching expertise when needed but co-hosting informational webinars. Producers accessing these supports are able to improve their HR practices."

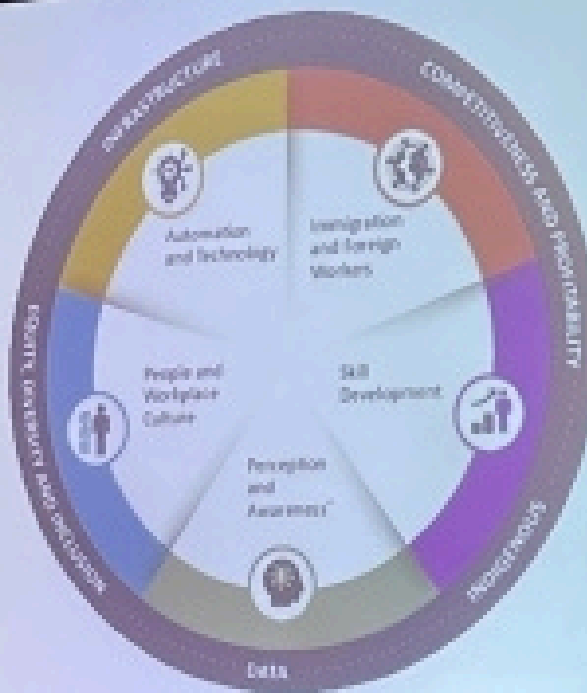


One of the most meaningful areas of collaboration has been the Cultivating Inclusion Framework, a joint effort designed to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility across the sector. According to NSFA, "The Cultivating Inclusion Framework aims to foster a culture of inclusion across the Nova Scotia agriculture industry. The initiative promotes a welcoming and respectful agricultural workforce by increasing awareness and competencies of diversity, equity, inclusions and accessibility among farm owners, workers, and stakeholders." Looking ahead, they emphasize that "As it is rolled out, its intention is to support the creation of inclusive workplaces that attract and retain diverse talent, improve employee satisfaction, and strengthen industry resilience."



## NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

- Developed to address challenges in agriculture and food & beverage manufacturing industries
- Whole-in-one approach
- Five Strategic Pillars
- Five foundational themes



NSFA has also played an active role in shaping the National Workforce Strategic Plan, ensuring Nova Scotia's realities are reflected in national planning. They explain that their participation in working groups allows them to "share on-the-ground insights from Nova Scotia producers, ensuring that the needs of our province are reflected." This two-way flow of information creates strategies that are more grounded, coordinated, and effective.

Agriculture is transforming rapidly, and workforce needs are shifting alongside it. Combining provincial experience with national research, as NSFA describes, "helps both organizations stay ahead of emerging issues, from new technology and evolving training needs, to the increasing urgency of succession planning." By aligning local experience with national trends, the partnership keeps both organizations nimble and responsive to change.

For NSFA, the value of partnership is straightforward: it leads to clearer solutions and more consistent support for producers. They note that "Partnerships such as this one – national to local – make workforce challenges more manageable as different perspectives contribute to solutions. No

single organization has all the data, experience, or tools needed, but when we work together, solutions become clearer and more effective. Collaboration also reduces duplication of work while giving our producers stronger, more consistent support across the sector."

The CAHRC-NSFA partnership demonstrates what can happen when organizations align goals, share expertise, and commit to supporting producers from both the provincial and The CAHRC-NSFA partnership demonstrates what can happen when organizations align goals, share expertise, and commit to supporting producers from both the provincial and national perspective. It is a model built on practicality, shared purpose, and the understanding that collaboration is one of agriculture's most powerful tools.





## CAHRC'S CORNER

# CANADA'S 2026–2028 IMMIGRATION LEVELS PLAN: WHAT IT MEANS FOR AGRICULTURE

In November 2025, the Federal Government released the 2026–2028 Immigration Levels Plan, outlining Canada's planned permanent and temporary resident admissions over the next three years.

Overall permanent residents' admissions will stabilize at 380,000 from 2026 to 2028 with a large focus on economic immigration reaching 64% in 2027 and 2028 and francophone immigration programs.

The number of temporary residents representing students and workers arriving in Canada under International Mobility Program (IMP) and Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) will decrease to 385,00 in 2026 and to 370,000 in 2027 and 2028 support the target of decreasing temporary residents to 5% of the population.

This reduction represents **a shift how Canada intends to manage labour supply, program integrity, and pathways to permanent residence** in the coming years. Below, CAHRC unpacks the key elements of the plan and what they mean for farm employers, agri-businesses, and sector associations navigating ongoing workforce shortages.

The most notable changes is how the plan treats TFWP numbers. For 2026, the government projects 60,000 temporary foreign workers, followed by 50,000 in both 2027 and 2028. However, fine print is critical here:

- TFWP targets include all non-seasonal workers who stay in Canada for more than one year.
- TFWP targets exclude seasonal workers, including those in primary agriculture who come for less than 270 days.

This clarification suggests that the government likely does not intend to reduce access to the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP). Seasonal workers remain outside the formal immigration cap, meaning core programs like SAWP, which currently provides up to 40,000 workers annually, are expected to remain stable.

Widely used Agri-Food Pilot likely did not make its way into the Levels Plan. Instead, the government has hinted at a potential one-time PR program specifically for in-demand occupations with the focus on rural areas, though details remain to be confirmed.



Provinces received increased nomination spaces, positioning the Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) as a more viable option for permanent agricultural and agri-food positions. However, not all PNPs currently accommodate lower-skilled NOC levels—limiting access depending on province and occupation. Upcoming changes in PNP categories and programs can be anticipated.

Based on the Levels Plan and recent TFWP updates increased scrutiny with LMIA applications processing can be expected, including more rigorous reviews of business legitimacy, return of requirements for job advertising and recruitment, closer oversight of Job Bank postings and compliance with new features like Direct Apply.

In addition, the industry is expecting any news or communication regarding new proposed program for agriculture and fish processing, with consultations completed in 2025.

One thing that is clear, 2026 will be an interesting year and changes in programs and requirements can be expected. CAHRC will continue to monitor developments and updates and share the information and resources to help employers navigate the evolving TFWP landscape.



## CAHRC'S CORNER

# HIRING DEMAND REPORTING

## *Job Scrapping*



Through Vicinity Jobs Inc., CAHRC accesses Hiring Demand Reporting (HDR) to further understand the demand side of the labour market, what are employers actually looking for? By identifying the jobs and subsequent skills employers are looking for, industry can build programming to meet job needs, educators can build courses to better prepare graduates for the workforce.

Often through anecdotal conversation, we hear there is demand for specific jobs or a skill but by evaluating job posting, these are labour gaps that employers are looking to fill immediately. In past research, CAHRC has identified where we feel the highest demand jobs will be, computer engineers, web design, and data analytics just to name a few. By accessing HDR, CAHRC now can verify that information and monitor the adoption of these positions within the sector. This information also contributes to core competency skills. As we incorporate new careers into the sector, we must identify core competencies for those careers.

So who uses this information? Organizations who are evaluating labour market information and building programs to answer the skills gap. CAHRC has access to both national and provincial data for all of primary agriculture. As we see the transition to advanced technology and the need for a skilled workforce, this information will better inform discussions on where the highest job demand is in our workforce.

If you are looking to for more information on Hiring Demand Reporting, please contact [Phyllis MacCallum](#).

### Ever wish you had a bird's-eye view of the agricultural job market?

CAHRC's Job Scrapping tool pulls postings from job boards across Canada and shows:

- What positions are most in demand
- Where the labour gaps are
- Skills, salaries, and details straight from the postings

**Turn data into direction.**





# PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF INDUSTRY AND CAREERS

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# SHAPING THE NEXT GENERATION'S VIEW OF AGRICULTURE

When [CAHRC](#) partnered with [Agriculture in the Classroom Canada \(AIRC\)](#) for the MyBlueprint webinar this fall, the goal was to help students see agriculture for what it truly is today, which is innovative, diverse, tech-driven, and full of opportunity. The student questions we received prior to the webinar presentation made one thing crystal clear: young people are curious about agriculture, but their understanding is still shaped by outdated perceptions.

Many asked:

“What jobs are there besides farming?”

“Do you have to grow up on a farm?”

“Is agriculture high-tech now?”

“Can I work in ag if I’m into science, tech, business, or the environment?”

Their questions were thoughtful, honest and they revealed a major opportunity for industry and educators to play a stronger role in building awareness and changing the perception of agriculture.

## Exposing Students to Non-Traditional Roles in Agriculture

What these questions showed us is that students want to explore ag careers, but don’t always know how to enter the industry. Many are surprised to learn that agriculture

includes roles in:

- Data analytics
- Engineering & automation
- Environmental science
- Food safety & supply-chain logistics
- Agri-marketing and communications
- GIS and precision ag

This is exactly why early exposure matters. When students see the real range of careers and potential career pathways, the sector instantly becomes more relevant and exciting.

## WIL as the Bridge Between Curiosity and Career

CAHRC expresses the importance of Work-Integrated Learning in changing that perception of agriculture and exploring career pathways. When students see agriculture up close, not just through textbooks, but through real work experiences, their entire understanding shifts. Real-world experience helps students understand that:

- You don’t need a farming background to thrive
- Jobs exist in urban and rural settings
- Agriculture is one of the most innovative sectors in Canada
- Skills like tech, science, business and sustainability are in high demand



WIL placements through CAHRC's Growing Opportunities Program give students clarity, confidence, and connections. They also directly support employers who are struggling to fill roles and need fresh talent to stay competitive.

### **Why Awareness Matters for the Future Workforce**

Agriculture is changing fast. Students want careers with purpose, innovation, and impact. Their questions tell us that the interest is there, and it is up to industry and educators to help guide them to explore career pathways that they didn't even know existed.

Through continued partnership, industry collaboration, and programs like Growing Opportunities and WIL we can help students:

- Discover the full spectrum of modern ag careers
- Build confidence in entering the sector
- Gain real experience that shatter old stereotypes
- Become the next generation of Canada's agri-food workforce

The opportunity is huge and the MyBlueprint webinar showed us exactly why investing in awareness is one of the most powerful tools we have for the future.





# See What Jobs Are Really in Demand

**Ever wish you had a bird's-eye view  
of the agricultural job market?**

CAHRC's Job Scrapping tool pulls postings from job boards across Canada and shows:

- What positions are most in demand
- Where the labour gaps are
- Skills, salaries, and details straight from the postings

**Turn data into direction.**

Whether you're hiring or planning for the future, job scrapping gives you the insight you need to fill labour needs and strengthen your workforce.

**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

✉ Phyllis MacCallum at [pmacallum@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:pmacallum@cahrc-ccrha.ca) | [www.cahrc-ccrha.ca](https://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca)





# PEOPLE AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

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# WHY BRINGING STUDENTS INTO YOUR OPERATION IS THE SMARTEST HIRING MOVE YOU CAN MAKE FOR SUMMER 2026

As the agriculture sector continues to evolve, one thing is becoming crystal clear: employers who invest in Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) placements aren't just filling short-term gaps; they're future-proofing their operations. With new technologies and a rising demand for talent, bringing students onto your farm or agri-business is one of the most strategic moves you can make heading into Summer 2026.

Programs like CAHRC's **Growing Opportunities Student Work Placement Program** make this easier than ever by helping employers access funding and tap into new streams of emerging talent. Students from across Canada in STEM, environmental science, business, communications, engineering, ag-tech, biology, GIS, data analytics, and more are eager to explore agriculture. You're not just giving them a summer job; you're giving them a real-world pathway into an industry that needs their skills.

## Why WIL Matters for Employers

Work-Integrated Learning isn't just a recruitment tool ... it's a workforce strategy. Employers who bring students into their teams are:

- Closing labor gaps by building their own talent pipelines
- Boosting innovation through fresh perspectives and digital-skills
- Strengthening workplace culture by fostering mentorship and knowledge transfer

... And with CAHRC's support, employers don't have to navigate this alone.

## How Employers Can Find Students for Summer 2026

If you're planning ahead, you're already winning. Here are the top pathways employers can use to connect with top talent and get ready for funding:

- Connect with Post-Secondary Career Services & Co-op Offices

Universities and colleges across Canada have dedicated WIL and co-op teams who share job postings directly with students seeking summer placements. Many can target your posting to specific programs - agriculture, environmental sciences, data science, engineering, business, and more.

- Leverage CAHRC's Growing Opportunities Partnerships

CAHRC works with career centers, national networks, and WIL organizations like CEWIL. Employers can reach out for guidance on where and how to post roles that match the funding criteria.

- Post on Platforms Students Actually Use

Students aren't browsing traditional job boards; they're on LinkedIn, school portals, and sector-specific pages. Posting early for summer positions (December–March) dramatically increases applications.

- Build Roles That Highlight Growth and Impact



Students want experience that feels meaningful. Roles that blend hands-on work with technology, sustainability, or data attract significantly more interest.

- Highlight That You're a SWPP-Eligible Employer

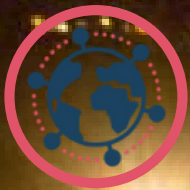
When students know the role qualifies for SWPP funding, they're more confident applying because it signals legitimacy, structure, and mentorship.

## **A Win-Win for the Future of the Sector**

Every student placement is more than a hire ... it's an investment in the next generation of agriculture talent. When employers open their doors to students, they help reshape perceptions of the sector, build a stronger and more inclusive workforce, and keep Canadian agriculture competitive in a rapidly changing world.

Summer 2026 may feel far away, but talent planning starts now. With the support of the [Growing Opportunities program](#), employers can access funding, build meaningful roles, and play a direct role in shaping the future of agriculture.





# IMMIGRATION AND FOREIGN WORKERS







# GROWING CANADA'S AGTECH WORKFORCE: HOW ACCES & CAHRC COOPERATION IS CREATING NEW TALENT PATHWAYS

Canada's agricultural sector is undergoing a transformation. As technology reshapes how food is grown, harvested and distributed, employers across the country are searching for the next generation of skilled talent—professionals who understand both agriculture and innovation. In response to this emerging need, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) has started collaboration with ACCES Employment, a leading non-profit supporting newcomers and jobseekers, to help build a stronger, more inclusive AgTech workforce.

This collaboration supports **Connecting to Careers in Agricultural Technology**, a program funded by Upskill Canada and the Government of Canada, designed to prepare internationally trained professionals for careers in AgTech and controlled environment agriculture (CEA). The initiative combines technical training, workforce readiness, employer connections, and sector orientation.

The partnership reflects a shared mission: strengthening Canada's agricultural workforce by opening doors for skilled newcomers while helping employers access job-ready talent. Through employer-facing events, networking sessions, and mentorship opportunities, CAHRC ensures that program graduates are seen, supported, and connected to the industry.

Employers benefit directly, gaining access to:

- Pre-trained AgTech and CEA talent
- Candidates with global experience and diverse skill sets
- Work-integrated learning and project collaborations
- Opportunities to upskill existing employees through select workshops

At a time when labour gaps are widening and technological adoption is accelerating, creating these bridges is more than workforce development—it's nation-building for the future of sustainable agriculture.



## Success Stories That Showcase Program Participants

Behind every labour market strategy are real people whose lives and careers are transformed through opportunity. The [ACCES program](#) is already producing powerful success stories.

### **From Newcomer to AgTech Entrepreneur: Svitlana's Journey**

After fleeing the war in Ukraine, Svitlana Haidaichuk arrived in Canada with more than 16 years of experience in logistics and production management. Through ACCES's AgTech program, she gained mentorship, Canadian context, and the confidence to turn an idea into a thriving business. Today, she is the co-founder and Operations Manager of Fusion Greens Inc., a hydroponic lettuce farm in Ontario that uses innovative NFT systems to produce fresh, pesticide-free greens year-round.

Svitlana credits ACCES with helping her refine her business plan, connect with local partners, and translate her expertise into a sustainable, community-focused operation.



### **Damilola's Path to a High-Growth AgTech Career**

For Damilola Olapade, who came to Canada from Nigeria with experience managing thousands of farmer contracts and advanced cultivation systems, the biggest challenge was presenting his experience in a way Canadian employers would understand. ACCES helped him adapt his résumé, strengthen his interview skills, and navigate the Canadian labour market. With support from the program, Damilola secured a role as a Cultivation Technician at WILL Cannabis Group—a position that aligned perfectly with his agricultural technology background. Today, he is thriving and eager to mentor other internationally trained professionals.



### **Reclaiming Professional Identity: Liudmyla's Story**

Another participant, Liudmyla Haiova, also from Ukraine, described her biggest challenge not as finding a job—but finding her footing in a new country. Through the Connecting to Careers in AgriTech program, she built the confidence to articulate her skills, understand the AgTech sector, and reposition her career. She says the program helped her “reconnect with her professional identity” and gain clarity on her future in Canadian agriculture.





## ***A Win for the Industry***

*These stories illustrate the transformative impact of employer engagement. Newcomers bring global perspectives, technical expertise, and a deep commitment to building a future in Canada's agriculture sector. Employers gain access to talent pipelines that can accelerate innovation in areas such as vertical farming, automation, greenhouse production, and sustainable technologies.*

## **How Employers Can Get Involved: Join a Speed-Mentoring Session**

One of the most immediate ways employers can make an impact is by joining ACCES's virtual speed-mentoring networking sessions, hosted in collaboration with CAHRC. These 90-minute sessions allow industry professionals to meet participants, share career insights, and connect with future talent.

ACCES and CAHRC invite AgTech companies, farms, HR leaders, and technical experts across the industry to join as mentors and help shape the next generation of AgTech professionals.

By opening doors for internationally trained professionals, we are not only supporting newcomers—we're helping Canada's agriculture sector grow stronger, more resilient, and more future-ready.

## ***Interested in participating or mentoring?***

Connect with [CAHRC](#) to learn more about upcoming sessions and partnership opportunities.





**CAHRC-CCRHA**

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council  
Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines  
en agriculture



# Be Seen as a **Leader** in Solving Agriculture's #1 Challenge

CAHRC is the **national leader in workforce development for Canadian agriculture**. We provide research, training, and HR solutions that help the sector attract, retain, and develop a skilled, sustainable workforce. **By partnering with us, your organization plays a direct role in solving agriculture's most urgent challenge: people.**

## Why Partner with CAHRC?

- **Make an Impact:** Support programs that strengthen agriculture's workforce and HR practices.
- **Expand Your Reach:** Connect with industry leaders, professionals, and stakeholders.
- **Elevate Your Brand:** Position your organization alongside a trusted, respected non-profit in agriculture.

## Partnership Benefits



### Industry Leadership

Position your organization as a key player driving workforce excellence and innovation in the agriculture sector.



### Impactful Engagement

Support programs and initiatives that make a tangible difference in workforce development and HR management.



### Brand Visibility

Showcase your brand to a national audience of industry professionals, stakeholders, and decision-makers.



### Strategic Connections

Build meaningful relationships with researchers, policymakers, and leading agricultural organizations.

## READY TO MAKE A LASTING IMPACT?

✉ Jennifer Wright at [jwright@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:jwright@cahrc-ccrha.ca)

🌐 [www.cahrc-ccrha.ca](http://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca)





# IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR TFWP EMPLOYERS

## Advertising requirements are returning

On January 1, 2026 the Government of Canada will reinstate the requirement for employers to provide proof of advertising when submitting LMIA application to hire temporary foreign workers for primary agriculture positions under (TFW Program).

Employers will be required to meet all advertising requirements, including providing proof of recruitment efforts to hire Canadians and permanent residents, including members of at least 2 underrepresented groups in the labour market, such as:

- vulnerable youth,
- Indigenous peoples,
- newcomers to Canada,
- persons with disabilities, and
- asylum seekers with valid work permits.

Recruitment and advertising requirements differ between program streams. Records of the employers' efforts must be kept for a minimum of 6 years.

## Wage reviews requirements

Employers must review the wages of temporary foreign workers annually by January 1, 2026. This process ensures that the wages of TFWs align with the prevailing wage or updates rates from the national commodity wage tables. This measure aims to ensure that TFWs receive fair compensation throughout their employment period. It is important to update wages on or before January 1 in order to remain compliant and avoid penalties under the TFWP employer compliance regime.

## CAHRC TFWP Employer School January Cohort

New cohort starts on January 8, 2026 with live Zoom sessions every Thursday. This is a 6 weeks program covering all aspects of TFWP including streams selection, NOC codes, program requirements, advertising, navigating LMIA on-line and Job Bank, work permits, employer compliance and PR pathways for foreign workers. [Register today.](#)

## Webinars:

- *Changes and Updates with Job Bank for Employers Applying for LMIA*

On January 13 at 2:00 PM EST Job Bank will conduct a 45-minute webinar for the industry to provide updates on recently introduced several changes that will directly affect how agricultural employers post jobs and demonstrate recruitment compliance. [Register.](#)

- *TFWP Employer Compliance Overview & Updated by ESDC*

On January 20 at 2 PM EST ESDC will conduct an information session for employers to provide overview and updates on employer compliance. The webinar will focus on employer compliance obligations, what to expect during inspections, voluntary disclosure and important reminders for employers how to proactively manage compliance risks. [Register.](#)



**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 [info@cahrc-ccrha.ca](mailto:info@cahrc-ccrha.ca) to  
discuss sponsored content and other opportunities you  
can take advantage of.**





# SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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## LEADHER LOUNGE: KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

When the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) launched the [National Women in Agriculture and Agri-Foods \(NWIA\)](#) project, one message came through clearly: women wanted more spaces to speak, connect, and be heard. Research, community events, and grassroots conversations revealed something powerful, women across agriculture were ready to share their experiences, and they wanted the dialogue to continue long after the reports were written, and the events wrapped up.

### **That momentum is what inspired the creation of the [LeadHER Lounge](#).**

Designed with the easy, conversational feel of a podcast, the LeadHER Lounge gives women in agriculture a place to tune in from anywhere — the tractor cab, the barn, the milking parlour, or the office — and simply listen, laugh, and reflect. Free from slides and heavy presentations, it's a space where real stories and lived experiences take centre stage.

"My goal was simple: keep the conversation going," explains project lead and host Rebecca Balsdon. "I love listening to podcasts, and I wanted something that felt the same, something you could follow while doing chores, that makes you laugh, and that shines a light on the parts of work and life that women experience every day."

While many national conversations about women in agriculture focus on the barriers, the LeadHER Lounge takes a different approach. Each episode brings visibility to the realities women navigate, but with a sense of optimism, honesty, and collective strength. Rather than dwelling on challenges, the series explores how the industry can keep moving toward a more inclusive future, one story, one insight, one conversation at a time.

Recent episodes have taken listeners on journeys through topics that rarely get attention, yet shape women's real experiences at work. One standout conversation explored women's workwear and personal protective equipment — why proper fit matters, how standards are developed, and the ingenuity of women who stepped up to create what they couldn't find on the market. Another episode shone a light on "invisible work," the unpaid or unacknowledged labour women often shoulder, and how this affects career progression, opportunity, and safety. These discussions resonated widely, reminding listeners of the everyday realities shaping women's roles across the sector.



For Rebecca, the LeadHER Lounge is proof that the NWiA project is not a one-off initiative, it's a living, breathing movement. "We need to keep building on the momentum," she says. "Women's lived experiences must stay at the centre. We're showing that women can kick butt and do all the jobs in agriculture, and these conversations help make that visible."

The LeadHER Lounge is more than a series — it's a connector, a catalyst, and a reminder that women's leadership grows strongest when the industry makes room for honest dialogue. As the NWiA project continues to advance its Action Plan, events, and national network, the Lounge ensures that the voices shaping the future of agriculture remain loud, clear, and proudly present.

Because when women gather — even virtually, even from the tractor — the industry moves forward.



# Your People. Your Farm. Your Toolkit.

*Simplify HR with resources made for BC agriculture*



## ARE YOU IN BRITISH COLUMBIA?

Managing people in agriculture isn't simple, between seasonal hiring, retention challenges, and evolving regulations, HR can quickly become overwhelming.

That's why CAHRC and IAFBC have developed a suite of practical, BC-specific HR supports designed for farm and agri-business employers.

### **BC Agriculture HR Toolkit**

A free, online HR toolkit built specifically for British Columbia farm and agri-business employers. Inside the toolkit, you'll find:

- 120+ customizable templates, checklists, and guides
- Practical HR manuals written for agriculture
- Tools to support recruitment, onboarding, and retention
- Legal guidance tailored to BC agriculture

## Free HR Toolkit for BC Agriculture Employers

Managing people in **agriculture** doesn't have to be complicated

### **BC HR Toolkit Walkthrough Webinars**

Not sure where to start? Join a live walkthrough session and learn how to use the toolkit effectively for your operation. These sessions walk you through:

- How the toolkit is structured
- Which tools to use based on your HR needs
- How to customize templates for your farm or agri-business
- Where to find BC-specific compliance support

**Upcoming dates: January 8, 29 or February 19**

[Register for a BC HR Toolkit Walkthrough](#)

### **Ag HR Management Training**

For employers and supervisors looking to go further, CAHRC also offers Ag HR Management training, a structured program that builds practical HR leadership skills.

This training supports:

- Stronger people management and supervision
- More consistent HR practices
- Better workforce planning and retention
- Confident, compliant decision-making

[Register today](#)





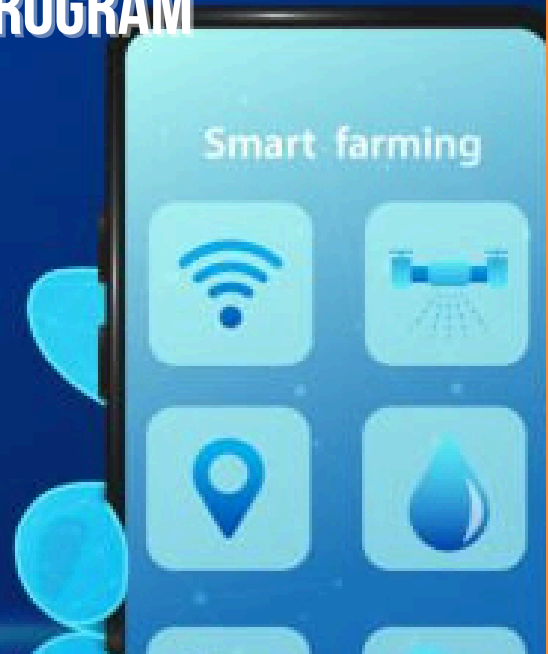


# AUTOMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

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# PREPARING PRODUCERS FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE: INSIDE THE SEEDING DIGITAL SKILLS PROGRAM



As Canadian agriculture continues to evolve at a rapid pace, producers are navigating a landscape shaped by automation, advanced data tools, and digital innovation. These technologies aren't just reshaping how farms operate, they're also redefining the skills required to stay competitive. Through programs like [Seeding Digital Skills](#), farmers and agri-food professionals are gaining the foundational knowledge needed to adopt emerging tools with confidence.

The insights below explore what the program offers, how digital twin technology is being used on farms, and the broader trends influencing the sector's future.

**What does the Seeding Digital Skills program offer? Who is involved in delivering the training? How many farmers have taken the training to date?**

The Seeding Digital Skills program is a 12 week course, learning the basics of digital twin technology. While working on real world projects tied to agriculture and food and beverage manufacturing, training includes: hand on experience with

simulations, IoT data integration and 3D visualization. Upon completing the course, you will receive a Unity Certified Associate + AgriTech MicroCredential.

**What exactly is digital twin technology and how is it used on farms? What are the benefits of this technology to farmers? How and why do they use it?**

Digital Twin technology creates a virtual, real-time replica of a physical objects, systems, or environments to monitor, simulate, and analyze its performance. By implementing this program you can design and virtually walk through new builds or renovations ensuring system efficiencies are achieved. There is also the opportunity to use this technology in monitoring remote sensors and virtually adjusting the sensors to achieve efficiencies.

**What other types of newer, cutting-edge technology do you see being used in agriculture across different production sectors?**

There are many different management software systems available depending on your





type of production system. Robots and automated feeding systems have been integrated for years now. There is work being done on facial recognition of livestock to monitor herd health and breeding cycles. AI for agronomy is also advancing quickly. Producers have the ability to curate an app to respond and provide recommendations for their specific needs.

**Why are they using them? How are they helping them to grow or manage their farms or be more productive, efficient, profitable?**

Producers invest in technology for a number of reasons; regulatory requirements, productivity efficiencies, lack of physical labor, or economics of scale. Here at CAHRC we focus on the labour aspect and although many feel technology will replace the need for physical people there will still be a need to upskills and reskills the workforce to design, build, install and maintain all the equipment we integrate on farm and currently that aspect of our workforce, the agriculture service sector is also short in supply of skills workers.

**What do you think are the factors that may hold farmers back from adopting some of these new technologies, and conversely, what prompts some to become early adopters?**

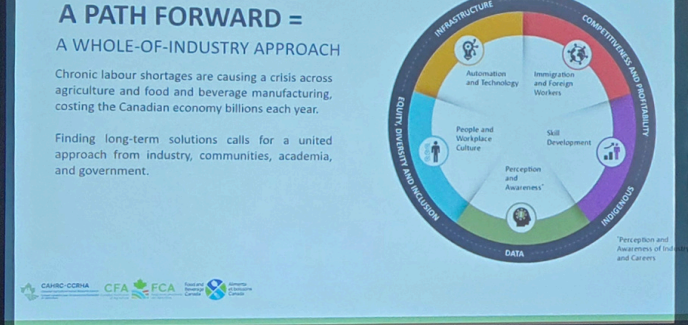
There are still a number of challenges that exist in adopting technology. Infrastructure requirements, technical ability, capital

invest cost and maintenance requirements, whether that is on the producer or a technician. The average age of agricultural producers in Canada is 58 and while that doesn't mean they wouldn't adopt any technology, the longevity of the operation has to be considered when large capital investments are being made.

**What trends are you seeing generally in ag tech and what do you see as the opportunities, the threats and the long-term changes to ag that these rapid digital transformations are offering?**

I think we need to do a better job at educating producers about the technology they have and the data it is collecting. Protecting that information is also important and discussing cyber security and the use of artificial intelligence on farm needs to be a topic at Annual General Meetings.





# AROUND TOWN

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

Find CAHRC here:

- **CANNEXUS 2026, JAN 26-28**
- **BUILDING AWARENESS OF CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE, JAN 28**
- **NLFA AGM, JAN 28-29**
- **KAP AGM, FEB 3**
- **EXPERIENCE GUELPH JOB FAIR, FEB 9**
- **FUTURE OF FOOD CONFERENCE, FEB 10**

Other events:

- **SASKATCHEWAN CROPS FORUM, JAN 13-14**
- **SALON DE L'AGRICULTURE, JAN 13-15**
- **DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO AGM, JAN 13-15**
- **WESTERN CANADIAN CROP PRODUCTION SHOW, JAN 13-15**
- **ONTARIO'S RURAL LEADERS CONFERENCE, JAN 18-20**
- **MANITOBA AG DAYS, JAN 20-22**
- **PACIFIC AGRICULTURE SHOW, JAN 22-24**



**CAHRC**

Canadian Agricultural  
Human Resource Council



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Conseil canadien pour  
les ressources humaines  
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