



# Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan

The ***Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan*** is a roadmap forward to address the sector's critical labour shortages. It is essential to maintain a strong agriculture and agri-food value chain and has been identified by industry as the number one business risk management issue across all commodities and the value chain. The agriculture and agri-food industry needs workers to remain **globally competitive**, to take advantage of **export opportunities** provided by the Federal Government's free trade agenda, and to ensure the **security, safety and sustainability of food** for all Canadians.

Some of the unique agricultural and agri-food labour challenges, which are identified and addressed within the ***Workforce Action Plan*** include:

- Overall image of the agricultural sector
- Shortage of skilled workers
- Aging workforce
- Retention of skilled workers in the sector
- Unique requirements of sector, including: transportation, food processing, and accommodation.
- Seasonality of work and the shorter Canadian growing and harvesting season vs other regions
- Lack of available training programs in Canada
- Regional disparity and competition for foreign workers (esp. from other sectors)

The Labour Task Force represents Canada's diversity: all regions and aspects of the agri-food value chain - farmers and industry coming together. With **over 64 Implementation Partners** supporting the ***Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan's*** implementation, industry is recognising it can achieve more by working cooperatively to address the important labour issues facing the Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry.

*"The Labour Task Force stresses that it is urgent and essential that this initiative begin immediately as the issues of labour shortage are pervasive, affecting current operational success and damaging to the future health of the industry and the economy"*  
(*Workforce Action Plan, p. 8*).

The Labour Task Force's consultative process has identified the need and how to address these labour issues through practical, achievable recommendations, and now the work needs to proceed. The Task Force put forward two recommendations that meet the immediate and future requirements of our industry:

- 1. Increase the Supply of Labour** - for skilled and unskilled workers
- 2. Improve the Knowledge and Skills** – of workers in the industry.

**It's time for action!**





## Leading the implementation of the Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan

### Overview Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) is a national, non-profit organization focused on addressing human resource issues facing agricultural businesses across Canada. It is our aim to fully understand and meet the unique and priority HR and training needs of those within various commodity areas. The Council works with industry leaders, governments and educational stakeholders to research, develop and implement solutions to challenges in employment and skills development in primary agriculture. We fully serve the agriculture community as the centre for reliable labour market information, and the access point for customizable solutions related to HR management and training.

### Workforce Action Plan Background

Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan (WAP). The WAP was developed with extensive research over the last three years by an industry-led Labour Task Force (LTF) made up of representatives from all twelve of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Value Chain Roundtables. The LTF is a solution-oriented forum which examines issues of agriculture and agri-food labour management and shortages. The WAP initiative is being led by the Canadian Agricultural HR Council to ensure implementation of documented recommendations by the LTF. To date, 60 organizations are confirmed as Implementation Partners, lending support, credibility and a sense of urgency to addressing labour issues for the industry. This stakeholder involvement is enhancing CAHRC's Labour Market Intelligence function.

### Industry Participation

Industry participation is the cornerstone of the Canadian Ag HR Council. Direction and guidance for all activities are provided by a large, nationally representative Board of Directors that includes agricultural leaders within and across various commodity groups. Additionally, all research, project work and product development activities are supported by national stakeholder participation to ensure quality, accuracy and relevance of prepared solutions. Stakeholders include employers, employees, youth, associations, education, and government at regional, provincial and national levels.

### Services and Products

Currently, CAHRC offers a number of important services and products designed to address critical issues for agricultural stakeholders including research reports, HR tools and training materials. The Council conducts in-depth research on labour market information that highlights skills shortages and includes recommendations on agricultural recruitment and retention. Research has also been conducted on identifying new and emerging markets for the agricultural sector.

## CAHRC is your one stop shop for Agricultural HR Needs

**The Access Point for Customizable Solutions related to HR Management and Training**

**The Centre for Reliable Agriculture Research such as Labour Market Information**

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# IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

## CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS



mushrooms.canada



CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL



CONSEIL CANADIEN POUR LES RESSOURCES HUMAINES EN AGRICULTURE

## SUPPORTING PARTNERS



HORTICULTURE VALUE CHAIN ROUNDTABLE

ORGANIC VALUE CHAIN ROUNDTABLE

AILCA AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY LABOUR COUNCIL OF ALBERTA

SPECIAL CROPS VALUE CHAIN ROUNDTABLE

The Agriculture & Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan is supported by 64+ Implementation Partners