

Supporting agricultural labour demands

Nov. 25, 2022

Record-setting economic growth in Alberta's agriculture and agri-food sector has ignited demand for workers across the province.

To support producers and processors, Alberta, in partnership with the federal government, is providing \$2.5 million to Agriculture for Life to help companies recruit, hire and retain workers in the agriculture and agri-food industry.

The funding will provide eligible organizations with grants of up to \$40,000 to increase public awareness of agricultural career opportunities through online advertising campaigns.

"Canada needs more skilled workers to help strengthen our workforce. Through our investments in skills development and employment services, we're working with provinces and territories to ensure that, across Canada, more skilled workers can be hired and retained. Last year, almost 97,000 Albertans were supported under the federal labour market transfers with Alberta. This funding is critical to supporting Agriculture for Life, reaching more Albertans with labour market training supports and ensuring that employers have the skilled workers they need."

Carla Qualtrough, federal Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion

"Alberta's agriculture sector continues to grow and set new investment and export records despite facing numerous challenges. This funding will help producers and processors with their labour needs so they can continue to focus on growing their business and meeting the global demand for food."

Nate Horner, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

As part of the funding, Agriculture for Life will also offer grants of up to \$25,000 to provide organizations with human resources training to support worker retention.

Related information

[Labour Market Partnerships Program](#)

[Agriculture for Life, Inc.](#)

Media inquiries

Mackenzie Blyth
mackenzie.blyth@gov.ab.ca
[780-293-1745](tel:780-293-1745)

Press Secretary
Agriculture and Irrigation

“The agriculture and agri-food industry are major job creators that fuel Alberta’s economic growth. This funding offers valuable support to Alberta employers and helps them succeed in our thriving economy. Supporting jobs in agriculture means creating prosperity for Albertans.”

Brian Jean, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Northern Development

“With a mandate of advancing agriculture literacy and career pathways, Ag for Life is excited to see this funding support Alberta producers and processors so they can continue to attract, grow and retain a strong workforce now and into the future.”

Luree Williamson, CEO, Agriculture for Life, Inc.

Quick facts

- Funding is being provided through the Canada-Alberta Labour Market Development Agreement.
- Eligible companies can apply for the grant through Agriculture for Life until March 2024.
- In 2021, food manufacturing was the largest industry in the province (23.8 per cent of provincial manufacturing sales), ahead of petroleum and coal product manufacturing (22.7 per cent) and chemical manufacturing (16.8 per cent).
 - Food manufacturing sales continued an upward trend, reaching a record \$20.1 billion.
- In 2021, value-added exports grew for the eighth consecutive year to \$8.2 billion, up 23.4 per cent from 2020, representing 58.4 per cent of Alberta’s total agri-food exports.
 - Higher exports of beef, canola oil (crude and refined), oilseed cake and meal, processed potatoes and prepared animal feeds contributed to the increase.
 - Exports of beef, the largest value-added product, jumped 40 per cent to a record \$3.5 billion.
- In 2021, agri-food industries employed 58,300 Albertans, with 35,900 in primary agriculture and 22,400 in food and beverage manufacturing.
 - There were about 2,500 temporary foreign workers in Alberta’s agriculture sector and 1,900 in Alberta’s agri-food sector. This represents about seven per cent of the workforce for these sectors.