

Where will your seasonal workers come from?

COVID-19 has made it evident that much of what once just ticked along, like having an available local and backpacker workforce, can no longer be taken for granted. To survive and prosper we need to expect the unexpected and to be flexible. That is why it is so important that you start to think more broadly and forward plan now for next year's harvest workforce.

There are several different options for finding seasonal workers and navigating the system can be confusing, so we have tried to make it simpler. The matrix below looks at a range of options to help you find the best solution for you. It is recommended that you click on [blue](#) text to be taken to the available internet links to read about the more complex requirements of each option where applicable. Once you have identified the most suitable options for you, more detailed information on each option can be found in the Citrus Australia publication 'Planning Your Seasonal Workforce' which can be found [here](#).

Whatever you do, do not leave this until the last minute, as you can see it is important to plan ahead.

| You must be able to tick all the eligibility criteria below to apply to become an Approved Employer and participate in the Seasonal Worker Programme OR Pacific Labour Scheme | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------------------|---|--|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|---|
| How many workers do you need? | How soon do you need workers? | | | | | How long is your season? | Is your business based in Australia and operate in an eligible region? | Can you provide worker accommodation and transport? | Do you have established employment and workplace policies and procedures? | Are you able to provide welfare and wellbeing support to your Seasonal Workers? | Does your business have a valid ABN? | Is your organisation/business eligible? What is your business structure? | Have you attempted to recruit Australian Job Seekers first? | Does your business have a history of compliance with immigration and fair work requirements? | Can you provide evidence of at least three years of financial solvency? | Does your business have established employment and workplace policies and procedures? |
| | As soon as possible | Next Week | Next Month | 2 months | At least six months + | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP) SWP AE factsheet SWP AE guidelines Process to become an AE | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ Can you provide workers with a minimum average of 30 hours per week for up to nine months? | ✓ Agriculture nationally. | ✓ Refer to the accommodation requirements checklist . Refer to chapter 4 SWP AE guidelines . | ✓ | ✓ You must provide at least one support person to assist and support your SWP workers. Refer to chapter 3 SWP AE guidelines . | ✓ | ✓ Are you an 'organisation' for the purposes of the Migration Regulations 1994? | ✓ Refer to labour market testing - page 18 SWP AE guidelines . | ✓ | ✓ An entity must demonstrate it is an eligible business registered and operating in Australia and has an ABN. | ✓ |
| Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS) PLS AE guidelines Process to become and AE | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ Can you provide workers with a minimum average of 30 hours per week for one to three years? | ✓ Agriculture nationally. | ✓ Refer to page 52 PLS AE guidelines . | ✓ | ✓ Worker welfare is led by the AE and supported by the (PLF). Refer to page 43 PLS AE guidelines . | ✓ | ✓ You are eligible if you are not an individual, sole trader, unincorporated entity or family unit trust. | ✓ Can you provide evidence of staff turnover rates, advertising frequency etc.? | ✓ | ✓ An entity must demonstrate it is an eligible business registered and operating in Australia and has an ABN. | ✓ |
| Seasonal Worker Programme Regional Pilot SWP Regional Pilot factsheet | ? | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ Less than nine months. | ✓ Sunraysia (NSW/VIC) Goulburn/Murray (VIC) Riverina (NSW) Wimmera Mallee (VIC) | Note: it is advisable to contact the Approved Employer (AE) at least eight to 10 weeks prior to needing workers – refer to the factsheet for AE contacts. | | | | | | | | |
| Labour Hire Company | ? | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | Abbreviations AE – Approved Employer PLF – Pacific Labour Facility PLS – Pacific Labour Scheme SWP – Seasonal Worker Program | | | Legend ✓ = this may be a good option for you ? = you may have left it too late, but it is worth a try ✗ = you have left it too late for this harvest, but if this is an option for you, start the process now for next harvest | | | Want to know more? If you would like some help with the matrix, or to have a chat about your seasonal workforce needs, feel free to reach out by calling Jeff Milne on 03 5023 6333. | | | | |
| Contractor | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harvest Trail | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Facebook | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Gum Tree | ? | ? | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | |

The Approved Employers of Australia Ltd can also assist with the application process. Contact details [here](#).