



Labour

Election 2019

Our Ask: First, that you initiate a Trusted Employer program for employers using the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP) Agricultural Stream and the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP), and second, that you include pack-houses that do not have on-farm operations into the new definition of primary agriculture to render them eligible to use the TFWP Agricultural Stream.

BACKGROUND

- The labour gap in horticulture is becoming a crisis with the gap expected to increase to 46,500 jobs by 2025 – the largest labour gap in the agricultural sector.
- In order to feed Canadians and the world while helping to achieve the Government's target of \$75 billion in agri-food exports by 2025, the industry requires better access to foreign labour.

ACTION REQUIRED

- 1) *a) Establish a Trusted Employer pilot program for the TFWP Agriculture Stream and SAWP.*
 - A Trusted Employer program would ensure that growers who have been in good standing for a number of years and have consistently proven the need for foreign labour are able to use pre-populated Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) and SAWP application forms with previous year's information.
 - Questions that are currently part of the approval process that do not need to be asked on an annual basis can be removed

from the mandatory completion fields for those who are part of the program.

- b) We also propose that *the amount of time required to advertise to Canadians is reduced to one week as the process is time consuming and rarely yields results.* The creation of such a program has been recommended by a number of government Committees
- 2) *Ensure that pack houses without on-farm operations are eligible to use the TFWP Agriculture Stream, including on a seasonal basis.*
 - Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) have indicated that they plan to move away from the National Commodities List (NCL) which currently determines who is eligible to access the TFWP Agriculture Stream and SAWP.
 - To replace the NCL, ESDC will be establishing a definition of eligible users of the TFWP Agriculture Stream and SAWP. Pack houses who do not have on-farm operations are currently ineligible to use the TFWP Agriculture Stream; however, we are seeing more and more pack houses in need of foreign labour to meet their operational requirements and pack agricultural products, often from small growing operations.
 - By including pack houses without on-farm operations as part of the definition to be used by ESDC, they will be able to continue to operate and pack products Canadians enjoy and expect in their local grocery stores.