

Careers in Fresh Produce: the fastest growing agriculture sector

ABARES Outlook 2020



Agenda

- Who works in fresh produce?
- Broad opportunities through the Supply Chain
- What are employers saying?
- Immediate Opportunities
- Implications for Government and Industry



Broad Opportunities

Opportunities in fresh produce are diverse, and stretch from the farm to the plate:

- Consumer insights
- Marketing
- Robotics
- Agronomy
- Plant breeding
- Entomology
- Engineering
- Law for plant breeders rights
- Quality Assurance
- Food Safety
- Biosecurity



Factors affecting Employment in Fresh Produce

Fresh produce remains one of the most labour intensive sectors within Australian agriculture. The two key factors are:

1. Nature of the work

- Often physical work outside in variable weather conditions
- Work periods and location dependent on the products being harvested

2. Nature of the locations

- Remote – difficult to travel, low level of service and accommodation
- Regional – competition from other industries, opportunities in capital cities
- Metropolitan – competition from other industry sectors for capable and skilled people



Immediate Opportunities

1. Harvest

- Harvesting and Picking Produce
- Packing Produce
- Off Season Pruning and Plant Maintenance including planting

2. Technical Expertise

- Farm Management, Agronomy and Irrigation
- Trade Skills – e.g. mechanic
- Machinery Operations

3. Middle Management

- Business Management
- Operations Management
- Strategy Development and Implementation



Implications

1. Harvest

- *Industry* - continued expansion of permanent local workforce, creating opportunities for young Australians, improving practices and reputation, and developing practical solutions.
- *Government* - opportunities in local communities, expansion of Seasonal Worker Program, and Working Holiday Maker Program.

2. Technical Expertise

- *Industry* - graduate programs to attract skilled young Australians, on the job training programs, encourage diversity.
- *Government* - support skills and training programs, immigration program must recognise the skills/experience/expertise.

3. Middle Management

- *Industry* - develop and attract middle managers into growth opportunities.
- *Government* - a collaborative approach to developing industry leaders.



Thank you

For further information please contact us at
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