

Work in agriculture this harvest season

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Want to help farmers harvest this year's fruit and vegetable crops? There are many short-term jobs to choose from in regional Victoria. It's a great opportunity to see more of Victoria, work alongside family and friends, and help put food on Victorians' tables.

TYPES OF JOBS AVAILABLE

Seasonal harvest jobs vary from fruit picking or packing, to grains receipt and tractor driving.

The work can be demanding and requires you to be physically fit. Some jobs involve heavy lifting, bending, climbing ladders and operating machinery.

The work is often outdoors without shelter from the weather. Some work may be indoors, like packing sheds and green houses.

Most jobs require skills that can be learnt on the job. Some jobs need a level of training or skills, like driving for example. Just ask your employer what is needed.

Victoria's regions need seasonal workers at different times. The table below provides a snapshot of where you could work this harvest season.

| Produce | Region | Timing |
|------------------|--|-------------|
| Citrus | Sunraysia, Swan Hill | Aug – Nov |
| Berries | Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula | Nov – April |
| Cherries | North East Victoria, Goulburn Valley, Yarra Valley, Dandenongs, Swan Hill, Sunraysia | Nov – Jan |
| Vegetables | Sunraysia, Werribee, East and West Gippsland | Oct – March |
| Summer fruit | Swan Hill, Goulburn Valley | Nov – May |
| Apples and pears | Goulburn Valley | Jan – May |
| Table grapes | Sunraysia | Jan – May |
| Dried fruit | Sunraysia | Jan – April |
| Melons | Sunraysia | Dec – April |
| Grains | Grain growing regions | Oct – Dec |

ELIGIBILITY TO WORK

You are eligible to work if you:

- are an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- hold a temporary work visa with general work rights, not restricted to an employer or type of work
- are an overseas student with working rights in Australia
- are an eligible working holiday maker holding a visa with appropriate working rights
- hold a Seasonal Worker Program or Pacific Labour Scheme visa.



FINDING HORTICULTURE JOBS

Seasonal jobs are often advertised in local newspapers and on social media. Employment services, labour hire companies and online platforms can help jobseekers find work.

Working for Victoria

The Victorian Government's [Working for Victoria](#) initiative matches jobseekers with work opportunities.

Registered jobseekers can access training and apply for jobs through the platform.

National Harvest Trail

The Australian Government's [Harvest Trail Services](#) connects workers with seasonal jobs.

GETTING PAID

Most seasonal horticulture workers are hired under the Australian Government's Horticulture Award. The award outlines minimum pay rates and other entitlements like leave and overtime.

The award also covers workers hired through labour hire providers.

Workers can earn an hourly wage or a piecework rate.

Hourly rate

The minimum hourly rate under the Horticulture Award is:

- \$19.84 for an adult full-time employee
- \$24.80 for an adult casual employee

Visit the Fair Work Ombudsman [pay calculator](#) for more information.

Piece rates

A piece rate is where a worker earns money based on the amount they have picked, packed, pruned or made.

Instead of the hours worked, an employer pays the worker for the number of kilograms or bins of produce they pick.

Visit the Fair Work Ombudsman's [Horticulture Showcase page](#) for more information.

SUPPORT TO WORK IN AGRICULTURE

If you find work in agriculture, you may be eligible for government support, like:

- A [relocation rebate](#) from the Australian Government for relocating to work in agriculture, and staying for more than six weeks. You may receive:
 - \$2,000 if you are a visa holder with the right to work in Australia
 - \$3,000 if you are an Australian citizen relocating to a capital city
 - \$6,000 if you are an Australian citizen relocating to a regional area
 - An extra \$3,000 if you are an Australian citizen relocating with a dependent.
- Greater access to [Youth Allowance or ABSTUDY](#). Earn \$15,000 in agriculture between 30 November 2020 and 31 December 2021 to be considered independent.
- Up to \$77.17 weekly allowance for eligible [apprentices](#) who move away from their parent's home for work.
- Free Victorian Government-funded [training programs](#) to get jobseekers ready for work.

Your employer may also receive government support to hire you:

- Up to \$50 daily to pay for your travel to work and \$200 daily for your [accommodation](#).
- Up to \$500 to help you [move](#) to where the job is located.
- Between \$100 and \$200 a week for up to 12 months for hiring young, [out-of-work Australians](#).
- Up to \$10,000 to hire and keep [eligible job seekers](#) in positions longer than six months.
- Between \$750 and \$4000 to [hire an apprentice](#).

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PREPARING FOR SEASONAL WORK

Step 1: Do your research

It's important to do your research.

Before applying for a job, read about the produce, harvest process, industry and the region it's located. Search for information on peak industry body and local government websites.

The Fair Work Ombudsman's [Working the harvest trail](#) page has tips for job seekers and an employment checklist.

Ensure the job and employer are reputable before you apply. Learn more about your rights on the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) website.

Step 2: Enroll in some free training

Gain confidence and get job-ready by undertaking training.

Information about free training opportunities is available on Agriculture Victoria's [Getting ready for work](#) page.

The Victorian Government's [Skills and Jobs Centres](#) can help you get ready for work or re-skill.

The [Working for Victoria](#) platform provides free training to registered job seekers.

Step 3: Download the Record My Hours app

The [Record My Hours](#) smartphone app can record your work hours. It can also help track the amount you pick, pack or prune (your piece) during a shift.

MORE INFORMATION

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