

2010 Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program



Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Information for Alberta Employers

Program Requirements

Eligible commodity sectors for the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* in Alberta are honey, nurseries, greenhouse vegetables, and field vegetables.

Alberta employers who want to hire a foreign national under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* should review the *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Seasonal Agricultural Workers from Mexico* and / or the *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Commonwealth Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers* (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/forms.shtml>) to familiarize themselves with the program requirements. Key elements of the program include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Advertise the available position to Canadian and / or permanent residents;
2. Pay the full cost of return air transportation;
3. Pay at least the established hourly wage for the eligible commodity;
4. Provide provincially-approved housing;
5. Arrange workers' compensation coverage;
6. Advance the Citizenship and Immigration Canada *Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee*; and
7. Advance the premiums for health insurance coverage.

Advertising Requirements

Before applying to Service Canada to hire a foreign national under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*, the employer **must advertise** the available position to Canadian and / or permanent residents **and offer employment** to any qualified and available applicant. Employers are advised to advertise as early as possible.

The *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* application must be submitted with proof of efforts to recruit Canadian and / or permanent residents. It is expected employers will advertise the agriculture employment opportunity for 14 days on the National Job Bank (<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca>) as well as one additional media source (newspaper, local weekly or daily, for a one week period, or internet advertising).

The advertisement should clearly state the following:

1. Job title;
2. Job description;
3. Qualifications needed for the job (such as education, knowledge, skills, experience);
4. Hourly salary (a foreign national hired under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* **must be paid the same wage** as a Canadian and / or a permanent resident for the same work performed but, cannot be less than the minimum hourly wage for the eligible commodity);
5. Number of work hours per week;
6. Number of work days per week;
7. Number of weeks of employment; and
8. How to apply for the position.

All job details included in your advertisement **must be the same** as the job details included in your application package. If there is a difference between the information in your advertising and your application, you will be required to complete further advertising.

The proof of advertising submitted to Service Canada as part of the application package must contain the following:

1. A copy of the invoice showing the name of the newspaper and the insertion dates of the advertisement;
2. A copy of the advertisement; and
3. A description of the response to the advertisement (if a qualified and available Canadian and / or permanent resident worker applies for the job, it is expected they will be hired).

Housing

Employers are required to provide provincially-approved housing to the foreign national hired under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*. Provincially-approved housing is defined as a positive *Housing Inspection Report* from the Regional Health Authority. The positive *Housing Inspection Report* must be submitted with the application package to Service Canada.

If the employer is unable to provide provincially-approved housing on the farm, the employer must provide provincially-approved housing elsewhere. In this case, the employer must also provide transportation between the housing and the farm at no cost to the foreign national.

Female workers must be provided with separate housing from male workers.

Payment of Citizenship and Immigration Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee

Since the foreign national hired under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* is not in a position to pay the fee charged by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to process their application for a work permit, the employer will pre-pay this fee as part of the application package. Employers can recover this amount from the worker's pay (see *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Seasonal Agricultural Workers from Mexico* and / or *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Commonwealth Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers*).

Employers must provide a **certified cheque, money order, or bank draft** for the total amount (\$150.00 for each foreign national requested under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*), made payable to *The Receiver General for Canada*. **This fee must be paid when the application package is submitted to Service Canada.** If an employer's application for a foreign national hired under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program* is refused, the amount can be refunded from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Applying to Service Canada for Confirmation

In planning for the arrival of a foreign national hired under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*, Service Canada requires **up to 15 working days** from the time a complete application is received to finalize a decision. In addition, the Government of Mexico and / or Government of Trinidad and Tobago require **at least 20 working days** to recruit workers and to make arrangements for their travel to Canada. It is advisable to begin the application process as early as possible to ensure the foreign national will arrive by the date required.

A complete application package will facilitate the processing of your request for a foreign national. The following documents are required for a complete application package and will assist in a timely decision from Service Canada:

1. Completed and signed *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Application* (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/forms.shtml>). Please note: one application is required if all foreign nationals will be performing the same duties, receiving the same wage, and are resident of the same source country. If there are differences in job duties, job requirements, wages, or source country, additional applications are required.
2. Completed and signed *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Seasonal Agricultural Workers from Mexico* and / or *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Commonwealth Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers* (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/forms.shtml>). Please note: one agreement signed by the employer is required for each application. Each foreign national must receive an agreement signed by themselves, the employer, and the Government Agent prior to working.

3. Proof of advertising (see *Advertising Requirements* section).
4. Completed and signed *Housing Inspection Report* from the local Regional Health Authority indicating provincially-approved housing is available for the foreign national (see *Housing* section).
5. Workers' Compensation Board – Alberta *Letter of Clearance* (can be requested by phoning 1.866.922.9221 or on the Internet at <http://decc.wcb.ab.ca>). The *Letter of Clearance* should be addressed to Service Canada at the address below.
6. Citizenship and Immigration Canada *Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee* (\$150.00 for each foreign national requested under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*) paid by **certified cheque, money order, or bank draft** to *The Receiver General for Canada* (see *Payment of Citizenship and Immigration Canada Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee* section).

The complete application package is sent to:

Service Canada
Suite 1440 Canada Place
9700 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton AB T5J 4C1

Attention: Foreign Worker Recruitment Branch
Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program

Service Canada Decision

A Service Canada Foreign Worker Officer will review the application package to determine if the documentation is complete and if the application complies with the requirements of the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*.

If the application is confirmed:

1. Service Canada will issue a *Letter of Confirmation* to the employer; and
2. Service Canada will forward notice of confirmation to the Consulate General for Mexico in Canada and / or the Consulate General for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the travel agency, and the travel insurer.

If the application is refused:

1. Service Canada will issue a *Letter of Refusal* to the employer; and
2. Instructions on how to apply to have the Citizenship and Immigration Canada cost recovery fee refunded will be included.

Coming to Canada

The following steps ensure the arrival of the foreign national to Canada:

1. The Consulate General for Mexico in Canada and / or the Consulate General for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago forward the Service Canada *Letter of Confirmation* to their respective department.
2. The employer contacts the travel agency with information on the foreign national and employment dates.
3. The employer contacts the travel insurer to arrange insurance coverage for the foreign national.
4. The appropriate source country department recruits the foreign national.
5. The travel agency advises the employer when the foreign national will arrive.
6. The employer meets the foreign national at the airport and provides transportation to the housing.

Returning to Country of Residence

The following steps ensure the return of the foreign national to their country of residence:

1. At the end of the contract:
 - a. The employer books the flight to the country of residence through the travel agency.
2. In the event of an early return:
 - a. The employer advises the Consulate General for Mexico in Canada and / or the Consulate General for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.
 - b. The Consulate General for Mexico in Canada and / or the Consulate General for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago provide the travel agency with the name of the foreign national it has agreed to send home early.
 - c. The employer books the flight to the country of residence through the travel agency.

Complete Application Checklist

- Application
Completed and signed *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Application*.
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/forms.shtml>
- Agreement
Completed and signed *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Seasonal Agricultural Workers from Mexico* and / or *Agreement for the Employment in Canada of Commonwealth Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers*.
<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/fw/forms.shtml>
- Advertising
See *Advertising Requirements* section for further information.
- Housing Inspection Report
See *Housing* section for further information.
- Workers' Compensation Board
Letter of Clearance addressed to Service Canada.
1.866.922.9221 or <http://decc.wcb.ab.ca>
- Citizenship and Immigration Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee
Citizenship and Immigration Canada *Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee* (\$150.00 for each foreign national requested under the *Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program*) paid by **certified cheque, money order, or bank draft** to *The Receiver General for Canada*.

The complete application package is sent to:

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9700 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton AB T5J 4C1

Attention: Foreign Worker Recruitment Branch
Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program

2010 Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program Information

Eligible Program Dates

01 January 2010 – 15 December 2010, to a maximum of eight (8) months

Minimum Hourly Wage by Eligible Commodity

	2009	2010
Nurseries	\$ 8.65	\$8.80
Greenhouse Vegetables	\$ 8.65	\$8.80
Field Vegetables	\$ 8.65	\$8.80
Honey Farms (Not Experienced)	\$10.65	\$10.65
Honey Farms (Experienced)	\$11.70	\$11.70

Maximum Deductions

The \$150.00 Citizenship and Immigration Canada *Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee* has been extracted from the aggregate deduction total. Employers are allowed to deduct the \$150.00 from the worker's wages during the first six (6) weeks of work.

	2009	2010
Mexico	7%* to maximum \$550.00*	TBD
Trinidad and Tobago	\$4.00* / day to maximum \$505.00*	TBD

* Exclusive of the \$150.00 Citizenship and Immigration Canada *Work Permit Cost Recovery Fee* deduction.

Travel Agency (as agreed to by the employers at the 2004 program meeting)

Vacation World Travel
Suite 209
5809 McLeod Trail South
Calgary AB T2H 0J9
Telephone: 403.265.0431
Facsimile: 403.290.1423
Contact: Linda Thierman

Travel Insurer

RBC Travel Insurance
PO Box 97 Station A
Mississauga ON L5A 2Y9
Telephone: 1.866.530.6030, Extension 62427
Facsimile: 905.816.2433
Contact: Ruth Alexis and/or Penny Cleary

Consular Information

Consulate General for Mexico in Canada (Calgary)
Suite 1100
833 – 4 Avenue SW
Calgary AB T2P 3T5
Telephone: 403.264.4819
Facsimile: 403.264.1527
Contact: Juan Jose Rivera

Consulate General for Mexico in Canada (Vancouver)
710 - 1177 West Hastings Street
Vancouver BC V6E 2K3
Telephone: 604.682.7617
Facsimile: 604.684.2485
Contact: Estela Garcia Leon
Email: egarcia@consulmexvan.com

Consulate General for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
4299 Village Centre Court, Unit 200
Mississauga ON L4Z 1S2
Telephone: 905.897.3001, Extension 223
Facsimile: 905.897.3063
Contact: Anthony Sanchez

Service Canada

Service Canada
Suite 1440 Canada Place
9700 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton AB T5J 4C1
Telephone: 800.418.4446
Facsimile: 780.495.2738