

# Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council Overview and Challenges



**CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL**  
**CONSEIL CANADIEN POUR LES RESSOURCES HUMAINES EN AGRICULTURE**

## Overview

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) is a national, non-profit organization focused on addressing human resource issues facing agricultural businesses across Canada.

Their efforts have resulted in clarifying jobs and worker requirements for modern agricultural operations today and into the future. Their research explores emerging labour issues, tracks the number of positions required, and quantifies vacancies and their impacts on competitiveness. They work through collaboration and partner with industry associations, educational institutions, and government departments to deliver practical staff management tools and training programs. In these ways, they are working hard to grow the Agri-Workforce and ensure it is skilled and resilient for future success.

## Challenges

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### ▼ Challenge 1

#### Promotion and recruitment

Canada is a world class food supplier and our agriculture and agri-food industry is thriving. The global pandemic highlighted the importance of the industry for domestic food security as well as the opportunities for employment and career growth. The agriculture and agri-food industry needs the best and brightest minds to grow and meet demand. Not only does the industry require food and animal science expertise, it also requires people with deep knowledge and skills in science, business, technology, environment, manufacturing, and global trade. Furthermore, the industry benefits from broader perspectives like those with excellent communications skills who have studied in the various arts disciplines.

**How do we best promote this industry to students from diverse disciplines and those who don't come from a farming background, attracting them to work in the industry?**

### ▼ Challenge 2

#### Skills Development

The global pandemic has had an impact on all aspects of life, resulting in overnight changes to otherwise steadfast approaches to where we work, how we shop, and how we access education and training. The general thought is that many of these shifts will be permanent, including how education and training is delivered. It has also shifted the type of work available with, for example, hospitality workers out of work and agriculture and agri-food having many openings to fill. The agri-food industry was challenged to up-skill new workers quickly to give those available to work the skills needed for the jobs in agri-food that needed to be filled. In addition, existing workers had to be quickly trained in new operational protocols.

**What opportunities does the shift in education and training delivery open up for the agriculture and agri-food industry to attract, train and retain workers (including new graduates and workers from other industries who may wish to transition into employment opportunities in the industry)**

### ▼ Challenge 3

#### Innovation

The COVID-19 pandemic had an immediate impact on how work is done. Overnight we moved from business as usual to many businesses closed and essential services adjusting to remain open in a safe manner. Agriculture and agri-food was deemed an essential service. Adjustments to processes and work environments had to be made quickly to ensure the safety of workers while maintaining the security of Canada's food supply. It also needed to be done to ensure all points of the supply chain were supported. Businesses were challenged to keep up to date on emerging health and safety requirements and operationalize them quickly as they evolved.

**What innovations or technology (new or existing in other industries) could be applied to agriculture and agri-food to support health and safety information dissemination, practical methods to ensure businesses and workers get the information they need in a timely manner to safely succeed on a more permanent basis?**

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