

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT -

Domestic Labour Research

The agriculture sector is facing substantial labour issues, including difficulties in recruitment, retention, and workforce engagement, which impacts its productivity and sustainability. The Cross-Commodity Leadership Support Project is partnering with Kwantlen Polytechnic University to deliver a labour research project focused on the tree fruit and wine grape industries in the Okanagan region.

Goal

The goal of the project is to gain a better understanding of the domestic seasonal labour market to identify policies, actions, and strategies for addressing labour shortages.

Objectives

The objectives of this project are to:

1. Understand the size and economic impact of the job market, current labour issues, and competing labour opportunities.
2. Analyze the experiences, needs, and perceptions of tree fruit and wine grape producers regarding domestic labour recruitment, retention, and relationship maintenance.
3. Understand worker demographics, motivations, migratory patterns, experiences, job-seeking methods, and employer relationship management practices.
4. Extract insights to guide strategies for addressing domestic labour shortages in BC's agriculture sector, with a focus on engagement.
5. Contribute to future domestic labour policies, programs, and industry standards.

Timeline & Funding

The project will be completed between June 2024 and July 2025. Funding is provided by Mitacs, industry partners, and the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia through the Agriculture Workforce Development Initiative.

Activity Highlights

Review Literature

- Review literature related to agricultural labour and interview people from the tree fruit and wine grape industry associations and organizations such as WALI, BCAC, CAHRC.

Conduct Interviews

- Interview producers and workers.

Use the Data

- Use data from Statistics Canada and other sources to estimate the size of the domestic labour pool and of the job market, average hourly rate and amount of wages paid out, and other relevant information.

Develop Key Takeaways

- Develop key takeaways and recommendations based on the literature review, interviews, and secondary data.

Prepare & Distribute Final Report

- Prepare a final report and supporting communication materials, such as an infographic and share results with industry using various channels.

