


HARVEST TRAIL FUNDING CANCELLATION: WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU AND HOW TO ADAPT

Discover the impact of the Harvest Trail funding cancellation on your enterprise and explore strategies to secure the seasonal workers you need.

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The End of an Era

In the 2024-25 budget, it was announced that the Harvest Trail Services would cease operations on June 30, 2024.

This government-funded initiative has been connecting workers, particularly overseas backpackers, with employers in harvesting regions across Australia for the past 26 years. So, what does this mean for you, and how can you adapt?

Leveraging Lessons from Harvest Trail

While the end of the Harvest Trail might seem daunting, it's an opportunity to implement what you've learned over the years to continue attracting seasonal workers.

Onsite Accommodation: A Major Draw

Onsite accommodation can significantly boost your appeal to seasonal workers, especially in areas with limited or no accommodation options. This is particularly attractive to overseas workers with working holiday visas. For Australian holidaymakers with their own mobile accommodation, providing a designated area on your property can also be beneficial.

Competitive Pay: Above and Beyond the Award

Paying at least the award rate or above is crucial. The Harvest Trail required compliance with award rates, including tax and superannuation for eligible workers. Ensuring competitive pay, possibly above the award rate, can make your positions more attractive. For more details, visit the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).

Flexible Working Arrangements: Win-Win for All

Consider offering flexible working arrangements to improve work-life balance, especially for holidaymakers and overseas workers on working holiday visas. Flexible schedules can lead to higher job satisfaction, increased

productivity, and reduced workplace stress. For more on flexible working arrangements, check the [Fair Work Ombudsman website](#).



Alternative Sources for Seasonal Workers

Even without the Harvest Trail, there are several avenues to explore for securing seasonal workers:

The PALM Scheme

We've previously discussed the PALM scheme, which brings workers from Pacific regions for peak seasons. This can be a valuable resource for filling seasonal roles.

Workforce Australia Providers

According to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, farmers can receive assistance from Workforce Australia providers, who have offices nationwide to help you find suitable candidates.

Local Jobs Program

The DEWR's [Local Jobs program](#) has facilitators in 51 regions across Australia, offering support to meet local workforce needs.

Horticulture Showcase

The Horticulture Showcase section on the Fair Work Ombudsman website is a treasure trove of industry information, including sourcing labour. You'll find templates for job ads and descriptions in the resources section.

Be Proactive: Seize the Opportunity

Now is the time to be proactive. Don't wait for solutions to come to you—take the bull by the horns and start planning your next steps. Reach out to past workers, talk to neighbouring property owners, and explore every available resource. The end of the Harvest Trail marks the beginning of a new chapter, and it's up to you to write it.


Start today by implementing these strategies and making moves to secure your seasonal workforce. The future of your harvest depends on the actions you take now. So, step up, plan ahead, and ensure your enterprise thrives despite the changes. With determination and proactive planning, you'll turn this challenge into an opportunity for growth and success.

Conclusion

While the Harvest Trail has ended, the wealth of resources and alternative schemes available ensures you're not left in the lurch. By implementing these strategies, you can continue to attract the seasonal workforce you need for a successful harvest.

By following these tips, you'll be well-equipped to navigate the post-Harvest Trail landscape and ensure a steady flow of seasonal workers for your agricultural needs. For further assistance, don't hesitate to explore the links provided and connect with relevant authorities and programs.



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