



The cotton industry and the Seasonal Worker Programme

This information reflects the changes announced by the Australian Government, effective from 5 November 2018.

A seasonal labour solution

Australian employers in the agriculture sector, including in the cotton industry, unable to find enough local Australian workers to meet their seasonal labour needs can access the Seasonal Worker Programme (SWP).

The SWP provides employers with access to workers from Pacific island countries and Timor-Leste for up to nine months. Seasonal workers can return in following seasons, providing employers with access to a reliable, returning workforce.

The SWP is a labour initiative that contributes to the economic development of some of Australia's closest regional neighbours, while also providing labour certainty to employers in the agriculture sector nationwide and the accommodation sector in selected locations.

What work can seasonal workers undertake in the cotton industry?

Seasonal workers can undertake a range of work in the cotton sector, including:

- ✓ General farm work
- ✓ Ground preparation
- ✓ Planting, irrigating, harvesting and treating cotton and other crops
- ✓ Loading trucks
- ✓ Cleaning, storing, operating and maintaining equipment (including tractors)

- ✓ Weeding, fencing, trenching, draining or otherwise preparing land
- ✓ General farm maintenance
- ✓ Tractor operations

Employment arrangements

Seasonal workers recruited under the programme earn Australian wages and are subject to Australian employment conditions. In addition to this, employers have a few additional responsibilities – such as contributing to each seasonal worker's airfare to Australia and helping to organise accommodation. For a list of responsibilities, refer to the factsheet on 'Approved Employers'.

Since the SWP commenced on 1 July 2012, employers who have participated in the SWP have benefited from a reliable, increasingly experienced workforce, and have enjoyed the benefits resulting from greater labour certainty.

How to access seasonal workers

Employers in the cotton industry with unmet demand for labour can either:

- ✓ contact an Approved Employer who can manage the recruitment of seasonal workers for you and take care of all the administrative arrangements during the seasonal workers' stay; or
- ✓ apply to become an Approved Employer

Find out more

More information can be found at:

Website: www.dese.gov.au/seasonal-worker-programme and www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/visa-1/403-

Email: seasonalworker@dese.gov.au

Phone: + 61 2 6240 523 Twitter: @SWPAustralia

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SWPAus