

Agriculture is growing

Some agricultural opportunities:

- Almond
- Apple
- Asian fruit & vegetable
- Beekeeping
- Broombush
- Buckwheat
- Buffalo & bison
- Camel
- Canola
- Caraway oil
- Carob tree
- Cattle
- Chestnut
- Cold-pressed oil
- Cotton
- Crambe oil
- Dairy
- Deer
- Dill oil
- Earthworm
- Emu and ostrich
- Essential oils
- Eucalyptus oil
- Field crops
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Floriculture
- Forestry
- Garlic
- Goat
- Legumes
- Guayule
- Hemp
- Herbs & spices
- Horse & pony
- Horticulture
- Hydroponic
- Jojoba
- Lavender
- Livestock industries
- Lama and alpaca
- Loquat
- Melon
- Native foods
- Olive
- Organic produce
- Pecan nut
- Peppermint
- Persimmon
- Pig
- Pistachio nut
- Pomegranate
- Pork
- Poultry
- Pyrethrum
- Quandong
- Rabbit & hare
- Rural tourism
- Sesame
- Sheep & lamb
- Snail
- Sugar
- Tea
- Tea-tree oil
- Walnut
- Wasabi
- Wine

The national agri-food industry comprises the major sectors of rural industries – seafood, meat, food processing and racing. Within these categories sit many sub-sectors, including wine and beverages, pharmaceuticals, horticulture, animal care and aquaculture.

It's big. Very big. Backbone-big. Agri-food production and food processing:

- around 880,000 jobs
- the generation of approx \$208 billion each year
- 20 per cent of our GDP
- a quarter of Australian exports
- the major employer in rural and regional Australia, forming the backbone of many communities throughout the country
- collectively, these industries produce food for 60 million people and are custodians of over two-thirds of Australian's landmass.

Most sectors within agri-food share unique characteristics - usually rural, regional and coastal settings, and rely heavily on climate, availability of seasonal workers and fluctuations in national and overseas markets and the value of the Aussie dollar.

One of the biggest challenges facing the industry is a huge opportunity for you, dear reader. That is finding top-notch staff.

Job roles are evolving with people needing to be more highly skilled across a greater breadth of functions. Take, for example, what is occurring within the most basic of agri-food jobs. Let's say, farmhands on a pig farm. They are evolving into piggery technicians who manage feeding operations; monitor growth, insemination, and animal health, and schedule resources.

This change is also consistent with technology improvements in other sectors. Let's take viticulture (growing grapes for wine production) – automatic pruning and harvesting machines are replacing the small army of seasonal workers that are increasingly hard to locate.

The new technology needs smart viticulturists who can operate and maintain machines, as well as manage the logistics of grading and getting the product to market.

Education and training

Oh, there's so many options and they all depend on where you are, where you want to get to, what you enjoy doing, or what part of the country you want to be in, or pretty much anything.

- Perhaps a TAFE certificate in stuff like farm mechanics, or specific production methods in everything from beef to cotton.
- Private providers might offer both these sorts of courses or a combination.
- Unis offer bachelor, masters and PhDs in everything from agribusiness to animal welfare to agriculture to aquaculture to agriculture economics and even some things that don't start with 'A'.

Put roots down

Smart Start heads to Queensland to investigate an industry that is not only growing, it's looking for young scallywags just like you, so get into it!

"We have no problems getting backpackers and university students to work for us," says Tim Harslett, "but it is hard to attract a young person to a full-time career in horticulture."

Tim reckons the variety, flexibility and outdoorsy components of horticulture make it a winning career: "I've always loved farming and the challenge of growing a good crop. It's a lifestyle I've chosen and a job I want to do."

The constant challenges and problem-solving aspects of farming are what sets it apart from other industries.

Tim part-owns and manages his family's commercial vegetable operation at Amiens near Stanthorpe in Queensland. He completed an agricultural science degree at the University of Queensland and he has since been awarded the Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarship, the only recipient in Queensland. He won a place on the Challenge of Rural Leadership course, a 13-day course developed by the Worshipful Company of Farmers, the Duchy College and the University of Plymouth.

Although Tim says young people considering careers in agriculture should complete tertiary education to improve problem-solving skills, the reality is that in his industry there is plenty of work for dedicated, permanent staff.

So what does Tim's farm get up to? Harslett Farm produces around 180,000 boxes of Chinese cabbage each year, together with 150,000 boxes of celery and 50,000 mini cos plants per week, which are sold to Perfection Fresh for sale as Sweet Gems baby cos lettuce hearts.

"Celery has always been our backbone crop but we are now among the biggest summer growers of Chinese cabbage in Australia. In the past few years, we've concentrated on producing fewer lines while trying to do a better job at growing them."

That strategy has paid off. The past two years having been particularly rewarding thanks to good prices and consistent quality. Even at only 25 per cent capacity currently the family's five dams have helped



Some aspects within industries

- Agribusiness**
- Business
 - Contacts
 - Economics
 - Education & training
 - Employment
 - Finance
 - Grants & assistance
 - Market access & trade
 - Taxation

Agriculture

- Biodiversity
- Biotechnology
- Environment
- Farming
- Law
- Meteorology
- Natural disaster
- Organic agriculture
- Quarantine & inspection
- Transport

Crops and horticulture

- Field and fodder crops
- Health – pests and diseases
- Horticultural crops
- Industries
- Management
- Market access and trade
- Plants and plant products
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Fish industries

Fisheries & Aquaculture

- Fisheries and aquaculture management
- Fishing
- Health – pests and diseases
- Market access and trade

Food

- Food and beverages industries
- Food chain
- Market access and trade

Forestry

- Forest and forest products
- Forest management
- Health – pests and diseases
- Market access and trade

Health - Pests & Diseases

- Agricultural pollution
- Agriculture and veterinary chemicals
- Biosecurity
- Pests and feral animals

Livestock

- Animal and animal products
- Animal industries
- Health – pests and diseases
- Livestock management
- Market access and trade

Resource management

- Forest
- Land
- Marine
- Soil
- Vegetation
- Water
- Weeds

Some careers

- Marketing, sales and promotion
- Animal production and health
- Field officer
- Rural finance
- Artificial breeding
- Research
- Winemaking
- Biotechnology
- Irrigation design
- Crop production
- Consultant and adviser
- Farm and agricultural enterprise management
- Rural journalism
- Soil and water conservation and landcare
- Stock and station agent
- Food production horticulture
- Genetics
- Water and wastewater management.

For more information

- www.agriculture.gov.au
- www.agrifoodskills.net.au ; 02 6163 7200

