Horticulture Skills Capacity Framework to Build Resilience and Skills Retention

Final Report

Mallee Regional Innovation Centre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Country that we work on throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and the Elders of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Moreover, we express gratitude for the knowledge and insight that Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to our shared work.
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Executive Summary

The Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production in the Northwest of Victoria (Mallee Region) is worth $964,455,426\(^1\). Horticulture is the second largest industry by value added in the region ($534M) and is going through a period of strong growth\(^2\). Like many agricultural regions in Australia, the horticulture sector in the Mildura and Swan Hill regions are finding challenges in attracting and retaining staff at both the skilled labour and specialist skills levels. The urgency of finding a coordinated way to address this issue for the region’s complex web of horticultural and fruit processing industries was a recurring theme in consultations run by the Victorian Drought Hub’s Northwest Irrigated Horticulture Node. This important context for the region leads to an even stronger need to build capacity and resilience in the workforce to buffer the skills attrition during drought.

With the guidance of the Project Reference Group, RMCG explored skills passports and competency frameworks as one way to attract and embed skills into the main horticultural industries of almonds, dried fruit, table grapes, citrus and summerfruit. After a review of similar initiatives from other regions and sectors and local contextual information, RMCG conducted interviews with 16 relevant industry, education provider and support agencies to provide recommendations on the interest in developing a competency framework across the industries and the next steps required to bring it to fruition.

The key skills gaps across the industries were mapped with similar, although not identical, needs found in terms of technical skills and behavioural skills. Given these similar skill requirements and a general interest in collaborating on a skilled labour competency framework approach, recommendations on how this would look and who would administer it have been made.

In developing a shared skills competency framework, the region has the advantage of existing strong networks and experience in collaboration between the Mallee Regional Innovation Centre, industry peak bodies and support organisations such as SuniTAFE, Northern Mallee LLEN and state government.

Recommendations on issues that would support such a framework such as wrap around services including housing and social support, careers pathway programs and promotion of the industries and region have also been included.

**ACRONYMS**

MRIC – Mallee Regional Innovation Centre  
WHS – Workplace Health and Safety  
LLEN – Local Learning and Employment Network  
RTO – Registered training organisation  
CaLD – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse  
VET – Vocational Education and Training  
SMECC – Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The horticulture sector within the broader agricultural sector are vital contributors to the Australian economy through employment, its ability to provide the majority of the domestic food supply and its export capacity. The Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production in the Northwest of Victoria is worth $964,455,426. Horticulture is the second largest industry by value added in the region ($534M) and is going through a period of strong growth.

Like many agricultural regions in Australia, the horticulture sector in the Mildura and Swan Hill regions are finding challenges in attracting and retaining staff at both the skilled labour including seasonal labour and specialist skills levels. The urgency of finding a coordinated way to address this issue for the region’s complex web of horticultural and fruit processing industries was a recurring theme in consultations run by the Victorian Drought Hub’s Northwest Irrigated Horticulture Node. This important context for the region leads to an even stronger need to build capacity and resilience in the workforce to buffer the skills attrition during drought.

This project aims to explore ideas such as a “regional skills passport” or skills competency framework to build workforce capacity and resilience and reduce skills attrition during drought. It is anticipated that this passport and/or framework may foster the development of skills with a resultant workforce that could shift between horticulture commodities within the region across the year. The passport approach would be supported by a framework of core competencies and key production activities – mapped to each industry sector. The skills passport approach has been trialled in this region and used in other sectors before with varied success. Learnings from these experiences have been captured, where available, and included in the forming of the recommendations.

The project aimed to provide recommendations as to how the region can be more resilient through skills capacity and retention for the main commodity groups of almonds, citrus, table grapes, wine grapes, dried vine fruits and summer fruits.

The framework focuses on skills and core competencies for skilled labour participants however, we have also considered career pathways through middle management and alignment with state and federal workforce strategies.

Previous work undertaken in the horticulture sector has highlighted some of the challenges associated with the attraction and retention of skilled people including:

- Poor promotion of career options and opportunities – perception outside the sector is its “only about growing plants”
- Lack of clear career pathways, particularly for those employed in small to medium sized enterprises
- Lack of time and resources for some producers/businesses for training and personal development
- Lack of diversity and inclusion of the workforce, particularly at senior levels
- Availability of relevant and accessible courses for horticulture employees and employers.

These challenges have been further exacerbated due to COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns and international borders closing.

Despite these challenges, the horticulture sector has a range of features that could be seen as opportunities including:

- Buoyancy and growth of the sector
- Ability to attract younger people into the industry via interest in new technology and innovation
- Diversity of experience, background, insights and skills with people from CALD backgrounds
- Potential to establish and promote different and diverse career pathways for school and tertiary students.

Our experience has also highlighted the need to focus on both the technical skills and softer, less tangible skills. There has been considerable research on both horizontal (technical competency) and vertical (behavioural change and emotional health) development⁵.

The project was designed to:

- Understand the issues considered by key stakeholder groups in the region
- Describe the core competencies required across the different industry sectors and a timeline for when the resourcing was required
- Establish a preliminary benefits statement for the value of a “passport” system to employers and employees
- Provide recommendations as to the next steps for development of a regional framework.

2 Methodology

To achieve the above objectives, we undertook:

▪ Consultation with key stakeholder groups and
▪ Desktop analysis of similar frameworks and “passport” approaches.

2.1 CONSULTATION

2.1.1 PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

A project reference group was established at the commencement of the project and were consulted regularly throughout to assist in guiding project activities. The project reference group consisted of:

▪ MRIC CEO – Rebecca Wells
▪ MRIC Project Officer – Tim Cummins
▪ MRIC Strategic Advisory Panel – Leonie Burrows
▪ MRIC Strategic Advisory Panel – Peter Forbes.

2.1.2 INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 individuals representing:

▪ MRIC staff
▪ Horticulture peak bodies – almond, citrus, table and wine grapes, dried vine fruits and summer fruits
▪ Major regional employers
▪ Organisations representing employers
▪ Education providers and skills organisations.

A list of interviewees is provided in Appendix 1.

The interviews focused on understanding:

▪ The needs of employers – level of skills and competencies
▪ The needs of employees – employment conditions
▪ Core competencies required (technical and behavioural)
▪ Production activities across the year for each commodity
▪ Key gaps in workforce requirements and what is available
▪ Success/challenges of skills passport approach.

Questions that guided the interviews are provided in Appendix 2.

2.1.3 WORKSHOP

A workshop was conducted with the project reference group in Mildura on the 10th May. The focus of this workshop was to discuss:

▪ Findings from desktop review
▪ Preliminary insights from interviews
▪ Initial recommendations for the next stage of the Horticultural Skills Capacity Framework.

2.2 DESKTOP ANALYSIS

A review of existing information on previous skills passports initiatives and similar initiatives in the region was conducted. The desktop review also included current state and federal government potential careers pathways for Horticulture Framework (passport participants) and alignment with relevant policies and strategies.
3 Desktop Review

3.1 REVIEW OF SKILLS PASSPORTS

A desktop review of existing skills passports across a range of different sectors was conducted. The focus of the passports considered was mainly on technical skills and compliance. For many of them it is a way of capturing, in a central location, the qualifications that staff had and needed in order to do their jobs safely.

For passports such as the National Disability Services passport and the Australian Archaeology Skills Passport there was an additional focus of providing a tool for individuals to promote their skills and for clients to know what experience they come with.

The Dairy Passport was developed to be compliance focussed however for culturally and linguistically diverse workers it has the extra benefit of validating their experience which may not be as well-known or as easy to promote as those from a mainstream Australian background.

The most relevant passports for the Mallee/Sunraysia region were the Farm Ready (Qld) and Tasmanian Ag Card (Refer to Section 5).

A detailed description of the passports is provided in Appendix 3.

3.2 OTHER RELEVANT STUDIES

The Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Pulse check\(^6\) provided an overarching picture of the skills in need for the area which complemented those identified during the interviews with industry and support agencies. It also provides relevant recommendations around improving the structural barriers to attracting and retaining the region’s workforce as well as the better alignment of education and training with skills required in industry.

Further information was sourced from the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance Harvest Work Visa framework and proposal\(^7\), Citrus Australia’s submission to the Commonwealth Government on agricultural occupations in ANZSCO\(^8\) and SuniTAFE’s career pathway model found in Appendix 4.

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\(^7\) Harvest Work Visa, Visa Framework and Proposal, October 2020, Australia Fresh Produce Alliance

\(^8\) Submission to the targeted update of agricultural sector occupations in ANZCO, 18 June 2021, by Nathan Hancock Citrus Australia Ltd
4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 INDUSTRY WORKFORCE NEEDS

In 2020 Nous group conducted a Pulse Check for the *Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile*. They found that the region grew significantly from 2017 – 2020 in terms of the value add increasing by $700 million with almost 2000 new jobs being created. According to the Pulse Check, the next three years offer a similar potential for growth and, if so, then the labour shortages being experienced now will exacerbate as the region is close to full employment. With less workers coming internationally and an ageing population, the region could face a shortage of up to 1500 workers (around 150 – 250 for horticulture) with an economic impact of $80m - $210M loss in gross value add per annum. The Pulse Check came out in 2020 so the full effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the availability of workers and the resultant economic loss may be underestimated.

It is within this context that RMCG consulted with the CEOs of industry peak bodies, SuniTAFE, Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Centre (LLEN) and the Victorian Skills Commission to hear about the specific workforce needs and the potential to fill them and provide careers pathways for employees.

4.1.1 COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

This report is focussed on the skilled labour needs of industries in the “On-farm” environment. However, to ensure we captured all the gaps and key workforce needs of the industries, we considered the needs across their whole business cycle including primary and secondary processing and specialist skills. For some industries such as wine grapes, almonds and dried fruits, the on-farm need was not high due to mechanisation and automation. These industries still require staff in processing and on-farm in areas such as agronomists, irrigation engineers and leadership staff. As such all horticulture were keen to be involved in a competency framework for the region.

The groupings of skills and core competencies required in the area of skilled labour is provided in Table 4-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL</th>
<th>BEHAVIOURAL</th>
<th>TECHNICAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate VISA</td>
<td><strong>Self</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mechanical</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• English</td>
<td>• Reliability</td>
<td>• Forklift driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Willingness to work in regions</td>
<td>• Punctuality</td>
<td>• Tractor driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding of Australian culture and communications</td>
<td>• Positive work ethic</td>
<td>• Harvest machine operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Worker Health and Safety</td>
<td>• Self-motivated</td>
<td><strong>Agronomic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chemical usage</td>
<td>• Willingness to learn</td>
<td>• Pruners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Energetic and interested</td>
<td>• Pickers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Honest/trustworthy</td>
<td>• Farm hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Problem solving</td>
<td>• Irrigation operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Interactions with others</strong></td>
<td>• Pest and disease scouts/sprayers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interpersonal skills</td>
<td><strong>Processing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication skills</td>
<td>• Packing shed operators</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Alignment with workplace culture</td>
<td>• Supervisors</td>
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</tbody>
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Although there were differences across the industries in terms of peak times when they required labour, the skills needs were largely similar. There were some general skills and attributes that applied across the business cycle (WHS, chemical usage and English skills) and then behavioural skills (reliability, communication, positive work ethic) and technical skills (forklift and tractor driving, farm hands, picking and pruning) required in the on-farm environment.

High demand roles identified in the Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Pulse Check included:
- Irrigation managers
- Agronomists
- Farm managers and farm hands
- Skilled pruners.

The interviewees reported challenges in recruiting across the business and saw the need to employ semi-skilled staff and then train them up on the job. The extra challenge was that there were not enough skilled and knowledgeable staff who could train up the new staff. As one respondent said "we are happy to employ apprentices however we lack supervisors and skilled people to show them the ropes". Similarly, another interviewee said “often the supervisory level lacks in understanding of viticulture, management of the whole farm system – irrigation, nutrition and fertigation”.

Given the very tight labour market, the focus on behavioural skills cannot be understated. If the businesses are hiring people who are semi-skilled then behavioural skills such as reliability, willingness to learn and work hard, common sense and problem-solving abilities, and being able to ask the right questions become even more important. The kinds of behaviours sought after in the Mallee region appear similar to those identified in a RMCG study in North West Tasmania.

A word cloud of the characteristics sought by around 100 of the farmers is provided in Appendix 5.

4.1.2 PEAK TIMES FOR LABOUR ACROSS THE YEAR

Figure 4-1 below illustrates the peak labour needs for the industries interviewed across the year. Due to mechanisation, almonds and dried fruit do not have a peak need for harvesting. Dried fruits still require labour for pruning for the short term – they are working on mechanising this part as well and almonds have more of a peak need for the processing side of the cycle.
4.2 SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

4.2.1 EDUCATION PROVIDER’S ROLE

Close collaboration with SuniTAFE and other RTOs has been important to industry to date and will continue to be so going forward. Being located in the Mallee region, SuniTAFE is very aware of the skills and labour shortages and understands the present need to first employ staff and then train them up afterwards – on farm and with certified courses.

There is a need to initially focus on providing a safe work environment for employees and as such SuniTAFE has developed an induction WHS interactive video involving Artificial Intelligence goggles. This was developed in collaboration with one large corporate farm however there is scope to develop a course that could be used across industries and incorporated into the Competency Framework.

An interactive chemical users course was also developed for a business which was so successful that the business now intend to take it overseas to other parts of their business. An online induction module was also developed in collaboration with Agriculture Victoria. One of the benefits of an online module is that students can redo parts of the course several times if they need to understand the content. This is a particular advantage when onboarding staff with English as an alternate language.

The need to reduce the risks to businesses through validation of skills was also identified. This could be a basic level validation, a “Statement of Results”, certifying relevant micro-credentials (see description below) or full courses. This reduced risk to industry was also raised when discussing shorter, less formal courses with the importance of some sort of rigour around assessing competency of skills rather than the “tick and flick” type courses.

Existing Core competencies for production horticulture can be found in Appendix 6. Skills Impact frequently update these units and there are opportunities for industry and business to feedback into this process. Currently they are validating a new set of core horticulture skills. Input into this process is via the following link or by going to the Skills Impact website.

Businesses could also work with SuniTAFE to develop a sub-set of the core competencies through micro-credentials that add value to the businesses. Due to changes to TAFE funding in July 2022, future credentials may be a fee for service model. Subject matter experts can be drawn in to ensure the relevancy of these courses.

An example of a bespoke leadership course developed by SuniTAFE was organised for 110 staff of an almond business. At least 1/3 of these staff were expected to progress to a higher-level leadership course. The course included conflict management and interview techniques building on the Cert IV in leadership but specifically tailored to their needs.

The Mallee Regional Skills Demand Profile Pulse Check found that the high demand courses at that time were:

- Certificate III in Horticulture
- Certificate III in Production Horticulture
- Bachelor of Agricultural Science.

The need for an agronomy course was raised and agronomist skills were listed as in demand by most of the industry interviewees. SuniTAFE has developed a course however needs industry support. While SuniTAFE are very aware of how busy organisations are at present, and aim to be flexible to accommodate businesses, a collaborative approach including commitment to running courses of need and commitment to sending students is required in order for both sectors to benefit.
Another area where SuniTAFE can assist is in developing career pathways for students of horticulture, students of other disciplines and mature age workers with experience. Careers pathways into horticulture are important in attracting new staff and retaining them into the future. An example of a career pathway model developed by SuniTAFE can be found in Appendix 4. This pathway can act as a suggestion of what is possible and can be easily moulded to suit the different experience and skill needs of individuals.

SuniTAFE have a mobile Skills and Jobs Centre which assists in connecting the industry needs to training. It also doubles as a promotional tool and is used at field days, schools and other regional sites promoting the Smart Farm concept to engage young people in particular in the future of horticulture.

Although not interviewed as part of this project, other education providers such as Irrigation Australia and RTOs can also assist in assessing competency and skilling up of staff.

Micro-credentials

Most universities and TAFEs now offer micro-credentials. These are bite-sized chunks of learning that can be stand alone or go towards an accredited course or degree. They are useful for upskilling staff or potential staff in specific skills required for the job. They can be used for mature age workers who may have experience in a different sector however lack the content knowledge for the new sector in which they will be employed. It can also be a way to assess recognition of prior learning where employees have been credited by other institutions (perhaps outside of Australia) or for experience in the workplace or other forms of informal learning. Micro-credentials can also be used to provide evidence of behavioural skills such as leadership skills and metacognitive skills.

Formalised micro-credentials include some sort of competency-based assessment and can lead to students receiving a “digital badge” that they can display as part of their online or physical CV. These would be assessed by a university, TAFE or RTO. Informal micro-credentials, where the course is not formally assessed or accredited by a university, TAFE or RTO, are possible as well so it is important for industries and employers to consider what is required to meet their particular needs (e.g. organisation risk, training costs, speed at which the competency needs to be developed, employee’s previous experience and formal qualifications) and to discuss the best way to achieve this with education providers such as SuniTAFE.

4.2.2 NORTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (LLEN)

The Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) works with young people at school ages 14 – 17 years. They offer a range of services to support young people into work including a Vocational Preparation and Transition Program where staff are trained up to run information sessions for schools. There is a specific one for the Agricultural Industry. They also like to run sessions to promote STEM idols especially females and have guest speakers from industry.

Although agriculture, horticulture and healthcare are the biggest employers in the area, the LLEN still has trouble attracting young people into agriculture and horticulture. They appear to be more attracted to construction, trades such as electrical and plumbing, allied health and nursing and see horticulture as hard labour not a career.

They have trialled school-based apprenticeships and had 5 students apply - three of which had parents with properties which was easy for those students. Similarly, some of the multinationals are running group training apprenticeships/traineeships but also find them hard to fill due to the tyranny of distance. Another barrier to engaging apprentices is that the apprenticeship rate of around $12/hr is less enticing even than casual work though it has a greater chance of leading them into a career. Other barriers include the lack of agronomy courses in the area and the need to engage young people in workplace learning from early high school as by the time they reach year 11, they have usually formed ideas about their potential careers and chosen subjects.
Promotion of the industry needs to also start earlier with a focus on parents as well as students and careers counsellors. Trying to connect with parents to show them other options aside from university and highlighting jobs with a good work/life balance, artificial intelligence and autonomous solutions is critical.

The LLEN is well connected with the Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC), Mildura Specialist School and the Christies Centre for social enterprises and aims to work with parents with CaLD backgrounds in careers conversations.

The LLEN can assist in promoting a passport of competency framework to schools and is keen on seeing continued focus on connecting industry with education. They can also provide industry visits for school age students.

4.2.3 VICTORIAN SKILLS AUTHORITY (VSA)

Victorian Skills Authority is an independent government agency that works across the education and training systems (VET and University) and looks at present and future skills demands for industry. They work with the Department of Education and Training and have a strong focus on long-term unemployed.

VSA recognise the challenges of TAFE when setting up bespoke courses in terms of costs and quality of courses and the differences in needs of regional versus urban communities. They identified the need to start talking to students about pathways and entrepreneurship from a younger age – early high school or before.

Other ideas they identified are:

▪ Youth Foyer model – an integrated learning and accommodation setting for young people aged 16-24 years. Two years free accommodation providing the students complete a TAFE course. The closest Foyer to Mildura at present is in Shepparton. [https://foyer.org.au/](https://foyer.org.au/)

▪ Longerenong College – attracts students from across Australia to live in and study agriculture. The courses are popular because of the social atmosphere created by on-site accommodation. Dookie College (University of Melbourne) is another example.

▪ Development of a quality mark for employers WHS and cultural safety to provide a sense of safety and security to those considering horticulture as a career

▪ Employability training - the LLEN is one that provides this service but also Commonwealth programs such as PaTH [https://www.dese.gov.au/newsroom/articles/explainer-youth-jobs-path](https://www.dese.gov.au/newsroom/articles/explainer-youth-jobs-path)

Although the need for labour is the region is immediate, they recommend a long-term plan with a deliberate commitment to WHS, the quality of the job offers and economic development.

4.2.4 OTHER NOT INTERVIEWED AS PART OF THIS PROJECT

Although not interviewed as part of this project, through discussions with the steering group and from RMCG previous connections we recommend connecting with the following groups:

▪ Employment agencies such as, but not only, Job Active providers

▪ Labour Hire organisations such as MADEC

▪ Agencies supporting CaLD and disability communities such as Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC), AMES Australia and Mildura Specialist School

▪ Agriculture Victoria (note: MRIC has already engaged with relevant staff).
4.3 CALD COMMUNITIES

There are numerous issues restricting the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) community in pursuing agricultural careers (Figure 5-1). These factors were explored with settlement agencies, agricultural peak bodies, education providers and individuals in a study conducted by RMCG for Agriculture Victoria in 2020 (Settlement factors that influence CaLD communities to pursue agricultural careers).

For the Mallee region, a number of the factors raised are in the region’s favour including access to services such as education, settlement support and health and securing employment. Having a core group of people from the same cultural backgrounds is also important for support and encouraging people to stay in the same region and Mildura has at least 79 different nationalities many of which come from strong farming backgrounds bringing potential interest in horticulture, skills and knowledge. SMECC and AMES Australia, under the Commonwealth Government funded Try, Test and Learn program moved several families from CaLD backgrounds to Mildura from Melbourne. Although the program was affected by COVID-19 and housing shortages, programs such as these provide opportunities to create career pathways into horticulture. Both SMECC and AMES Australia offer a wealth of knowledge and information about attracting and retaining staff from CaLD backgrounds.

As with mainstream Australians, the further from the regional centre the farm businesses are, the harder it is to attract staff so thought needs to be given to providing incentives to work regionally. Trials of government incentives have had limited success in the past as quoted in the Citrus Australia Submission to the targeted occupations in ANZSCO. Access to a car and driver’s licence are issues for many people from CaLD backgrounds. This is also an issue when attracting young school age students into apprenticeships as well. Parents do not always have the means or willingness to drive kids to farms. Attracting second generation CaLD people into horticulture has the extra barrier of their parents being keen for them to obtain a university degree and work in a sector other than horticulture. Promotion of the breadth of opportunities available, including those requiring a university degree, can address this perception.

Figure 5-1: Settlement factors that influence CALD communities to pursue agricultural careers

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11 Identifying Opportunities and Challenges for Culturally and Linguistically diverse (CALD) Communities to address workforce gaps in Victoria’s Agricultural Sector, RMCG, 2020
The opportunities and challenges for career development pathways for people from CaLD backgrounds were also identified (Figure 4-2) in the RMCG study. The first three opportunities are relevant for attracting any staff into agriculture with the other two specific to attracting and retaining CaLD staff.

![Figure 4-2: Opportunities and challenges for people from CaLD backgrounds](image)

**Opportunities and Challenges for employment and career development pathways for people from CALD backgrounds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear targeted career pathways guide</td>
<td>English language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeships, traineeships and Work Integrated Learning (WIL)</td>
<td>Labour hire and casual work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of the breadth of jobs available in the agricultural industry</td>
<td>Time and energy to spend on studying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visas that support training and encourage long term commitment</td>
<td>Knowledge of Australian workforce and networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural competency (2 way Australian and CALD specific) programs</td>
<td>Visa types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge, openness and flexibility of employers when hiring CALD workers</td>
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</table>

**English language and Australian workplace knowledge:** Many of the challenges raised in the report for Agriculture Victoria\(^\text{12}\) cited above were also discussed in the interviews for this project. English language was not a strong barrier to those interviewed although may prevent individuals from progressing in their career. Understanding of workplace English and culture was seen as more important. To assist in overcoming safety issues arising from inducting people with low level of English skills or people unaccustomed to horticulture work, SuniTAFE and Agriculture Victoria have recently put in place an online workplace awareness/OHS induction program. This will be a valuable resource for future programs, especially if adapted to include pictorial or plain English instructions.

**Reputation of the horticulture industry:** Similar to mainstream Australians, the previous unscrupulous practices of a few labour hire organisations (but highly reported in media) has tainted the view of horticulture for people from CaLD backgrounds. A “quality tick” for farmers and organisations who meet high standards of worker safety and security may counter this perception. The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance’s submission “Harvest Work Visa – Visa Framework and Proposal” lists a few existing programs (Fair Farms Certified, approved employer under SWP or PLS) worth exploring.

**Visa system:** Employers and CaLD employees alike appear to find the current visa system less than helpful in encouraging attraction and retention of staff. There are many submissions to the Commonwealth Government on this topic including one from the Citrus Industry. For employees from CaLD backgrounds the main issues are around ability to access study and training, ease with which they can bring out their spouses or families and ability to transfer to permanent residency from other visas.

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\(^\text{12}\) Identifying Opportunities and Challenges for Culturally and Linguistically diverse (CALD) Communities to address workforce gaps in Victoria’s Agricultural Sector, RMCG, 2020
**Cultural understanding:** Understanding cultural requirements of their employees is important e.g. employees less willing to work on cultural or religious holidays, potential uneasiness of some cultures and individuals taking on a supervisory role if it means supervising those older than themselves.

**Women from CaLD backgrounds:** CaLD Women face extra barriers to study and work with significant caring responsibilities and lack of access to, or confidence in, childcare. There is often a lack of connection between the RTOs and employers to set up placements, long term employment or successful self-employment. Certain communities prefer to have their daughters’ study close to home which can limit their options in courses. The importance of considering the whole family when establishing programs for CaLD communities is essential.
5 Skills Framework

From the discussions with the industry, support agencies and steering group members, there appears to be merit and interest in developing a central competency framework or passport like approach to ease the pressure around onboarding the skilled labour side of horticultural businesses.

The potential features of a skills framework are described below.

1. **Collect general employee information**

   Having general information readily accessible would be highly valuable to employers. This would include training credentials, VISA status, previous employment and photo.

2. **General induction to horticulture module**

   SuniTAFE and Agriculture Victoria have already developed modules which could be modified to meet basic needs across the industries such as the bespoke leadership course for a large corporate organisation. There is also an existing introductory awareness raising video (https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/crops-and-horticulture/the-big-victorian-harvest/harvest-work-training) showing the region's industries and their importance nationally which could be included here for the dual purpose of inducting staff and awareness raising of the industries.

3. **General WHS module**

   This could include a WHS induction module and notifications to employers of when that has been completed (similar to the Diary Passport).

4. **Central record of licences or qualifications**

   This could also include reminders to individuals and employers of when qualifications are due for renewal e.g. tractor driver licences. If implemented across different industries, it may have the benefit of enabling groups of people to be trained at once instead of each business organising to send employees at different times. This may assist TAFE and RTOs in their planning and budgets as it is easier to set up courses for larger groups. This approach would provide an opportunity for add on services to the group such as careers pathway information, updates from industry and other incentives to remain in horticulture.

   Initially experience could be captured simply through a record of where people have worked and for how long. Potential for it to be used to identify areas of skills or training, needs to again be consolidated across industries before approaching TAFE or RTOs with the requirements.

5. **Inclusion of behavioural skills**

   The use of a passport to capture behavioural skills such as problem solving, reliability or communication skills, would need further exploration to work out who would assess the skills and ensure the assessment was rigorous enough so that employers were confident in the assessment. Ideas for how to capture this can be found in the archaeology passport (https://australianarchaeologicalassociation.com.au/careers-resources/the-australian-archaeology-skills-passport/) where the skills have been assessed under full supervision, moderate supervision or no supervision. This would be valuable to include given the present tight labour market means that employers are keen to hire on skills such as “common sense, reliability and willingness to learn” and then train them in the technical skills later.

6. **Requirements to implement**

   Unless the information can be drawn from a TAFE or other database then it would require both employers and employees to upload details to ensure its relevance and accuracy, so thought needs to be given to whether this effort provides enough reward for both. Online systems similar to the Tasmanian Ag Card (WHS induction) or Queensland FarmReady Hub (an app with a fee for employees) are worth exploring. There is a description of the two below.
Relevant Existing Schemes

_Tasmanian Ag Card_

The AgCard is an online platform administered by Primary Employers Tasmania (not-for-profit registered employer organisation) It is a pre-farm employment induction program designed to assist farm employers and employees identify and manage workplace health and safety risks, and provide essential awareness and understanding of WH&S procedures and human resources principles. It includes two elements:

- **AgCard Safe Farming** – promoting conversations about workplace health and safety, identifying hazards in the farm workplace and minimising risks
- **AgCard Human Resources** – meet obligations in the workplace as an employee

_FarmReady Hub and FarmReady Card_

Supported and funded by the Queensland Government and administered by the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (a member-based organisation including RTOs, peak bodies, industry bodies and large corporate organisations), the FarmReady Hub is an online website and app that houses the FarmReady Card micro-credential and the skills passport along with extra holistic support that a job seeker may need.

The micro-credential (informal with a pathway to become accredited) appears to meet many of the needs raised by the Mildura/Swan Hill interviewees for this project, i.e. induction including WHS, legal information, need to know elements such as living and working regionally and appropriate clothing and food for working on a farm, how to find work and accommodation and what to do if you wish to change or leave a job.

The Digital Skills Passport is a digital vault where students or job seekers can store employment paperwork, work history information (certificates and licences etc.) making it easier to email prospective employers with the relevant information. This part appears to be designed for the employee. It is unclear whether the same passport could be used for employers.
6 Recommendations

6.1 OVERALL RECOMMENDATION

The main recommendation is that the Horticulture Skills Capacity Framework concept has merit. Industry is interested in a competency framework that spans across the specific sectors and therefore options for how to implement a solution should be explored.

A subsequent project should be funded that follows through on the Actions listed under 6.4 Next Steps.

6.2 BENEFIT STATEMENTS

6.2.1 FOR EMPLOYERS

An online Skills Competency Framework will free up employer’s time by providing an easily accessible database of basic staff skills and qualifications. It could assist with induction, WHS compliance and decreasing workplace risks. Leveraging the existing SuniTAFE induction module, it could start with basic WHS training and broaden out to be a tool to identify training and skills needs so that a coordinated group of training can occur. If it included a “hub” feature similar to the FarmReady Hub, it could also act as an industry awareness raising platform, provide relevant information about the region, support services and working on-farm.

6.2.2 FOR EMPLOYEES

An online Skills Competency Framework will make it easier to apply for jobs by having one location to store up to date licence and qualification information. It can also provide an opportunity to share interests in training or careers with employers to build a career in horticulture. It could also include information on workplace rights and obligations similar to the AgCard and FarmReady Hub and be a ‘one stop shop’ for all the extra information relevant to working and living in the regions.
6.3 PROPOSED MODEL

The key features of the proposed Skills Competency Framework and how the benefits relate to both employers and employees are described in the following diagram (Figure 6-1).

![Skills Competency Framework Diagram](image)

**Figure 6-1: Skills Competency Framework**
6.4 NEXT STEPS

The actions below articulate the next steps required to follow through on the recommendation of developing a skills competency framework. The key actions relating directly to the skills competency framework are described in 6.4.1 followed by broader issues relevant to the success of attracting and retaining valuable staff outlined in 6.4.2.

6.4.1 SKILLS COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

▪ Decide who will be responsible for administering the Framework. Who will manage the technical side, who will fund the set up and who will ensure it is maintained?
  - Approach Agriculture Victoria to discuss whether they would fund and/or administer the required sections of the framework.
▪ Utilise the competency list (Figure 6-1) across industry groups and gain commitment on the short list of core skills required. Consult with industry peak bodies to engage businesses to ground truth the list.
▪ Engage with employees through the peak bodies on the value of a Skills Competency Framework to them
▪ Engage labour hire groups used by the industries to see what sort of system they use to capture key skills and licences and test whether building on that would be an option for implementation or whether a stand-alone one would better suit
▪ Consult with Farm Ready hub, AgCard and Dairy Passport to hear how they have fared over time and the feedback from employers and employees as to their value
▪ Investigate the different “Quality Employer Schemes” available and the feasibility of including such schemes as a requirement for employers as part of the framework, or whether a specific Mallee quality employer brand would suit better.

6.4.2 ATTRACT AND RETAIN VALUABLE STAFF

Broader issues were heard through the research and interviews which are separate to, but relevant to the success of a competency framework. These recommendations highlight approaches that may be successful in attracting and retaining staff in the region.

▪ Continue to consider and jointly advocate for improvements in wrap around services such as housing, settlement support and services for the region
▪ Continue to feed into the ANZSCO and skilled migration list to ensure up to date jobs in horticulture are listed in order to better enable the migration process
▪ Continue to promote careers in horticulture together, in particular to parents as well as students and careers advisors. Continue to promote the region as a whole and how it contributes to the economic and social fabric of Australia/Victoria/Mallee region
▪ Continue to work with SuniTAFE and other RTOs to develop careers pathway models to demonstrate a long term career in horticulture. An example from SuniTAFE can be found in Appendix 4 with online careers hub examples from the nursery and vegetable industries following: https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/greenlife-careers-hub/greenlife-careers and https://ausveg.com.au/grow-your-career/
▪ Continue to feed into the Skills Impact Training packages to ensure its relevance to industry
▪ Consider developing a graduate program similar to the Queensland Farmer’s Federation graduate extension program which is highly regarded by employers and graduates alike. Details can be found here.
### Appendix 1: List of interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Key Stakeholder</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Reference Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MRIC CEO</td>
<td>Rebecca Wells</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MRIC Strategic Advisory Panel</td>
<td>Leonie Burrows</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MRIC Strategic Advisory Panel</td>
<td>Peter Forbes</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MRIC Project Manager</td>
<td>Tim Cummins</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education Providers SuniTAFE</td>
<td>Ross Humphries</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Peak Body Almond - Almond Board of Australia (CEO)</td>
<td>Tim Jackson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Peak Body Citrus - Citrus Australia (CEO)</td>
<td>Nathan Hancock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Peak Body Citrus - Citrus Australia (Project Officer)</td>
<td>Kerry Thompson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Peak Body Table Grapes - Australian Table Grape Association (Project Officer)</td>
<td>Jenny Treeby</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Peak Body Dried fruits - Dried Fruits Australia (CEO)</td>
<td>Anne Mansell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Peak Body Summer fruits - Summerfruit Australia (CEO)</td>
<td>Trevor Ranford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Employers Board of Suniatafe, citrus and winegrapes businesses</td>
<td>Greg Hutchinson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Employment Body Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network</td>
<td>Rodney Martin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Government Victorian Skills Authority</td>
<td>Craig Robertson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Government Victorian Skills Authority</td>
<td>Katrina Currie</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Government Agriculture Victoria</td>
<td>Del Delpitiya</td>
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Appendix 2: Interview questions

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with questions specific to each segment of:

- Industry employers – e.g. peak bodies
- Employee representatives – e.g. CALD, government
- Education providers – e.g. TAFE, MRIC.

1. **INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS**:

- What are the main gaps in your workforce?
  - Labouring/technical
  - Middle management
  - Tertiary/highly skilled
- What are the main issues in accessing employees?
- Are employment services used? If so which ones?
- What are the specific skills that are required?
  - Technical – e.g. forklift driver, irrigation manager
  - Behavioural – attitude, people manager, learner
- What training/development is provided for employees?
- What career pathways are available for employees?
- What are the peak periods for specific skills?
  - Timeline with a description of what skills is needed
  - E.g. pruning, harvesting, coolstore, transport
- If you were to design a competency framework for entry level jobs – who would you involve? Would this be useful to cover your employment needs and increase attraction and retention of staff?

2. **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES**:

- What are the main skills provided – technical and behavioural?
- What specific barriers are employees faced or might be facing?
- What courses or formal learning are they expected to have?
- What informal learning are they expected to have?
- How do they access employment?
- What support are they provided?
- If you had a way of recording your technical and behavioural competencies so you could be constantly in work or so your skills and aptitude could be recognised, would this be useful to you? What sort of things would you include?

3. **EDUCATION PROVIDERS**:

- What courses do you offer?
- Do you offer non-accredited as well as accredited courses?
- What level of proficiency are these targeted?
- What skills development do your courses/learning opportunities focus on?
- Where are the key gaps in workforce requirements?
## Appendix 3: Review of passport schemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION (LINK)</th>
<th>TARGET AUDIENCE / ADMINISTERED BY</th>
<th>ELEMENTS OF PASSPORT</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGRICULTURE</strong></td>
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</table>
| **FarmReady Hub**   | **Audience:** Farmers<br>Agricultural employees/<br>jobseekers<br>Contractors<br>Employment agencies/ Labour<br>hire providers  
**Administered by:** Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA) and FarmReady Hub.  
**Platform:** app with upfront fee ($49 for an individual)  
- FarmReady Card – micro-credentials  
- Skills Passport  
**Focus:** compliance, induction, some technical skills and qualifications  
The Pre-Induction Micro-Credential program allows prospective agriculture employees to obtain a FarmReady Card that prepares them for work on farm and opens career pathways to all the employment opportunities across Queensland’s agriculture sector  
New employees arriving at the farm gate are correctly prepared for an agricultural job with an understanding of specific requirements for:  
- Rural workplace health and safety  
- Biosecurity  
- Food safety  
- COVID-19  
Job seekers can include their licence details, permits, letters of offer, and other qualifications (e.g. first aid, forklift ticket) | Develop a workforce that is responsive to technological advances and potential disruption | Queensland |
| **Ag Card**         | **Audience:** Tasmanian agricultural, horticultural, viticultural employers and employees  
**Administered by:** Primary Employers Tasmania (not-for-profit registered employer organisation)  
**Platform:** online  
**Focus:** Induction, WHS, compliance, HR  
2 courses need to be completed  
1. AgCard Safe Farming – promoting conversations about workplace health and safety, identifying hazards in the farm workplace and minimising risks  
2. AgCard Human Resources – meet obligations in the workplace as an employee  
Pre-farm employment induction program designed to assist farm employers and employees identify and manage workplace health and safety risks, and provide essential awareness and understanding of WH&S procedures and human resources principles | Also provides a link to subsidised TasTAFE agriculture courses |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION (LINK)</th>
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<th>ELEMENTS OF PASSPORT</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Passport</td>
<td>Dairy Australia</td>
<td><strong>Focus</strong>: compliance, some technical skills?</td>
<td>Allows dairy farms to manage all the members of their farm via an online platform and link them to the key tasks that need to be undertaken on-farm</td>
<td>SOPs for key tasks, available to farm team members via any Internet connected device 90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dairy managers and workers</td>
<td>Dairy Passport enables managers to:</td>
<td>Allows farmer managers to view levels of current and required capability across the farm business, identify and record development and training activity</td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Platform</strong> – Dairy Passport App or website</td>
<td>▪ Create Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and Policies (from templates) for your farm to share with farm team members via Internet connected devices</td>
<td>Can view and agree to policies/SOPs relevant to role on-farm via the Dairy Passport App or website</td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Record acceptance of SOPs and Policies to meet compliance and governance requirements</td>
<td>Allows managers to keep up to date records in relation to policies, procedures and workforce planning</td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Easily record who is working on farm/s, informal and formal skills, completion of SOPs / policies, and identify any skills gaps</td>
<td></td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Engage staff in driving their own development</td>
<td></td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Record inductions and other records for contractors</td>
<td></td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Documents can be uploaded, categorised and shared relating to COVID-19, team meetings, farm information, and training documents</td>
<td></td>
<td>90-day journey guides support coaching of new staff to assist them in effectively settling into their roles</td>
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**Australi</p>
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<th>ORGANISATION (LINK)</th>
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<th>ELEMENTS OF PASSPORT</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
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</table>
| NDS Skills Passport | **Audience:** Disability Support Workers, Disability Service Providers, Disability Clients | **Focus:** technical skills, ease of promotion of skills  
Disability Skills Passport – a digital record of the training, qualifications, and capabilities of disability Support Workers  
1. A self-service online system: Service Providers or Support Workers register a disability Support Worker’s profile in an online portal  
2. In the portal, the worker uploads records of their training and qualifications. That information is verified by Disability Skills Passport technology partner, Pegasus  
3. Once a Support Worker’s information is verified, they will be issued with a special Passport (eCard or physical card) which links to their online profile  
4. Via a dedicated mobile app, the worker can show a Service Provider or Participant what they are qualified and trained to do | Students and practitioners:  
• Provides students with a clear guide as to what is expected of them as a professional archaeologist  
**Group A skills** are those which a graduate is expected to have had at least some initial experience in upon entry into the workforce  
**Group B skills** are those which can be targeted for Professional Development  
Digital skills sheets will be housed online with the Australian Archaeology Association, providing guidance on how a candidate is to be assessed for each skill within the three tiers of experience: that a skill can be completed under full supervision, moderate supervision, or no supervision  
Feedback loop – skills gaps identified in ANCATL’s Profiling the Profession surveys  
Aboriginal Site Officers and Rangers:  
• Recognition of the importance and value of practical experience and knowledge  
• Encourages the equal weighting of experience gained during life and study | Based on the highly successful UK model  
The passport is available in both hard copy and open access digital form (here). Digital skills sheets are housed online with the Australian Archaeological Association, providing guidance on how a candidate is to be assessed for each skill within the three tiers of experience. There are also assessor guidelines |
| Australian Archaeology Skills Passport | **Audience:** Archaeology Students and practitioners, Aboriginal Site Officers and Rangers, the Public, e.g. teachers, school students | **Focus:** technical skills through qualifications and/or experience  
Group A skills are those which a graduate is expected to have had at least some initial experience in upon entry into the workforce  
Group B skills are those which can be targeted for Professional Development  
Digital skills sheets will be housed online with the Australian Archaeology Association, providing guidance on how a candidate is to be assessed for each skill within the three tiers of experience: that a skill can be completed under full supervision, moderate supervision, or no supervision  
Feedback loop – skills gaps identified in ANCATL’s Profiling the Profession surveys | Students and practitioners:  
• Provides students with a clear guide as to what is expected of them as a professional archaeologist  
**Group A skills** are those which a graduate is expected to have had at least some initial experience in upon entry into the workforce  
**Group B skills** are those which can be targeted for Professional Development  
Digital skills sheets will be housed online with the Australian Archaeology Association, providing guidance on how a candidate is to be assessed for each skill within the three tiers of experience: that a skill can be completed under full supervision, moderate supervision, or no supervision  
Feedback loop – skills gaps identified in ANCATL’s Profiling the Profession surveys  
Aboriginal Site Officers and Rangers:  
• Recognition of the importance and value of practical experience and knowledge  
• Encourages the equal weighting of experience gained during life and study | Based on the highly successful UK model  
The passport is available in both hard copy and open access digital form (here). Digital skills sheets are housed online with the Australian Archaeological Association, providing guidance on how a candidate is to be assessed for each skill within the three tiers of experience. There are also assessor guidelines |
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<th>ELEMENTS OF PASSPORT</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| European Hospitality Skills Passport – 2014 article | **Audience:** EU jobseekers and employers within hospitality and Tourism  
**Administered by:** EURES is a European cooperation network of employment services, designed to facilitate the free movement of workers.  
**Platform:** online portal (EURES website) | **Focus:** technical skills, language fluency  
The EURES Portal allows jobseekers to specify which skills they have obtained where (within a specific sector), making it easier for employers to find exactly what they are looking for. The skills passport has already been launched for the hospitality and tourism sectors  
By selecting the skills they are looking for, employers will see a filtered selection of matching skills passports and CVs from all over Europe | • Supports alternate entry methods into the discipline  
**The Public:**  
• Can be used in primary and secondary school contexts  
• Open access format can contribute to curriculum focussing on Australian archaeology, First Australians and contemporary Australian culture | An important practical tool to promote mobility of European workers, especially young people, in a sector that has high growth potential  
EURES has always worked hard to ensure that European citizens can benefit from the same opportunities, despite language barriers, cultural differences, bureaucratic challenges, diverse employment laws and a lack of recognition of educational certificates across Europe |
Appendix 4: Career pathway model SuniTAFE

CAREER PATHWAY MODEL

To provide a career pathway for unskilled staff to progress ‘up the bands’ and into the skilled labour pool and beyond.

BAND 1-4 is based on the following skills development program for those who aspire to a salaried positions

1. OM1: Operate Orchard Machinery
2. OM2: Maintain (and include prevention) Orchard Machinery
3. OA1: Orchard Agronomy
4. OA2: Orchard Water and Fertigation (Infrastructure and Applied System)

BAND 5-6 is based on an aspirational skills development program for those who aspire to management

Pre-requisite for all staff prior to commencing the Career Pathway Model

1. Coaching Your Career Seminar
2. Industry (include literacy and numeracy) skill assessment
3. Individual Training Plans including goals

Other aspects for consideration to be incorporated/embedded into the program

- Policies and Standard Operating Procedures
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- OHS/Induction
- Literacy/i-literacy
- Delivery – class-based, on-site, mobile classroom
- Time Allocation and commitment to program
- Optional Workshops e.g. Driver Operations and Licensing, First Aid including Anaphylaxis, Certificate TAE Assessment Units, ICT Literacy
Appendix 5: Employee characteristics

Figure A5-1: Characteristics sought by approximately 100 employers in north west Tasmania agriculture (RMCG (2020) North West Agricultural Workforce Plan Consultancy Project. Final Report. (Tasmanian Department of State Growth). Summary available here)
Appendix 6: Core units

Table A6-1: Core units for Certificate II to Diploma level for Production Horticulture and Nursery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUAL’N LEVEL</th>
<th>QUAL’N NO.</th>
<th>QUAL’N</th>
<th>UNIT NO.</th>
<th>UNIT NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20320</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCBI0204</td>
<td>Follow site quarantine procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20320</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCWHS201</td>
<td>Participate in work health and safety processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20320</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCWRK204</td>
<td>Work effectively in the industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20320</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCWRK205</td>
<td>Participate in workplace communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20720</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCNSY206</td>
<td>Care for nursery plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20720</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCPCM204</td>
<td>Recognise plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert II</td>
<td>AHC20720</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCWHS201</td>
<td>Participate in work health and safety processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC30620</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCBI0303</td>
<td>Apply biosecurity measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC30620</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCWHS301</td>
<td>Contribute to work health and safety processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC30620</td>
<td>Production Horticulture</td>
<td>AHCWRK306</td>
<td>Comply with industry quality assurance requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC31120</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCCHM304</td>
<td>Transport and store chemicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC31120</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCCHM307</td>
<td>Prepare and apply chemicals to control pest, weeds and diseases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cert III</td>
<td>AHC31120</td>
<td>Nursery Operations</td>
<td>AHCIRG338</td>
<td>Troubleshoot irrigation systems</td>
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This report has been prepared by:

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Document review and authorisation

Project Number: #1602

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This project is supported by the Mallee Regional Innovation Centre which is the Victoria Drought, Resilience, Adoption and Innovation Hub’s North West Irrigated Horticulture Node, with funding through the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund and Regional Development Australia - Loddon Mallee.