



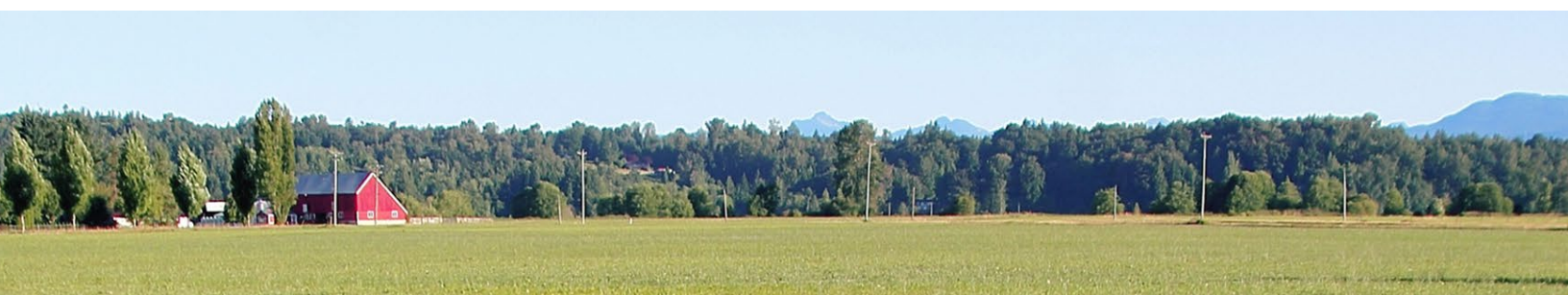
**CAHRC-CCRHA**

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council  
Conseil canadien pour les ressources humaines  
en agriculture

Advancing BC's Agricultural Workforce:  
HR Tools Development and Employer Training  
for Sustainable Growth

# Environmental Scan Report

*April 2025*



This Report was funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia through the Agriculture Workforce Development Initiative. The initiative is delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC.

The Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC are pleased to participate in the delivery of this report. We are committed to working with our industry partners to address issues of importance to the agriculture and agri-food industry in British Columbia. Opinions expressed in this report are those of the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) and not necessarily those of the Investment Agriculture Foundation, the Government of Canada, or the Government of British Columbia.



## Executive Summary

This environmental scan provides a comprehensive analysis of existing HR tools and resources within British Columbia's agriculture and food processing sectors. Faced with persistent labour shortages and an increasingly complex regulatory environment, employers are challenged to recruit, manage, and retain skilled workers. BC's agriculture sector recorded the highest vacancy rate in Canada in 2022 at 12%, highlighting the urgent need for targeted HR supports.

The scan utilizes a mixed-methods approach, including an employer survey, focus group discussions, evaluation of existing HR resources, and review of national and provincial labour market research.

Findings reveal that HR practices across the sector are largely informal, with over 65% of employers managing HR themselves without dedicated personnel. Tools and training currently available are often fragmented, generic, or misaligned with the realities of BC's diverse agricultural operations.

Key gaps identified include a lack of sector- and commodity-specific HR resources, limited accessibility of user-friendly tools, and significant training needs for frontline managers and owner-operators. Employers also expressed a strong demand for a centralized resource hub and ongoing advisory support to implement best practices effectively.

The report concludes that a coordinated, BC-specific strategy is needed to develop practical, customizable HR tools and targeted training programs. Strengthening HR capacity will be critical to supporting workforce retention, enhancing sector resilience, and ensuring the long-term growth and sustainability of BC's agri-food industries.

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	5
Methodology.....	5
Current HR Landscape.....	6
HR Challenges and Needs .....	6
HR Management Practices and Barriers .....	7
HR Tools and Resources.....	9
HR Training and Capacity Building .....	11
Gaps and Areas for Improvement.....	12
References .....	14
Appendix 1: Existing HR Tools & Resources Evaluation Matrix .....	15
Appendix 2: Employer Survey Questions.....	18
Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion Questions.....	22

## Introduction

British Columbia's agriculture and food processing sectors are critical drivers of the province's economy, supplying both domestic and international markets with a diverse range of products. According to the CAHRC's British Columbia Agriculture Labour Market Information and Forecast 2023-2030, the agriculture sector employed over 35,800 domestic workers in BC at peak season in 2022. Additionally, the British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Sector Snapshot 2022 for Food & Beverage Processing reported that the food-processing sector employed 39,143 workers in 2021.

Despite their significance, both sectors are increasingly challenged by persistent labour shortages, evolving workforce expectations, and a complex regulatory environment. Labour market pressures have created a situation where many agricultural operations struggle to maintain productivity and meet market demands. As highlighted in the CAHRC's Agriculture Labour Market Forecast 2023–2030, BC recorded the highest agricultural vacancy rate in Canada at 12% in 2022, leaving over 4,800 positions unfilled during peak season—well above the national average vacancy rate of 7.4%. These figures underscore the unique and acute workforce pressures facing the province.

In response to these challenges, the *Advancing BC's Agricultural Workforce: HR Tools Development and Employer Training for Sustainable Growth* initiative was launched. Funded by the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia through the Agriculture and Food Workforce Development Initiative (AWDI)—and delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAFBC). This project, lead by the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) aims to address labour challenges and support workforce retention in BC's agriculture and food processing sectors. The project focuses on enhancing HR tools, best practices, and training programs to promote long-term sector sustainability.

This environmental scan serves as a foundational element of the broader strategy, providing evidence-based insights to guide the customization of HR tools and the development of targeted employer training initiatives.

## Methodology

The environmental scan utilized a mixed-methods approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the HR landscape within BC's agriculture and food processing sectors. The methodologies utilized included the following

- **Employer survey:** An online survey was conducted between February 28 and March 28, 2025, receiving 58 responses. The survey collected data on HR management practices, current HR challenges and needs, and HR tools and resources currently in use and those identified as needed, as well as preferences regarding HR training formats and content.
- **Focus group discussions:** A virtual focus group was held on April 3, 2025, brought together six stakeholders representing a diversity of sectors, business sizes, and operational models. These discussions served to validate and expand upon the survey findings, offering qualitative insights and sector-specific perspectives.
- **Resource evaluation matrix:** Existing BC-specific HR resources were systematically evaluated using a detailed checklist and scoring framework, assessing criteria such as content coverage, relevance, practical application, specific commodity relevance and cost.

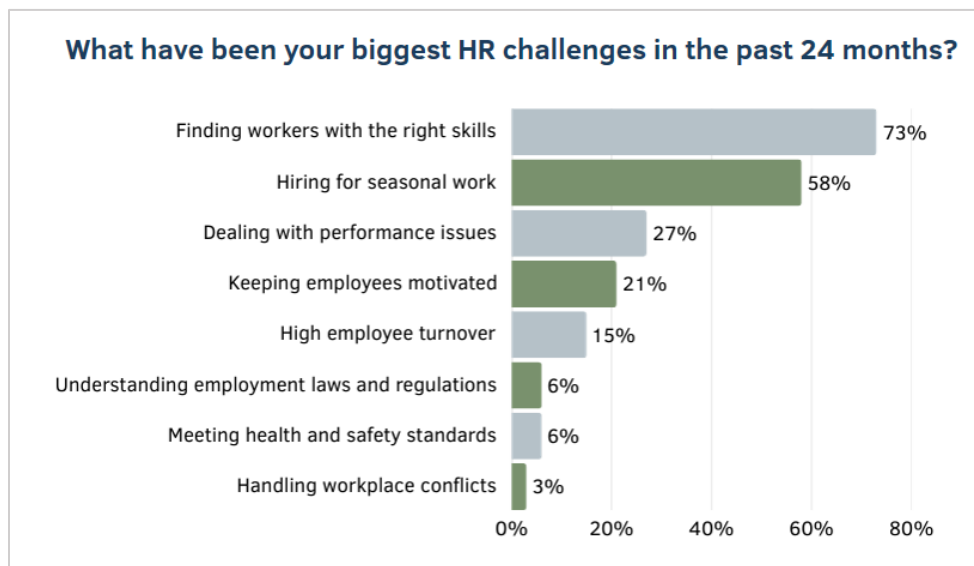
- **Secondary data review:** Analysis of CAHRC British Columbia Agriculture Labour Market Information and Forecast 2023-2030 and CAHRC Agriculture Labour Market Forecast 2023–2030 were reviewed to understand provincial labour trends in comparison to national trends.

The insights generated through this process form the basis for the recommendations regarding HR tool development and employer training priorities for the project.

## Current HR Landscape

### HR Challenges and Needs

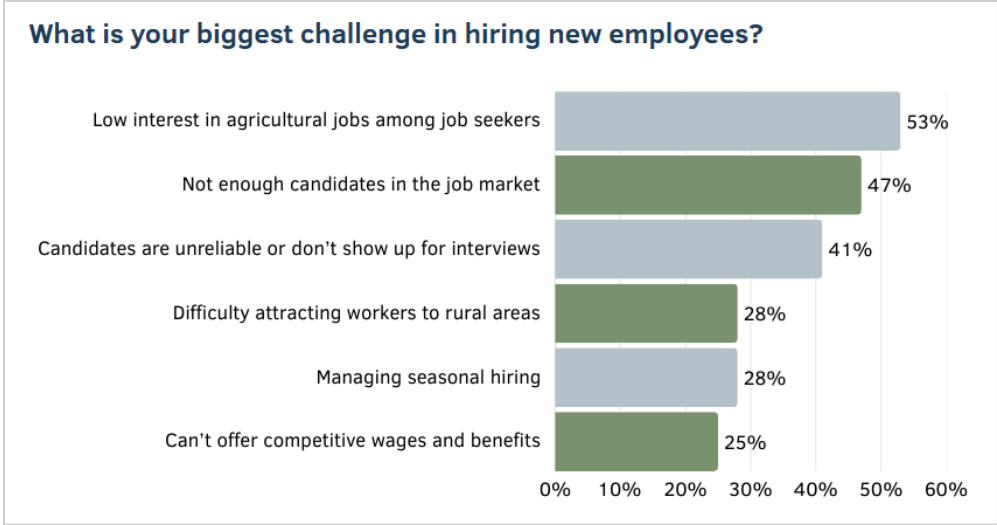
The survey data from BC agriculture and food processing employers reveal that 73% of respondents struggle to find workers with the right skills, and 58% face persistent issues with seasonal hiring. Additionally, 53% of employers identified a low interest in agricultural jobs among job seekers, while 47% reported a shortage of available candidates in the job market. These issues are consistent with the labour projections detailed in CAHRC’s British Columbia Agriculture Labour Market Forecast: 2023–2030 and the national report, *Sowing Seeds of Change: Agriculture Labour Market Forecast 2023–2030*.



**Chart 1: Employer Evaluation Survey - HR Challenges**

Both forecast reports confirm that labour shortages are expected to deepen. The BC report projects a domestic labour gap of 17,700 unfilled positions by 2030, with greenhouse, nursery, and tree fruit operations among the hardest hit. Similarly, the national forecast highlights that Canada’s agricultural sector will face a 100,000-worker shortfall over the next decade if no action is taken. Seasonal and manual labour roles are especially difficult to fill, reinforcing survey findings.

Employers are also constrained by reliability issues—41% of respondents noted that candidates often fail to attend interviews—and by financial limitations, with 25% indicating they cannot offer competitive wages. These themes align with the structural challenges highlighted in both CAHRC labour market reports, which cite the seasonality, rural location, and perceived job quality of agricultural work as barriers to attraction and retention.

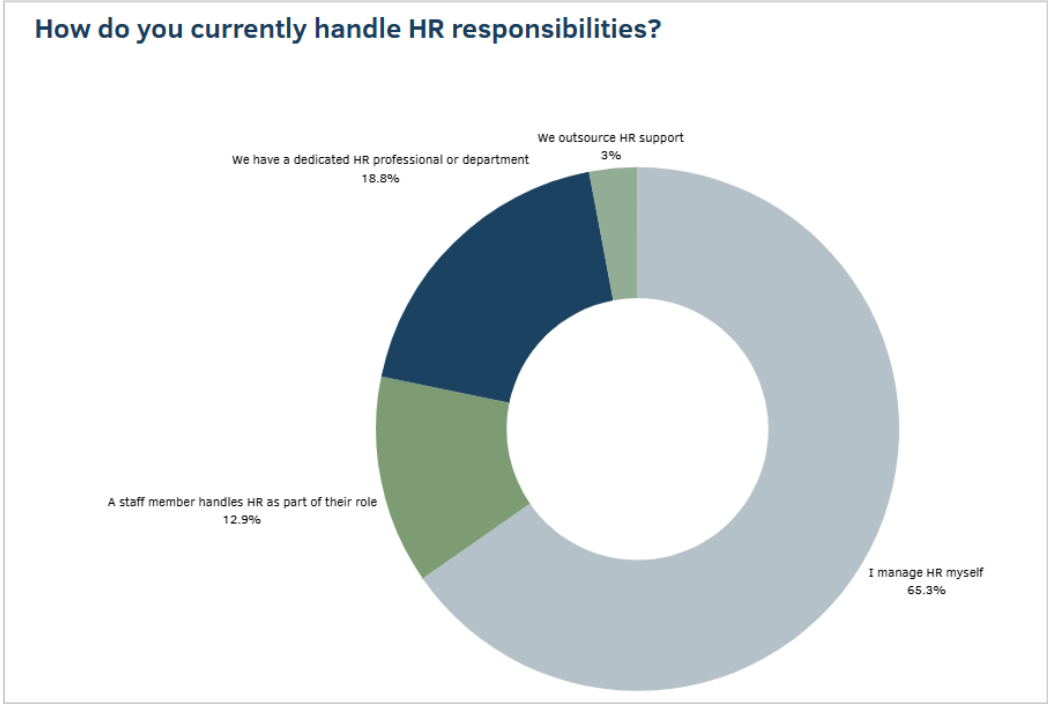


**Chart 2: Employer Evaluation Survey – Challenges in Hiring New Employees**

In conclusion, the current survey results strongly mirror national and provincial trends. The mismatch between available workers and employer needs will persist without targeted HR supports. Priority solutions include developing sector-specific training, addressing the root causes of labour unattractiveness, and expanding access to relevant and user-friendly HR resources.

### HR Management Practices and Barriers

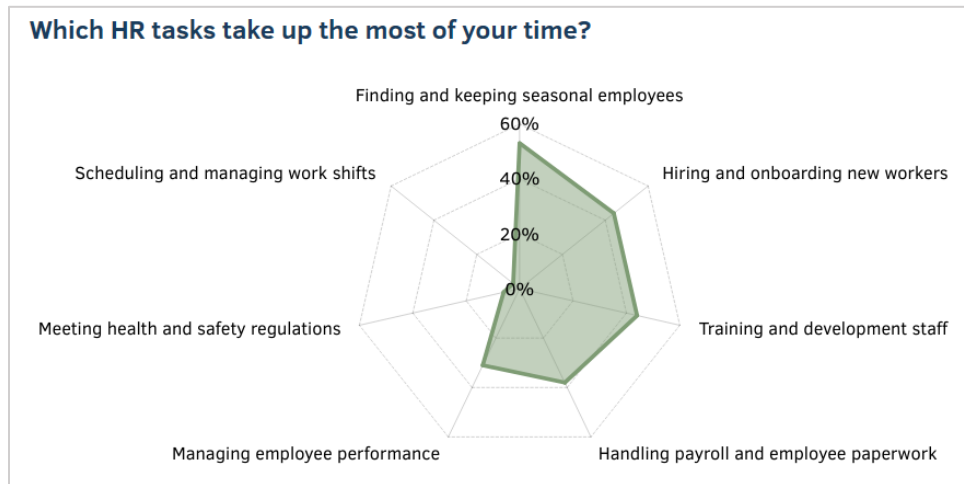
Analysis of the survey and focus group data reveals that HR practices in BC’s agriculture and food processing sectors are largely informal, with a heavy reliance on owner-operators and multitasking staff.



**Chart 3: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Management Responsibilities**

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65.3%) manage HR themselves, and only 18.8% report having a dedicated HR professional or department, and 3% used outsourced HR support. This indicates that most HR functions are being performed without formal training, policies, or adequate support systems.

This limited capacity directly affects employers’ ability to manage core HR tasks efficiently. The most time-consuming HR responsibilities identified by employers include finding and keeping seasonal employees (60%), hiring and onboarding new workers (just under 50%), and training staff. These functions require consistent and well-documented processes, yet many employers lack the bandwidth or resources to develop and implement them.



**Chart 4: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Tasks Distribution**

Focus group participants emphasized the challenges associated with HR management. Smaller operators described HR as an “elephant”—something large, complex, and difficult to tackle. Many expressed a strong need for streamlined tools and customizable resources to help reduce time spent on administration. One employer explained that they wear “too many hats,” with HR duties extending beyond recruitment to tasks like managing laundry and kitchen services for seasonal workers.

**“HR feels like an elephant — it’s huge, and nobody knows where to start.”**  
*Focus Group Participant, April 2025*

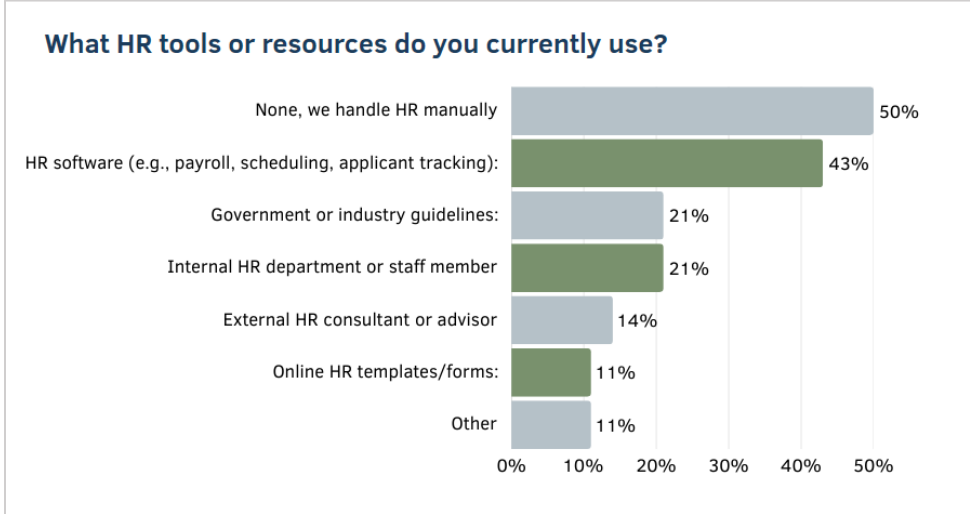
Participants also discussed the significant mental burden tied to HR responsibilities. Several noted a fear of legal compliance issues, stating that many employers are “terrified” of HR because of the risks and costs of making mistakes. Processors, in particular, called for clearer onboarding guidelines, easier access to expert advice, and better systems for managing performance reviews and discipline. They also highlighted the need for support in building positive workplace culture and improving communication practices to retain workers.

Throughout the discussion, participants distinguished between basic HR survival and strategic workforce planning. As one employer remarked, “Great HR would mean time for high-value tasks like succession planning, staff coaching, and proactive retention strategies—not just managing paperwork and compliance issues.” However, this vision of

**“We’re not HR experts – we’re farmers trying to do HR after a 14-hour day.”**  
*Focus Group Participant, April 2025*

strategic HR remains rare, especially among small and family-owned operations balancing compliance, hiring, and daily labour demands with very limited support, which once again shows a critical need to professionalize HR functions through scalable, accessible tools that reduce administrative burden and empower employers to build sustainable HR practices.

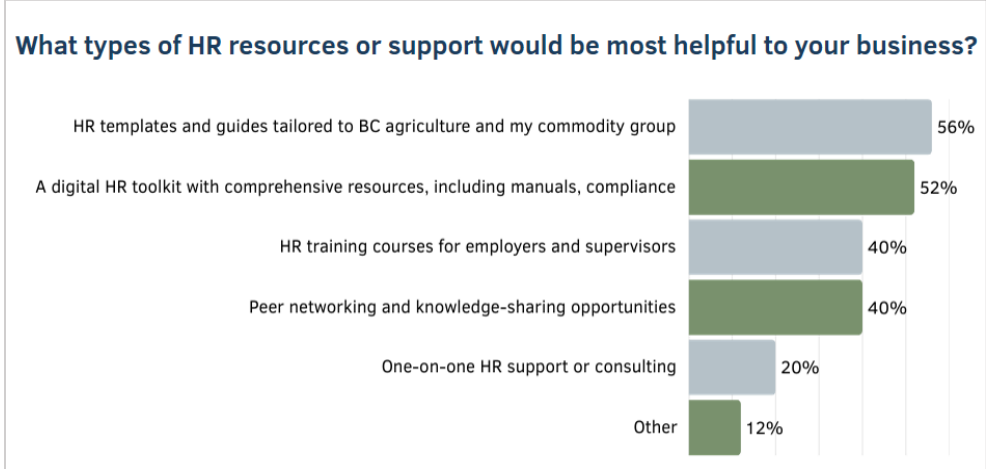
**HR Tools and Resources**



**Chart 5: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Tools and Resources Currently Used**

Survey results reveal a fragmented landscape of HR tools currently used by BC agriculture and food processing employers. Half of respondents (50%) report handling HR manually and only 21% rely on government or industry-issued guidelines such as WorkSafeBC, AgSafe, WALI, BC Food & Beverage, CPHR BC & Yukon, CAHRC AgriHR Toolkit, and BC Blueberry Council. Use of HR software is somewhat more common, with 43% of employers using scheduling, payroll, or applicant tracking systems.

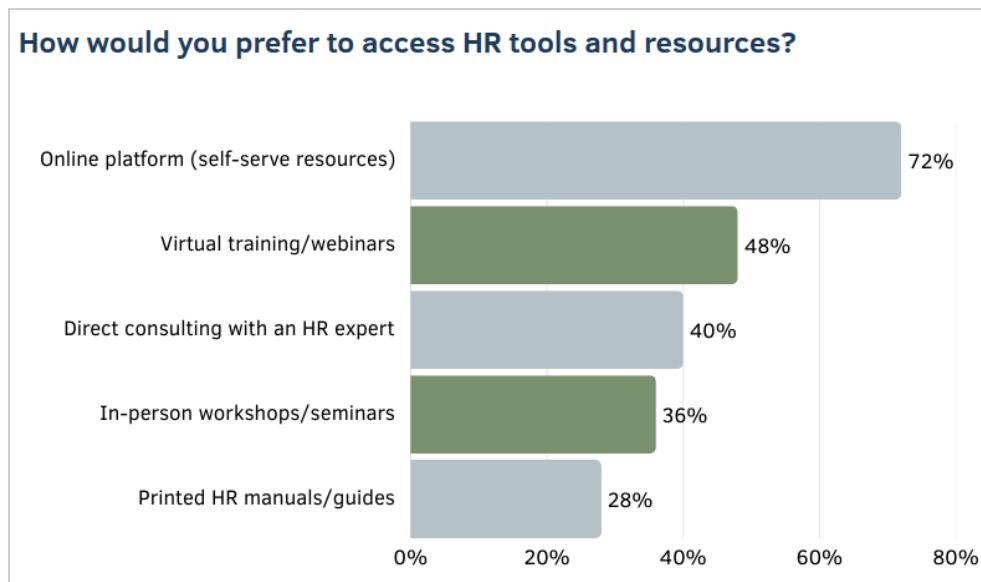
This limited and inconsistent use of tools reinforces the challenges described in the focus group. One participant commented, “We need tools that don’t take a full day to understand — something quick, simple, and actually useful for farms like ours.” The desire for usability and immediate practicality was echoed across small and medium-sized operators.



### Chart 6: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Tools and Resources Needs

When asked what types of HR resources would be most helpful, 56% of employers requested HR templates and guides tailored to BC agriculture and their specific commodity group. Another 52% prioritized access to a digital HR toolkit with comprehensive resources such as manuals and compliance checklists. Training programs and opportunities for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing were also selected by 40% of respondents, indicating strong interest in both individual and collective capacity building.

Survey data also revealed how employers prefer to access HR tools and support. The vast majority (72%) favour an online self-serve platform, indicating a strong preference for flexibility, immediate access, and convenience. Nearly half of respondents (48%) indicated a preference for virtual training or webinars, which offer a practical learning format that can fit into their seasonal and often unpredictable schedules. In addition, 40% of employers would like to consult directly with an HR expert, and 36% value in-person workshops or seminars, particularly for more complex or interpersonal topics. Printed guides are still relevant for 28% of respondents, highlighting the need to offer materials in multiple formats to meet different learning styles and connectivity levels.



### Chart 7: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Tools and Resources Accessibility

As one focus group participant put it, “HR shouldn’t feel like another job we have to figure out after work — it should be something that supports the work we’re already doing.” This quote reflects the call for tools that reduce—not add to—the administrative workload.

***“HR shouldn’t feel like another job we have to figure out after work — it should be something that supports the work we’re already doing.”***  
*Focus Group Participant, April 2025*

In summary, while some HR resources are available, their uptake remains limited due to accessibility, relevance, or complexity. An evaluation of available tools and resources found that while resources like the AgSafe BC and WorkSafeBC platforms scored highly for credibility and relevance, they were often focused narrowly on health and safety. In contrast, broader HR guides such as the BC

Employee Handbook scored well on practicality but were limited in customization and lacked sector-specific details. Resources tailored to specific commodities, like the BC FruitWorks employer materials,

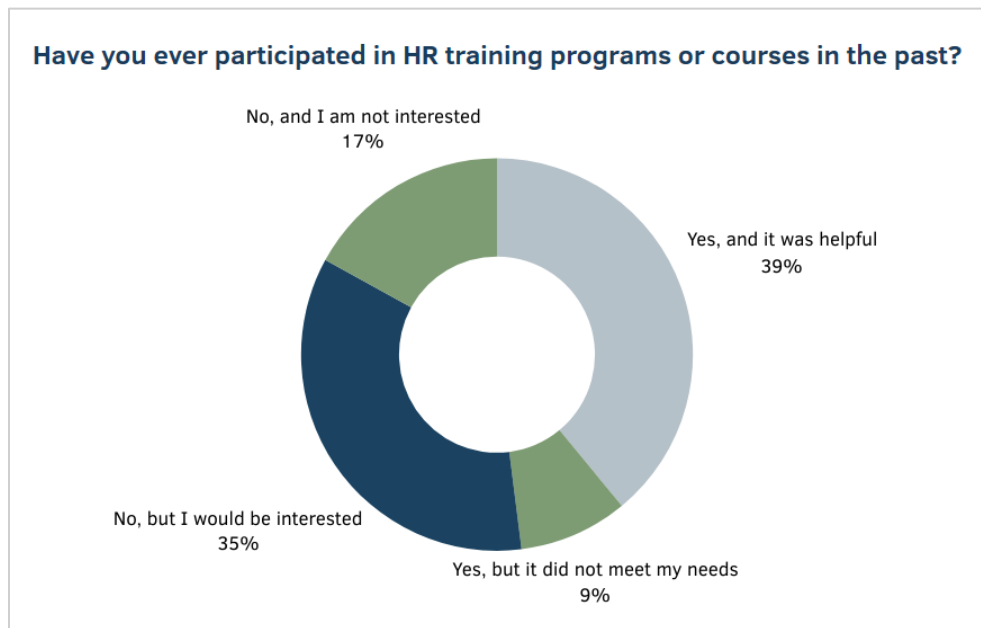
were rated as useful but fragmented, with evaluators noting the lack of cohesive structure and missing compliance documentation.

There is a clear demand for more sector-specific, BC-aligned, and easy-to-use HR tools that accommodate the realities of time-strapped, hands-on agricultural employers. To be effective, future resources must not only be credible and practical, but also highly accessible, customizable, and embedded in the everyday workflow of farms and processing businesses.

**"We need tools that don't take a full day to understand — something quick, simple, and actually useful for family farms like ours."**  
*Focus Group Participant, April 2025*

### HR Training and Capacity Building

Findings from both survey data and focus group feedback highlight the importance of accessible, practical HR training for employers in BC's agriculture and food processing sectors. While 39% of respondents have participated in HR training in the past and found it helpful, a significant portion (35%) have not but expressed interest. This reveals a clear opportunity to strengthen workforce management by offering more relevant and engaging training opportunities.



**Chart 8: Employer Evaluation Survey – HR Training Participation**

Preferences for how employers would like to receive training further underscore the need for flexibility and accessibility. Most respondents (65%) preferred short, self-paced online courses. In-person training workshops (48%) and live virtual sessions (44%) were also popular, suggesting that a blended approach to training may be the most effective. Only 26% opted for an on-demand HR helpdesk, indicating that while reactive support has value, employers place higher priority on proactive, structured learning formats.

These trends were echoed in the focus group discussions. Participants emphasized that training should be context-specific, concise, and applicable to real workplace scenarios. One participant shared, "The

best training I ever got was practical and short—anything longer than a couple hours gets buried by the rest of the day’s work.”

There was also widespread recognition of the need to build internal HR capacity among supervisors and owner-operators who manage recruitment, discipline, and onboarding without formal HR education. Several employers requested more support for front-line leaders, particularly those newly promoted into people-management roles including leadership training.

In summary, there is strong demand for targeted, digestible training that meets employers where they are—both in terms of content and delivery method. Investing in well-designed training solutions will be key to building the sector’s capacity for sustainable and compliant HR practices.

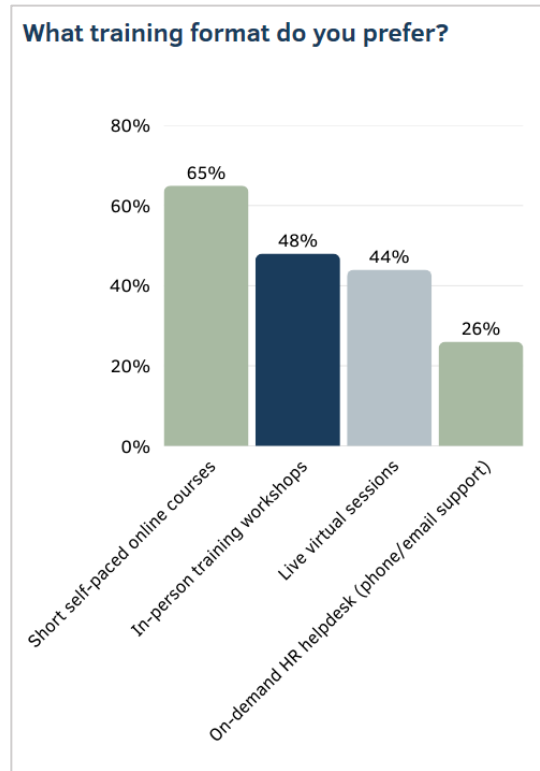


Chart 9: Employer Evaluation Survey – Training Modality Preferences

## Gaps and Areas for Improvement

This environmental scan identified several consistent gaps across HR tools, resources, and training that must be addressed to better support employers in BC’s agriculture and food processing sectors:

**Lack of customization for sectors, commodity groups and business sizes:** There is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to HR resources for agriculture and food processing. Existing HR tools tend to be overly broad, offering general templates that do not align with the specific operational realities of different types of agricultural businesses. Employers consistently emphasized the need for materials tailored to the workflows of greenhouses, seasonal crop farms, nurseries, small processors, and larger operations. Resources must also reflect BC’s specific legislative and compliance requirements.

**Usability and practical application:** Many employers—particularly those without formal HR staff—struggle to adapt existing tools to their needs. The most helpful resources were described as simple, editable, and immediately actionable. Tools that are too complex or time-consuming often go unused.

**Format and Delivery Barriers:** Although 72% of respondents prefer self-serve online platforms, challenges with rural internet access and digital literacy highlight the need for printable, mobile-friendly, and low-bandwidth formats. As for the training, a blend of delivery methods—including in-person and virtual options—would increase usability and reach.

**Training gaps for frontline managers and supervisors:** A significant portion of employers manage HR themselves or delegate it to untrained staff. Survey and focus group data confirm a strong interest in practical training focused on recruitment, onboarding, leadership, and employee relations—particularly for newly promoted supervisors.

**Limited ongoing support and implementation guidance:** Employers are not just looking for tools—they need help using them. There is significant demand for peer learning networks, live advisory services, and implementation support. Initiatives such as AgSafe BC’s HR advisory services have potential to close this gap if expanded.

**Need for a centralized HR resource hub:** Even credible sources like WorkSafeBC and AgSafe are often used in isolation. Employers frequently piece together information from multiple sources, resulting in inconsistent practices and compliance risks. There is a need for an integrated, centralized resource hub.

These gaps collectively point to the need for a coordinated approach to HR tool and training development—one that centers accessibility, relevance, and ease of application. Future resources must be not only credible and comprehensive, but also easy to adopt, customize, and scale within the diverse and dynamic realities of BC’s agri-food workplaces.

## References

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, British Columbia Agriculture Labour Market Information and Forecast 2023-2030 (2024) <https://cahrc-ccrha.ca/resources/document/british-columbia-agriculture-labour-market-information-and-forecast-2023-2030>

British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Sector Snapshot 2022 Food & Beverage Processing (May 2024) [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/statistics/industry-and-sector-profiles/sector-snapshots/af\\_sector\\_snapshots\\_manufacturing.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/statistics/industry-and-sector-profiles/sector-snapshots/af_sector_snapshots_manufacturing.pdf)

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, Sowing Seeds of Change Agricultural Labour Market Forecast 2023-2030 (February 2024) <https://cahrc-ccrha.ca/resources/document/agriculture-labour-market-forecast-2023-2030>

## Appendix 1: Existing HR Tools & Resources Evaluation Matrix

**Disclaimer:** The resources listed in this matrix are organized in alphabetical order. Only resources that are openly available online were reviewed. Please note that the ratings provided are subjective and reflect the personal assessment of the tools based on their general overview, content, practical application, and credibility. These ratings may vary depending on the specific needs and preferences of individual users.

Resource Name	Link	Developed or Provided by	Commodity Group	Cost	Evaluation Scores (1 to 5)				Overall Average Score	Overall Impression	Evaluation notes	
					General Overview	Content & Coverage	Practical Application	Credibility & Relevance				
1	AgSafe BC	<a href="https://agsafebc.ca/">https://agsafebc.ca/</a>	AgSafe BC	All commodities	Free	4	5	4	5	4.5	Excellent for workplace safety training	Highly applicable; includes Employer COR for Foreign Workers; currently working on expanding to all HR practices areas covering employee life-cycle.
2	BC Food & Beverage: Growth Hub	<a href="https://growthhub.learnworlds.com/">https://growthhub.learnworlds.com/</a>	BC Food & Beverage Growth Hub	All commodities	Free	4	4	4	4	4	Comprehensive and strategic training resource for employers	Effective in strategic HR management, only training resources are available.
3	BC Landscape & Nursery Association HR Resources	<a href="https://bcna.com/grow-your-future/hr-resources/">https://bcna.com/grow-your-future/hr-resources/</a>	BC Landscape & Nursery Association	Nursery, Landscaping	Free	4	3	3	4	3.5	Good starter kit for employers	Needs updating and more compliance-based templates; strong for recruitment outreach

Resource Name	Link	Developed or Provided by	Commodity Group	Cost	Evaluation Scores (1 to 5)				Overall Average Score	Overall Impression	Evaluation notes	
					General Overview	Content & Coverage	Practical Application	Credibility & Relevance				
4	BC Tree Fruits Cooperative	<a href="https://bcfruitworks.com/for-growers/">https://bcfruitworks.com/for-growers/</a> ; <a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iGATGH-Kmw6rK6Hb1NjCXVu8bA9AfxN1">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iGATGH-Kmw6rK6Hb1NjCXVu8bA9AfxN1</a>	BC Tree Fruits Cooperative	Tree Fruit	Free	4	4	3	3	3.5	Valuable, but fragmented	Includes practical docs but lacks consolidated toolkit structure; not fully customizable
5	CAHRC AgriHR Toolkit	<a href="https://hrtoolkit.cahrc-crrha.ca/">https://hrtoolkit.cahrc-crrha.ca/</a>	CAHRC	All commodities	Between \$0 to \$259 annually depends on partnership level	4	5	5	5	4.75	Highly customizable, comprehensive toolkit	National resource. Well-structured and flexible for different commodities. Can be overwhelming for smaller employers. Requires provincial customization.
6	Canadian Food Processing Institute	<a href="https://foodprocessorsinstitute.com/show/human-resources-hr-toolkit/">https://foodprocessorsinstitute.com/show/human-resources-hr-toolkit/</a>	Canadian Food Processing Institute	All commodities	\$899	5	5	5	5	5	Premium resource with extensive industry coverage	National resource. Very detailed; high cost may limit accessibility
7	CPHR BC & Yukon: Knowledge Hub	<a href="https://cphrb.ca/resource/hr-toolkit/">https://cphrb.ca/resource/hr-toolkit/</a>	CPHR BC & Yukon	All commodities	Between \$428 to \$594 for annual membership	4	5	5	5	4.75	Helpful, relevant, highly credible	Can only be used by CHPR Members, mostly useful for HR Practitioners

Resource Name	Link	Developed or Provided by	Commodity Group	Cost	Evaluation Scores (1 to 5)				Overall Average Score	Overall Impression	Evaluation notes	
					General Overview	Content & Coverage	Practical Application	Credibility & Relevance				
8	Guide to Developing a B.C. Agriculture Employee Handbook	<a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/farm-management/farm-business-management/agemployeehandbooknov28_final.pdf">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/farm-management/farm-business-management/agemployeehandbooknov28_final.pdf</a>	Government of British Columbia	General (Primary Agriculture)	Free	5	4	4	5	4.5	Highly practical provincial tool	Strong local relevance; clear formatting; could benefit from sector-specific examples
9	Western Agriculture Labour Initiative	<a href="https://wali.bc.ca/">https://wali.bc.ca/</a>	Western Agriculture Labour Initiative	Primary Agriculture (SAWP employers)	Free	4	3	4	4	3.75	Helpful for foreign worker compliance	Focused on SAWP; not broad HR-focused
10	WorkSafeBC	<a href="https://www.worksafebc.com/">https://www.worksafebc.com/</a>	WorkSafeBC	All commodities	Free	4	4	4	5	4.25	Strong on safety compliance	High credibility; limited agriculture-specific customization

## Appendix 2: Employer Survey Questions

1. What type of agricultural business do you operate? *(Select all that apply)*

- Crop production
- Greenhouse/nursery
- Livestock production
- Aquaculture
- Agri-food processing
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where are you located?

- Cariboo-Chilcotin Coast
- Kootenay
- Okanagan
- Skeena-North Coast
- Omineca-Nechako
- Peace
- South Coast
- Thompson-Nicola
- Vancouver Island

3. How many employees do you currently have?

- 1-5
- 6-20
- 21-50
- 51+

### Section 2: Your Current HR Challenges & Needs

4. What have been your **biggest HR challenges** in the past 24 months? *(Select up to 3):*

- High employee turnover
- Finding workers with the right skills
- Hiring for seasonal work
- Keeping employees motivated
- Understanding employment laws and compliance
- Meeting health and safety requirements
- Dealing with performance issues
- Handling workplace conflicts

4. Which HR tasks take up the **most of your time**? *(Select up to 3)*

- Hiring and onboarding

- Employee training and development
- Workforce scheduling and management
- Health and safety compliance
- Performance management
- Other (please specify)

5. How do you currently **handle HR responsibilities**? *(Select one)*

- I manage HR myself
- A staff member handles HR as part of their role
- We have a dedicated HR professional or department
- We outsource HR support

6. What is your **biggest challenge in hiring employees**? *(Select up to 3)*

- Not enough candidates in the job market
- Difficulty attracting workers to rural areas
- Can't offer competitive wages and benefits
- Managing seasonal hiring fluctuations
- Low interest in agricultural jobs among job seekers
- Candidates are unreliable or don't show up for interviews

### Section 3: HR Tools & Resources You Use

9. What **HR tools or resources** do you currently use? *(Select all that apply, and please specify or name the resource you use, if possible)*

- HR software (e.g., payroll, scheduling, applicant tracking): \_\_\_\_\_
- Online HR templates/forms: \_\_\_\_\_
- Government or industry guidelines: \_\_\_\_\_
- External HR consultant or advisor
- Internal HR department or staff member
- None, we handle HR manually
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you used any of the following **government or industry HR resources**? *(Select all that apply, and please specify or name the resource you use, if possible)*

- CAHRC AgriHR Toolkit
- WorkSafeBC resources
- BC Government resources: \_\_\_\_\_
- Resources provided by my industry group: \_\_\_\_\_

11. How satisfied are you with the **HR resources currently available** to you? *(Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not effective at all and 5 = Very effective)*

- 1- Very dissatisfied
- 2- Somewhat dissatisfied

- 3- Neutral
- 4- Somewhat satisfied
- 5- Very satisfied

**Section 4: HR Tools & Resources You Need**

13. What types of **HR resources or support** would be most helpful to your business? *(Select up to 3)*

- HR templates and guides tailored to BC agriculture and my commodity group
- A digital HR toolkit with comprehensive resources, including manuals, compliance guidelines, best practices, and templates
- HR training courses for employers and supervisors
- One-on-one HR support or consulting
- Peer networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. How would you prefer to **access HR tools and resources**? *(Select all that apply)*

- Online platform (self-serve resources)
- Virtual training/webinars
- In-person workshops/seminars
- Printed HR manuals/guides
- Direct consulting with an HR expert

15. What **HR topics** would you like more guidance on? *(Select up to 3)*

- Employment laws and compliance
- Recruitment and hiring
- Employee retention strategies
- Workforce planning and scheduling
- Conflict resolution and employee relations
- Compensation and benefits best practices
- Leadership and team management
- Other

**Section 5: HR Training & Pilot Program Participation**

18. Have you ever participated in **an HR training programs or courses in the past**?

- Yes, and it was helpful
- Yes, but it did not meet my needs
- No, but I would be interested
- No, and I am not interested

If yes, please share more details (e.g., name of the course, provider): \_\_\_\_\_

17. What training format do you prefer? *(Select all that apply)*

- Short self-paced online courses
- Live virtual sessions
- In-person training workshops
- On-demand HR helpdesk (phone/email support)

16. Would you be interested in joining a pilot program to test new HR tools or training for BC agriculture?

- Yes
- No

**Final Thoughts (Optional)**

20. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions on what HR support would be most beneficial for your business? *(Open-ended response)*

## Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion Questions

### Current HR Challenges and Needs

1. If this project could solve one HR problem for you, what would it be—and why?
2. What would “great HR” look like on your farm or in your business? What would be different from today?
3. If you could change one thing about how HR works in your industry today, what would it be—and why?

### HR Tools and Resources

1. What is missing from the current resources or tools you have tried?
2. If we provide you with an HR toolkit tomorrow, what would make you open it and start using it right away? What would make it sit on a shelf?
3. If you could design your ideal HR toolkit, what would it include?
4. What makes an HR resource actually useful to you—not just something you download and forget? *e.g. content format, tone, timing, or accessibility preferences*

### HR Training and Capacity Building

1. Thinking back to a training you actually enjoyed or found helpful, what made it work for you?
2. What would help you and your team leads or supervisors feel more confident managing people? *e.g. leadership training for supervisors*
3. How could HR training feel like a benefit, not a burden for you or your staff? *e.g. motivation, format*
4. Would a learning community (where employers share tips, resources, or questions) be valuable to you? What would make it work? *e.g. format (on-line chat or platform, zoom meetings, newsletters, engagement frequency)*