



Building Australia's Agricultural Workforce



\$1.9 million

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the agricultural industry through foundational workforce measures that underpin ongoing productivity in the agricultural sector.

What's in this year's Budget

The Budget provides \$1.9 million over 3 years. This includes:

- \$0.4 million to fund National Farm Safety Week activities for an additional 3 years
- \$0.5 million to support the continuation of the AgCAREERSTART gap year employment program for an additional 2 years
- \$1.0 million to support a new, skilled agricultural work liaison program over 2 years

National Farm Safety Week

The government is committing \$0.4 million to support Farmsafe Australia to deliver National Farm Safety Week activities for the next 3 years (until July 2027). This will enable the continuation of a targeted campaign delivering critical farm safety information and awareness activities aimed at reducing injuries and fatalities on Australian farms.

AgCAREERSTART

The government is committing \$0.5 million to support the continuation of the AgCAREERSTART pilot program. This will enable 2 further intake years beyond the pilot's current plans.

This program provides a structured employment program for young Australians to trial and start a career in agriculture. More than 150 participants have completed placements on farms across the country, and more than 80% have indicated they will stay on in the industry.

The further intake years of the pilot will provide a more extensive trial of the program model enabling more placement opportunities. It will also allow for new approaches to increase diversity in participation (including among First Nations Australians) and exploration of sustainable funding models to support the program.

AgConnections

The government is committing \$1.0 million to support a 2-year pilot of AgConnections, a skilled agricultural work liaison program, in urban and regional universities aimed at increasing the number of highly-skilled graduates entering the sector.

This program will ensure opportunities for diversity in participation, including among First Nations Australians.

Why this is important

The agricultural industry is critical to the economic success of the nation. It provides incredible opportunities to contribute to the government's sustainability and climate agenda and is an important source of jobs and economic investment opportunity in rural, regional and remote Australia.

To continue to grow and prosper, the agricultural industry must attract more talented, qualified workers to consider a career in the industry.

These measures will help the industry to attract a broader talent pool and build a foundation for a skilled workforce. This workforce will be able to take advantage of productivity and technological advances which are essential to the ongoing efficient operation of agricultural businesses, and therefore Australia's secure access to safe, affordable and sustainable food.

These foundational measures align with the work of the tripartite Agricultural Workforce Working Group (now the Agricultural Workforce Forum), which has focussed on addressing issues such as attraction, retention, skilling and protecting workers in the agricultural and processing sectors.

The group has been influential in securing agriculture's place in the Fee-Free TAFE initiative – with more than 14,000 enrolments in agriculture related courses; in the commissioning of the Food Supply Chain Capacity Study underway by Jobs and Skills Australia; research to scope the feasibility of an agricultural apprenticeship pathway and in representing the needs of the sector in key processes such as the Migration Review and the Employment White Paper.

How much this will cost

	2024–25 \$m	2025–26 \$m	2026–27 \$m	2027–28 \$m	TOTAL \$m
Foundations for the Agricultural Workforce					
National Farm Safety Education Fund	0.125	0.125	0.125	-	0.375
AgCAREERSTART program	0.100	0.411	-	-	0.511
AgConnections	0.500	0.500	-	-	1.000
Subtotal	0.725	1.036	0.125	-	1.886

More information

For more information about agricultural workforce visit agriculture.gov.au

For more information about the 2024–25 Budget visit budget.gov.au

