



On-Farm Labour – Final report

Supporting On-Farm Labour During the Dry Times: Co-Designing
Job Security and Development in Rural Communities during Drought.

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SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,
LANDSCAPES AND COMMUNITIES

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Introduction

In September 2023, Holbrook Landcare Network (HLN) commenced work on the *Supporting On-Farm Labour During the Dry Times* Co-design project. This project consisted of a range of activities to ensure a thorough investigation of the topic through the lens of multiple stakeholder groups. These activities included a rapid review of both domestic and international peer-reviewed literature and Industry reports, codesign workshops with Farm owners who employ labour on farm, future and current on-farm employees and Industry, on-on-one interviews, and a survey. Over the last ten-months of this project Holbrook Landcare Network has worked with 17 local producers, 48 young workforce people, and 13 industry organisations across three intensive co-design sessions and activities.

This report collates the insights that Holbrook Landcare Network has gained from this process into the factors and barriers impacting farm business attraction and retention of on-farm staff, and the perceptions of on-farm roles from the perspective of young, future workers. This report also considers the ideas and solutions proposed by both producer and young workforce co-design participants, and information presented by Professor Ruth Nettle and Andre Vikas, from University of Melbourne's Rural Innovation Research Group in order to provide a preliminary list of recommendations and potential actions for pursuit at local, industry and the Hub level.

Outputs from this project including the Rapid Literature Review, Idea and Solutions Summary and additional data collected from the co-design sessions are included in the Appendix.

Key Learnings

By comparing the data collected through our student workforce survey and co-design session it is evident that young people can articulate the barriers that detract them from pursuing on-farm roles. While we have summarised these barriers into themes such as work/life balance, accommodation, training and mentorship, and workplace culture for the purpose of this report, many of the suggested improvements from our workforce participants align directly with enhancements which have been made in other regions and have indicated improved retention highlighted in the literature review.

We noticed thematic connections between the factors and barriers identified by our producer co-design participants and our young workforce participants. Both groups perceived accommodation as important, training and mentoring, pay and remuneration as important. Producers are conscious of the pull and push effects of having quality infrastructure, competitive packages and investing time and knowledge into staff but these are limited by constraints within the farm business. Through this process producers have named some of the constraints, such as time and access and awareness of resources.

From a drought perspective, the literature review highlighted how during periods of business stress - such as those exasperated by drought conditions, farm workforce may be perceived as a response option to provide flexibility to respond to these conditions (Nettle, 2024). This may result in cutting workforces down to core workers, the minimum number of staff required to keep the farm business function or utilising seasonal or contract workforces to reduce costs. In cases such as those mentioned in the literary review cost-focused mitigation strategies producers used highlighted the decision to manage high staff turnover to enable flexibility and responsiveness to adverse seasonal economic events (Nettle, 2024). In other cases, producers have adopted strategies on-farm that prioritise maintaining a stable staffing regime and have experienced positive workforce retention.

This process has allowed us to explore factors and barriers from both producer and workforce perspectives. What we identified is that there are common themes identified by both groups and an evident awareness of the pull and push effect these factors have on the attractiveness of on-farm roles and the level of engagement received by existing staff. These themes include, accommodation and infrastructure, training and mentorship, pay, remuneration and travel costs, workplace culture and social connectedness.

This process has highlighted that there is a gap in the capacity of local producers to be able to implement practice change on-farm which would increase their abilities to attract and retain on-farm staff. This process has also demonstrated that in future work related to this field it will be important to investigate the workforce strategies used by producers and understand the mechanism driving producer decision making related to workforce management during drought and other adverse events.

The literature review, producer co-design and Industry co-design sessions have provided many suggested activities and avenues for Holbrook Landcare Network to trial to address on-farm labour retention issues in general as well as prepare for during drought times. Recommendations for the SNSW Hub and for the Holbrook farming community via Holbrook Landcare Network include,

- The development of resources and services which support on-farm workforce management practices and planning in farm businesses.
- Explore shared-labour and cross-industry partnerships in the local community to support retention during drought times.
- Development and piloting of a skills development and employment model from existing successful programs and new ideas.
- Investigate accommodation opportunities at a local level to increase availability and the feasibility of a state-wide accommodation quality code.

Further details of these recommendations can be found at the end of this report.

Results

Rapid Literature Review

The Rapid Literature Review was conducted by Professor Ruth Nettle and Andre Vikas of University of Melbourne's Rural Innovation Group. This Rapid Literature Review assessed data from international and Australian peer-review literature and industry documentation related to farm workforce retention. The purpose of the literature review was to identify issues and solutions previously identified in other regions or countries to guide the co-design process. The review would also assist with building a body of evidence of identified gaps to inform and support future grant applications designed to address the issue of retaining on-farm labour during periods of drought.

The literature review (Appendix 2) provides a comprehensive overview of factors associated with farm workforce retention, highlighting common factors that have enhanced retention on farms, and identified gaps in how our industry measures the impact of drought on farm workforces.

As outlined in Appendix 2, the literature identified the need for farm employees to invest in the development and career advancement of employees – the reinforcement of the value of people within their businesses.

The common factors reported to enhance retention on farms were:

1. Higher than the average pay rates in industry for their role
2. Flexible work hours
3. Placing limits on the extent of weekend hours and limiting the extent of long shifts
4. Training and development opportunities
5. Feedback and appreciation for a job well-done
6. Individual attention to career development and mentoring
7. An enjoyable work environment with good facilities
8. Varied work

A notable finding from this study is the identification of the need to tailor interventions to the needs of people's stage of career and life with Millennials and Managers particularly pointed out as needing specific approaches.

A number of research gaps were identified that can be built into future grant applications and programs of work. These include:

- The nature of workforce shortages and retention issues during drought periods
- The consequences of drought strategies and responses for family members and the employed farm workforce in terms of well-being, jobs, careers, and retention.
- How the ongoing digitization of farms effect the farm workforce and the potential to undermine regional resilience by continuing to reduce the need for on-farm employment (Phelps & Kelly, 2019).
- The effects of drought on the employed farm workforce outside the phenomena of job losses (e.g., health and well-being and their decisions to stay or leave a region).
- The range of workforce strategies deployed in drought and their effects on people.
- The interrelationship between farm workforce changes and regional communities.
- Evaluation of workforce interventions during drought/critical success factors
- More research into employee, contractor and casual workers' perspectives of jobs and careers and the effects of drought.

Early in the co-design process, it was identified that there were two issues to be addressed in this study – the central issue of attracting and retaining on-farm labour in NSW farming systems and the further challenge of managing this issue under periods of chronic mental, physical, and financial stress that occurs during drought when this issue is exacerbated. It was determined early in this study that any actions to improve the central issue of attracting and retaining on-farm labour would also assist during times of drought. The Literature review has enabled greater focus on the ramifications on labour during drought and it is evident that additional investigation into local approaches to retaining labour and understanding labour needs specifically during drought is now needed.

Producer ThinkTank – Identified Factors and Barriers

This workshop was conducted with local Producers from the Holbrook region who were employing one or more farm staff. The co-design workshop aimed address two key questions:

- 1) What issues and barriers do Holbrook producers experience on-farm that reduce their capacity to attract and retain on-farm staff
- 2) What solutions can be developed to attract, retain and upskill on-farm staff in the Holbrook region and increase job security during the dry times?

Producer Think Tank co-design question 1: “What issues and barriers do Holbrook producers experience on-farm that reduce their capacity to attract and retain on-farm staff”

1. Housing/Accommodation:

Producers of the Holbrook region are conscious of the fact that they mostly have suitable accommodation on-farm for permanent, full-time staff but often lack suitable on-farm accommodation for part-time, casual and seasonal staff as well as the capacity to accommodate work placement students. They recognise that the quality of accommodation can be varied but a good standard is essential for attracting and maintaining staff. They also recognise that additional amenities (e.g. internet) and opportunities to have pets, working dogs and horses are potential value adds.

2. Skills and Experience:

Producers of the Holbrook region highlighted that they often receive high volumes of applicants however there is an evident lack of baseline skills/knowledge of agricultural work in those applicant pools when they are recruiting. They experience challenges with staff that have a lack of ability or willingness to learn and capacity to work independently.

3. Isolation and Social Factors:

Producers were conscious of the impact of geographic and social isolation on job desirability, a lack of social opportunities for workers and their families and limited educational opportunities for children of on-farm staff.

4. Uncertainty navigating wages and employment terms:

Producers identified that it is challenging to navigate fair wages and remain competitive with the expectations of contractor rates for farm work. Additionally, Holbrook producers have a high demand

for part-time, casual and seasonal workers, but struggle to keep young workers for longer than 12 to 18-months.

5. Training and support:

Owners/Managers experience time constraints limiting their capacity to conduct training and on-boarding, supervise and provide mentorship to staff. Additionally, they have concerns on OH&S and workplace liability.

Less frequent factors but still important...

- Workplace culture and values.
- Attracting young people: finding ways to make agriculture a desirable career for youth.
- Transportation: overcoming the challenge of how to get workers to their job and what services/opportunities are in the community to help spouses and children access schools, work etc.
- Diversity in the Workplace: Identifying when an openness to hiring individuals from diverse backgrounds becomes a feature of the farm business.
- Navigating worker interests: Challenge in navigating how or if to allow time for employees to have 'side' farming projects or jobs for spouses etc.

Producer Think Tank co-design question 2, "What solutions can be developed to attract, retain and upskill on-farm staff in the Holbrook region and increase job security during the dry times?"

Producers were asked to reflect on four 'Idea cards' of four existing skills development and employment models help them and their thinking for the 'Idea Dump'. The 'Idea Dump' asked producers to directly consider and identify ideas and solutions addressing the main co-design question described above.

Key themes amongst the suggested solutions detailed in Appendix 1 include:

- A structured training and development course or model which provides opportunities for participants to gain recognised training and on-farm experience.
- Increasing availability of off-farm accommodation suitable for casual and short-term staff through share houses or refurbishing existing buildings in town.
- Shared labour or labour exchange between farm businesses to support seasonal on-farm practices e.g., shearing, lamb marking, harvest, and sowing.
- Increased communication and visibility of on-farm jobs through an online platform.
- Support the linkages of university students to on-farm placement opportunities and casual on-farm work.

Workforce Co-Design Session: What does your future on Australian Farms look like Workshop.

This co-design session aimed to address the same question as the Producer ThinkTank, but with an audience made up of current and future workforce participants. The co-design team consisted of a group of seven Charles Sturt University students studying in an agriculture related field. Via a Menti survey, were asked to identify the biggest challenges they anticipate facing in their career in agriculture and on-farm.

The top six challenges identified included.

1. Lack of access to land or capital
2. Educational barriers or need for further training
3. Uncertainty of potential roles in agriculture
4. Limited or no connections in the industry
5. Feeling isolated or unsupported as a young person in the community
6. Limited job opportunities.

Additional challenges identified but not ranked included

- Work/Life balance: Balancing work with additional study and expectations of weekend work.
- Availability of seasonal work/connection to be get involved.
- Accommodation and living arrangements.
- Employer willingness to teach and share knowledge, patience while teaching.
- Workplace culture, the motivation and energy of other members if the workplace contributing to a positive environment.

When participants were asked if they had experience on-farm, six out of seven responded yes, highlighting that they most enjoyed the lifestyle of farming, being outdoors, challenging but rewarding work, learning new skills and daily variation.

When asked what aspect of working on-farm they found most challenging, participants identified that being a woman in a male dominated industry is a challenge, as well as difficulties planning tasks which are subject to change, and managing the pressures experiences on-farm.

When asked what they need from peers, employers and the agricultural community as a whole to have a successful career in agriculture and on-farm, participants highlighted aspects relating to workplace culture and attitude. These included things such as encouragement, patience and time to share knowledge and skills, working with a team that wants to be at work and enjoys the environment and opportunities for responsibility and growth.

On- Farm Labour Perceptions Survey

To expand on the insights collected during the Workforce Co-Design Session, Holbrook Landcare created and collect responses from students attending the Charles Sturt University Approaching Ag Careers Fair. The On-Farm Labour Perceptions survey was completed by 40 students aged 18-25-years-old. 55% were female and 45% were male students in which all surveyed students were all studying an agricultural degree.

Do University Students have On-Farm experience?

Of these respondents 90% highlighted that they grew up in a small-town community or on farm. The remaining 10% had grown up in the city.

90% of respondents highlighted that they have experience working on farm. The remaining 10% without experience grew up either in the city or in a small town.

Do university students see working on-farm as a viable long-term career path?

The perception survey asked students what careers in agriculture they were interested in pursuing. Over half of the respondents highlighted that their current career pursuit was agronomy, followed by

25% identifying livestock consulting and another 25% identifying farm management or ownership (Figure 1). Please note some respondents selected more than one career area.

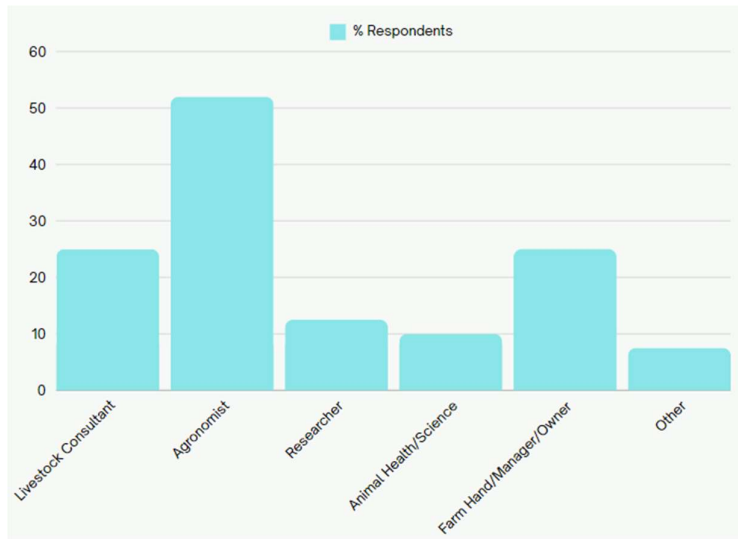


FIGURE 1 CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The survey then asked students if they saw working on-farm as a viable, long-term career path ‘as an employee’, ‘as a manager’ or ‘as an owner’.

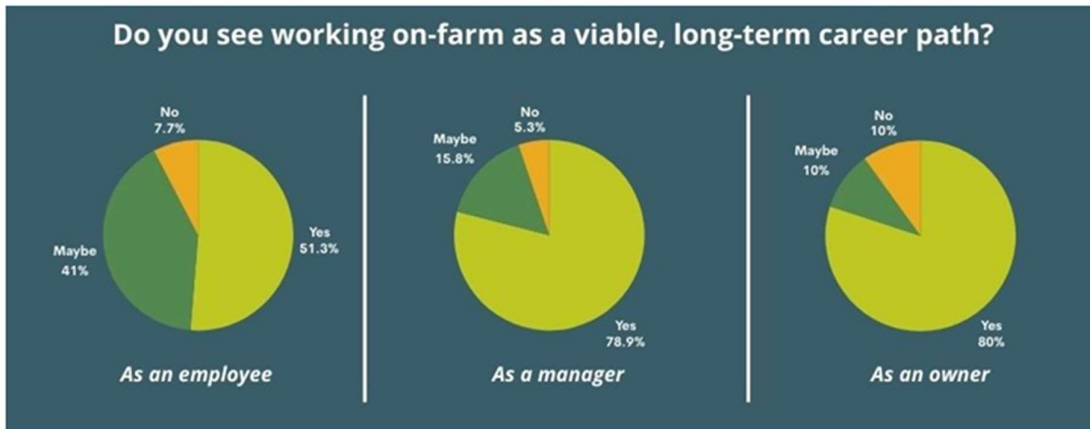


FIGURE 2 PERCEPTIONS OF WORKING ON-FARM AS A VIABLE CAREER PATH

52.3% of students see working on-farm as an employee as a viable, long-term career. This perception increased as status in the farm business increased from employee into management and ownership (Figure 2).

What do students see as the main barriers preventing people from considering farm roles as viable, long-term careers?

From the on-farm perceptions survey, and based on the frequency of the following barriers arising in responses, the main barriers identified included work/life balance, accommodation concerns, training and mentoring and their capacity to travel to the workplace. A number of other issues were also identified (Table 1).

TABLE 1 FREQUENCY SCORE OF KEY BARRIERS PREVENTING STUDENTS FROM CONSIDERING FARM ROLES AS A VIABLE LONG-TERM CAREER OPTION

Barrier	Frequency
Work/Life Balance	16
Accommodation	14
Training and Mentoring	13
Travel	11
Career Progression	9
Moving away from home	9
Availability of regional services	7
Workplace Culture	7
Pay and Renumeration	6
Isolation	5
Awareness of good job opportunities	3

What areas did students identify, that if improved, would increase attraction and retention in on-farm roles?

A number of areas of work were identified via the survey that, if improved, students felt would increase the attractiveness and retention of students in on-farm roles. Based on the frequency of these themes being highlighted in the responses the following groupings can be highlighted.

- Accommodation & On-Farm Infrastructure: increasing the accessibility and quality of on-farm accommodation and improving infrastructure such as yards, shearing sheds, and other areas of work including machinery.
- Social and Cultural: This includes improving work/life balance by managing how expectations are set and communicated. Workplace Culture including how workplace values are shared and demonstrated, how occupational health and safety is managed and supported on-farm, and how employees received feedback and recognition for work. Social connectivity, ensuring adequate opportunities for social connectedness in local communities and that employees are encouraged and supported to access these opportunities.
- Training, Mentorship, Progression in roles and Increasing Awareness of Pathways: increased access to training, flexibility, and financial assistance from employers to undergo training. Capacity in the farm business for a supervisor/manager/owner mentorship.

Industry Insights Session

The purpose of the industry Insights Session was to bring together a diverse group of professionals from the agricultural industry who had experience in the skill development, training, mentorship, and career pathways of on-farm roles. Despite reaching a wide range of 13 industry groups and businesses, this session was the poorest performing component of the co-design process with six group represented during the event.

Actively engaged groups that participated in the session included, Charles Sturt University, AgCAREERSTART, AgriFutures, Agrista, Hay Inc. Rural Education, and AgSkilled. Drovers was interviewed outside of the Industry Insights Session.

The aim of this session was to leverage the experience of the workshop participants to create user sketches of the target audience that our farm businesses want to attract and retain in on-farm roles. We asked participants to consider someone they have worked with in their career who is in an on-farm role or looking to get into an on-farm job and provide a user sketch. By creating these user sketches

(Table 2), we would be able to gain a better understanding of the people and businesses our solutions were addressing to ensure they are effective. We prompted participants to expand on their user sketch, using an empathy map as a tool to explore how these users, speak, think, act, and feel (Table 3).

TABLE 2 FREQUENCY SCORE OF KEY BARRIERS PREVENTING STUDENTS FROM CONSIDERING FARM ROLES AS A VIABLE LONG-TERM CAREER OPTION

User Sketch 1	
Demographic	In an on-farm role. 25-year-old male, working on the same property for five years
Goals	Become manager of the property.
Pain/Challenges	Not being recognised for building skills, not getting opportunity for training off-farm.
User Sketch 2	
Demographic	18-year-old male just finished year 12. No real plans for university but wants a gap year. Is not from a family farm but grew up in the city visiting a cousin's farm in holidays
Goals	Maybe work in agriculture. Maybe on farm as a jackaroo or head up North. Find some mates in Agriculture and play for a local footy team.
Pain/Challenges	No real previous paid work experience on farm so not references. Not many Networks to get anywhere to get skills or apply for work on farm that will teach skills and develop a network of friends.

TABLE 3 EMPATHY MAPS PRODUCED BY PARTICIPANTS IN THE INDUSTRY INSIGHTS CODESIGN SESSION

Empathy Map 1: 25-year-old Male.	
Say	Think
I love the region I am working in and the property I work on.	What do the next 5 years look like for me? How will I build the skill to become manager?
Do	Feel
Shows up to work every day with enthusiasm, works weekends when requested and completes every task to best of ability. Suggests training opportunities to management, often brushed off.	Happy but feeling limited or unsure of future direction.
Empathy Map 2: 18-year-old Male	
Say	Think
I am keen to be a jackaroo. I love agriculture and want to work on a farm and be outdoors	Do I have the skills to do this work. Will I look stupid cause I didn't grow up on a farm. Will I fit in.
Do	Feel
Applies for and completes a program such as Hay Inc Rural Education Program or AgCAREERSTART. Finds network and mates and gets a job in a local district. Plays in local footy team.	Excited to be finished school but nervous about leaving home, going to a new town. Keen to make money and be outdoors and in ag.

While this session was not the most successful session of the project and did not address its intended purpose effectively, participants willingly shared their insights and highlighted programs and services in the industry which could be further explored by the project team. These include,

Training and Professional development courses,

- LifeTime Ewe Management.
- MLA EDGE Suite.
- On-Farm Gap year Programs e.g., AgCAREERSTART.
- Residential Training e.g., Hay Inc. Rural Education Program.
- Subsidised training e.g., AgSkilled Industry led tailor and contextualised training.
- Regional Industry Engagement Pathways (Department of Education).
- School-Based apprenticeships and trainees.

It also included some workplace opportunities such as mentoring with current managers or sharing mentoring across farms, allow time within the work week and provide support for staff to complete training by distance, and encouraging staff to make a business case to allow for participation in training.

Industry participants also emphasised the importance of providing training opportunities online or in local areas to increase access for potential attendees.

Recommendations

From this co-design process, six areas of work were identified to be further explored by Holbrook Landcare Network for its members and five recommended areas of work which could be proposed at either the Southern NSW Innovation Hub or wider agricultural community level.

Holbrook Landcare Network Areas of Work

1. HR Integration on-farm resources including a directory for job advertising and sharing platforms, links to employment and award information, help and services. This includes the development of an on-farm human resources health check list to assist farm businesses identify areas of their business relating to labour attraction and retention that need to be improved.
2. Investigate opportunities for increasing social engagement in the community for on-farm employees. For example, a young farmer's network for the Holbrook region.
3. Explore the potential of developing a new or existing graduate, skills development, and employment model. Test feasibility and pilot in the Holbrook region.
4. Overcoming Accommodation – A consultation process to further explore accommodation options and opportunities to provide adequate accommodation for permanent and seasonal employees. This may include exploring shared accommodation, cost-shares and negotiating lower accommodation costs.
5. Building and seeking organisational capacity to employ a Pastoral Support Officer in the Holbrook region who can prioritise and manage the execution of these areas of work such as, coordinate training opportunities in the region, provide direction to resources and key services already existing in the industry etc.
6. Enhancing on-farm placement and casual employment opportunities for students studying agricultural focused vocational and tertiary training.

Recommendations for the Wider Agricultural Community and SNSW Innovation Hub

1. Investigate of pathways to farm ownership, particularly the transition of farm ownership in businesses to new farmer entrants.
2. Increase farm and rural community focused wellbeing resources and support services which are tailored to the agricultural context – particularly for times of drought. They must be relevant and stigma reducing. This may include investing in existing programs such as I Farm Well and National Centre for Farmer Health.
 - a. The Southern NSW Innovation Hub could support the development of a Drought Cycle Wellbeing Program and instigate further research which consists of resources and services which address needs of farmers and rural communities, pre-drought, during drought and in drought recovery.
3. Investigate and support the consideration of potential rebates, incentives or initiatives which support the establishment or improvement of on-farm accommodation for on-farm employees.
4. The development of a standard accommodation Code or Standard which can be applied state-wide to ensure a minimum standard of quality for on-farm accommodation.

With consideration to all the above recommendations we strongly encourage the support and investment of the SNSW Innovation Hub and other industry bodies to explore the adoption of successful pilot projects and programs conducted by Holbrook Landcare Network into other regions of the southern NSW footprint.

Appendix 1:

Ideas and Solutions Collected during Producer and Workforce Co-Design Sessions.

<p>How Idea: These are ideas that are original, but are essentially impossible to implement (lack of resources, budget etc.) These are breakthrough ideas. Imagine: Ideas that are the big, out of the box ones but would need budget and resources to achieve.</p>	<p>Wow Idea: These are the ideas that are original, easy to implement within current reality. Have the potential to shift the game. Imagine: Ideas that just make sense and there is the resources and support there to make it work.</p>	<p>Now Idea: These are ideas that are easy to implement. Low-hanging fruit that would require some effort but could ultimately be done relatively quickly. Imagine: Ideas that could be achieve in a week's time with no cash.</p>
<p>1. Structured training courses + tickets, complete the training as a group; First Aid, Driving Courses? Chem Cert etc.</p> <p>2. Structured Graduate Program. Rotate between 4-6 local farm businesses (1-2years).</p> <p>3. Emphasis on developing a career in agriculture, not just jobs.</p> <p>4. Need support with accommodation - could share houses be an option= good social network.</p> <p>5. A program with a similar structure like Hay Inc. integrated with an internship to further the skill set.</p> <p>6. Refurbish a building like 74 Albury Street for Short-Term local Accommodation - could require a Co-Op Model.</p> <p>7. Integrated model for potential franchise around Australia > Accommodation, training, transport (Bus?), Working safely on-farm (safe work culture), Fostering culture - learn and social.</p> <p>8. Provide younger people with an opportunity + training to entice them into agriculture.</p>	<p>9. A 'stocksquad', a contract team of people who travel around the area that farmers can hire when they need the labour (Shearing, crutching, cattle work.)</p> <p>10. Intern Scenario: opportunity to gain suitable tickets for farm work e.g. truck license, chem cert etc. through work. Extra opportunities to broaden knowledge, e.g. workshops, trainings, conferences. Supporting component to support the education and support of management to engage with employees/interns. Promoting social interaction particularly between technical and operational staff. Clear goals of employment: what happens when the internship ends.</p> <p>11. How do we change the perception of Ag roles? "Farm Hand" - Not everyone can be a manager, middle end labour still has a high skill level requirement, re-thinking structures.</p> <p>12. Cert III in ag receiptents create a team/mentoring program to work for themselves. They work as a rolling contract team to help out hobby farmers and help peer to peer learning with hobby farmers(Farmers who are new blockies).</p> <p>13. Scholarship (6-months, 12-months, or 2 years) Cash and in-kind, on-farm experience.</p> <p>14. 3-month internship, with gradual pay increase per month based on the demonstration of skills & capacity increase.</p> <p>15. Intensive Skills School: Availability to be paid while learning. Tractors (Maintenance and implements), Fencing, stock handling, crop familiarization in a stress-free/safe learning without causing issues for employment.</p> <p>16. A portal or central hub on the internet where you can find all support resources and links to job seeking sites etc.</p> <p>17. Increasing access to TAFE and Day courses.</p> <p>18. Job Seeking/Sharing/Promotion App? Like Instagram. Employers can look at a applicant's profile, see videos and photos of applicant demonstrating skills. This platform is ag specific.</p> <p>19. 2-week courses (Include accommodation + Food included), every day learn physically how to do it all have prac and knowledge and walk away qualified.</p>	<p>20. Local Facebook page or Page on a Website for locals to advertise local job opportunities and availabilities on.</p> <p>21. Small area (Holbrook and Surrounds) Webpage advertising, tradies, farm hands etc. who are seeking roles, Employers can look up people and post job ads.</p> <p>22. Collate a list of various HR/Employment websites that already exist to identify platform that can be used by local businesses.</p> <p>23. Getting Ag into schools to entice young people into industry - Talks and work experience programs.</p> <p>24. Encourage producers to get their farm hands to come along to workshops and field days.</p> <p>25. Work with the local council to promote 'moving to the area' - could be a billboard saying "Come work in Holbrook".</p> <p>26. HLN to facilitate connection to Uni Students</p> <p>27. Create a network of farmers to be involved, form a group.</p> <p>28. Run targeted workshops/experience building, specialized workshops and events for young people/farm.</p> <p>29. Teambuilding on farm</p> <p>30. Boost Young people in job ads.</p> <p>31. Reduce negative stigma of academic's on-farm</p>

Statements Collected During Workforce Retention Survey

Question: Do you see working on-farm as a viable, long term career?

As an employee	As a manager	As a Farm Owner	Please explain why you've answered this way
Yes	Yes	Yes	Farming is an essential part of life and I believe it to be very important.
Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Not set on any future careers or anything right now, just getting as many different experiences to narrow down on my interests.
Maybe	Yes	Yes	
Yes	Yes	Yes	Previous farm experience
Yes	Yes	Yes	
Maybe	Yes	Yes	I value career progression, so I feel a management position would be a more longer term career path
Yes	Yes	Yes	Interesting career path. Variety of work. Career progression
Yes	Yes	Yes	Interested in ag and just want to work on the land.
Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Would like to have my own property while being an Agro or nutritionist.
Yes	Yes	Yes	Farming is the way of providing the world with food, everyone needs food.
Yes	Yes	Yes	Growing up in a rural area has made me realise I love working on farms to create a successful business.
Maybe	Yes	Yes	I feel that as an employee with experience you may be able to seek further opportunities in the Ag Industry.
No	Yes	No	Farming is crucial to the sustainability the future with a growing population.
Yes	Yes	Yes	Reliable employment, work opportunities, connections, growth opportunities.
No	Yes	Maybe	Would like to be my own boss or make my own choices.
Yes	Yes	No	Would like to end up working in farming industry
No	Yes	Yes	
Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Just seems like a very volatile/high risk, certain aspects seem off-putting.
Maybe	Yes	Yes	Employee: Money depending on the job would dictate whether or not it is viable. Manager/Owner: Work/life balance difficult but rewarding long-term. Building experience and working towards goals.
Yes		Yes	As an employee to get experience and than move back home for a family farm
Maybe	No	No	Would like to be in the industry - not too sure what that will look like
Yes	Yes	Yes	
		Yes	I have access to resources through generation inheritance
Maybe	Yes	Yes	All have potential opportunities depending on the system
Yes	Yes	Yes	Would like to gain experience to manage then in the long run own my own property
Maybe	Yes	Yes	There are opportunities for long term managers and farm ownership. There are less opportunities for progression as an employee as some work is only seasonal and there are less training opportunities through many farm businesses

Yes	Yes	Yes	Being able to do different stuff everyday.
Yes	Yes	Yes	I would love to experience being an asset employee but also build my way to become a manager then own my own.
Maybe	Maybe	Maybe	Would like to end up on my family farm eventually however this is uncertain so will be in another career path first.
Yes	Yes	Yes	Working on farm can be a rewarding and exciting opportunity with many areas for growth and being able to grow alongside family.
Yes	No	No	It is what interests me the most.
Yes	Yes	Yes	I love the Ag industry
Maybe	Yes	Yes	May get sick of making minimal money working for someone else.
Maybe	Yes	Yes	I want to own/run. I'm not that interested in farm labour, more so in agronomy and consulting. Unless I own the farm itself.
Yes	Maybe	Yes	As the old man is farm owner, but wanting other experience of different farms as an employee.
Yes	Yes	Yes	For the moment employment is the only way later possibilities
Maybe	Yes	Yes	More career opportunities and \$\$
Maybe	Maybe	Yes	Plan on owning a farm later in life after a career.
Yes	Yes	Yes	I love hands on work as well as being involved in primary production systems.
Maybe	Yes	Yes	I believe long term it would be better to be higher up, such as managing or owning. However being a long term employee is equally as informative.

What are three things we could do to make working on farm a more attractive option for people?

- 1.Additional training
- 2.More resources

- 1. Feed back, hours,
- 2.accommodation

- 1.Less expected work hours a week (max 60)

- 1.Offer accommodation
- 2.A good work life balance
- 3.Opportunities for networking & career growth

- 1. Pay - Jackeroo/jillaroo positions often poor pay
- 2. Training/skills
- 3. Career opportunities

- Sustainable long-term job.

- 1. Better Accom to decent standards.
- 2. option and opportunity for courses.
- 3. Have practical training & assistance.

- 1. Free Training
- 2. Information Days
- 3. Inviting workplaces

- 1. Provide work vehicle.
- 2. Affordable accommodation.
- 3. A way to grow through the business.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A suitable work/life balance. 2. Have accommodation as an option. 3. Travel and fuel costs are hard - allowance for fuel per week.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lifestyle 2. Work/life balance 3. Pay
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training 2. Infrastructure 3. Pay
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good infrastructure. 2. Safe equipment. 3. Quality pay for work being done.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accommodation options nearby
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer Free Training
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stability. 2. Less - isolation/more social circles.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community networks/reduce isolation in remote/rural areas. 2. Clear boundaries of work/life balance. 3. Mediation/consultancy - someone to go to with issues/questions (as an employee/managed as opposed to owner).
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work life balance,
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessible, training and welcoming
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Easier entry to farm ownership 2. More recognition by government 3. More recognition from Australian public
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More career growth and clear pathways from certain jobs , more community engagement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer accommodation information/ options, provide training
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opportunities for career progression 2. Formal training with on farm components 3. Better WHS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay Increase. 2. Extras: houses etc. 3. Flexibility.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training. 2. Transport. 3. Accessibility.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Better support programs/systems (work/life balance, mental health groups) 2. More opportunities for upskilling/development. 3. Networks for job advertisements and career opportunities.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring proper accommodation is available for employees. 2. Providing employees with knowledge about social opportunities. 3. Providing proper awareness of job opportunities by maximizing use of social media.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More marketing 2. Travel 3. Community
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More education 2. More information on different jobs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater income. 2. Accommodation. 3. Standard working weeks.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. better Progression opportunities more often on farm. 2. I think the fear of moving away stops people but that can't be helped. 3. Having workers quarters
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feedback 2. Create a positive engaging video into importance of agriculture. 3. Time-management.

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1. fit into work/life balance.
 2. training and research
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1. Better health services
 2. Grad programs/Casual contracts
 3. Social clubs to help mental health
-

1. Money
 2. Career Progression
 3. Work recognition
-

1. Opportunities for growth
 2. Accommodation
 3. Advertising/awareness of opportunities (e.g.in schools).
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1. Cheaper travel options.
 2. Accommodation with Jobs.
 3. training
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