

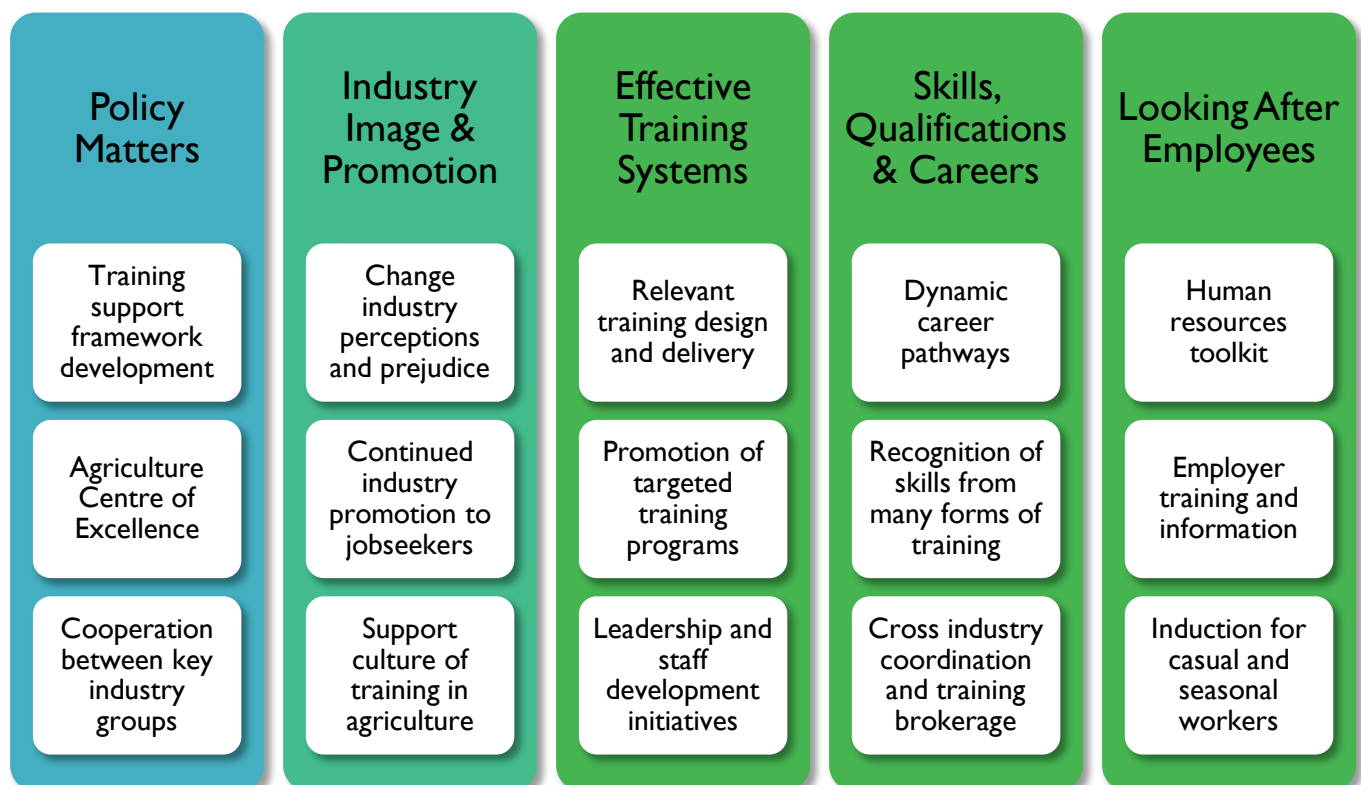
North West Agricultural Workforce Plan

Report Summary | October 2020

The North West Agricultural Workforce Plan (the Plan) is one output from the 'North West Job Ready Generation Package'. The Plan describes what industry, government and education and training providers should do to support the growth of a highly valued agricultural workforce in the region.

Training - A Shared Responsibility

The plan suggests strategies aimed at accomplishing delivery of the required training services and achieving a culture of training in the agricultural sector. The below diagram suggests strategies in five interrelated focus areas.



Improving workforce skills as well as the attraction and retention of people in agriculture, is a shared responsibility involving cooperation between industry and training service providers.

Government can play an important supporting role in ensuring the appropriate environment for quality delivery of training, such as the Centre of Excellence at Freer Farm and with other funding initiatives. However, industry must provide leadership to ensure that any initiative is relevant and most importantly, that it is taken up.

The detailed plan presented in the report suggest tactics under each strategy. These ideas are for consideration by industry, the education and training sector and government. A shared responsibility, collaboration and industry leadership are vital to achieve the required change in workforce attraction, training and retention of quality people.

Skills and Training Needs

The plan found that a large proportion of jobs in the region are for a mainly hands-on, technical work ('Doers') and includes the seasonal workforce, general farm labour and packing/production workers. The report identified that an increased future workforce, along with growing productivity and continued technological advancements, will need people with a minimum of key skills in food safety, workplace health and safety and biosecurity. Information on future skills and training needs for the various positions is below.

An increased 'Doer' workforce will also result in an increased need for 'Decision maker' supervisors and managers who are highly trained and experienced to ensure continued succession and innovation in the industry. The plan also highlighted that employers were having the most difficulty filling roles in maintenance trades; professional services such as agronomists and skilled operational/supervisory staff. This information can inform current training and education delivery for the sector and facilitate future offerings.

Job Role	Grouping	Skills and Training Needs
Pickers & Packers	Doers	✓ Induction including WHS, Food Safety
General Farm Labour	Doers	✓ Hands-on work, on the job training ✓ Compliance-based training
Operational Roles	Doers	✓ Training in specific identified skills gaps in particular in new technologies by qualified, respected trainers
Supervisors, Team Leaders & Managers	Deciders	✓ Technical skills, managing people, WHS
Trades & Maintenance	Doers	✓ New technologies for their trade, WHS
Professional Services	Deciders	✓ New technologies, on-farm trials, agribusiness reporting, data analysis, software packages, people management

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