



Issues with recruiting foreign workers

Banff Pork Seminar 2012

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Sunterra Farms Ltd



About Sunterra

- 1970 as PIC
- 1998 Sunterra
- 7200 sows - Alberta - 6 locations
- Boar Stud - Alberta
- 5600 sows - Ontario - 3 Locations
- 70 Farm Employees



About Sunterra

- 1 processing plant in Alberta
- 9 retail locations in Alberta
- 120 plant employees
- 748 store employees

- Company has 938 employees
- 86 TFW + 78 PR



Why Is There a Need for Foreign Labour?



No-one wants to work in Agriculture!





Lack of Interest in Agriculture

- Lack of understanding of ag. in schools
- Not being taught ag. in schools
- Fewer farm families & people with farm background
- More people being brought up to go to further education & not enter into primary jobs.
- More choices.



Recruiting in Canada

- Very little local interest
- Ones that do start, do not stay!
- Alberta seeing a booming economy
- Agriculture is not perceived as a career

Pig Farming perception!





Pig Farming perception!





Reality







So what has been some road blocks
& speed bumps?





Overview from 2004

- Getting into the TFW program was a minefield.
- Worked with Service Canada to streamline the process.
- Set up job descriptions & a wage grid.
- Service Canada worked with other industries to duplicate this.
- Great communication with Service Canada



- What Changed?



• The Economy

Increase in unemployment





But Were they looking for our
type of work?





Issues

- Sudden claw back from HRSDC
- Less Communication with HRSDC
- Wage rates
- Length of time to process LMO's
- Length of time LMO's were being issued for



Sudden Claw back!

- 2009 the economy changed
- HRSDC announced quickly they were making changes
- Very quick to react to the changing economy when they needed to.



Less communication

- Changes were made at the Edmonton office
- E-mails not returned
- One meeting & HRSDC Alberta said it was in the hands of the Federal Government!
- No sense from HRSDC of wanting to work with industry to improve things



Wage rates

- The grid set up was no longer to be used
- Wage rates posted on the LMI website were in force.
- These kept going up & we were not sure how they came up with the numbers
- Using an average instead of a starting wage.
- Rates were allot higher than we were using
- **Varied across region**



Wage Rates

Low skill NOC 8431

Community/Area	Wage (\$/hr)			Reference Period
	Low	Average	High	
ALBERTA				
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	12.00	15.46	20.15	2011
Lethbridge / Medicine Hat	8.80	14.97	20.00	2011
Fort McMurray Area	8.80	14.67	21.00	2010
Edmonton	8.92	13.99	21.54	2011
Red Deer	8.92	14.60	21.02	2011
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	12.00	15.46	20.15	2011
Camrose / Drumheller	8.80	15.41	21.38	2010
Cold Lake / St.Paul	9.30	15.83	25.00	2010
Calgary / Banff / Jasper / Rocky Mountain House	9.00	15.27	20.42	2011



Wage rates

Skilled NOC 8253

Community/Area	Wage (\$/hr)			Reference Period
	Low	Average	High	
ALBERTA				
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	14.65	15.93	18.00	2011
Lethbridge / Medicine Hat	9.00	18.08	32.24	2010
Fort McMurray Area	10.00	16.01	26.72	2010
Edmonton	10.00	15.18	31.90	2010
Red Deer	14.22	18.91	21.42	2011
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	14.65	15.93	18.00	2011
Camrose / Drumheller	13.50	15.72	21.63	2011
Cold Lake / St.Paul	10.00	16.53	26.72	2010
Calgary / Banff / Jasper / Rocky Mountain House	10.00	16.39	26.72	2010



LMO's

- The length of time an LMO was issued for went down to a max of 1 year.
- LMO's only valid for 6 months of issue.
- Processing was very stringent followed up with phone calls.



- These changes were tough to deal with due to the nature of our business needing staff 365 days a year.
- Even with an increase in unemployment rates people not interested in working in primary ag.
- Higher wage rates forced upon an industry in the hardest time we had ever faced with negative returns for a prolonged period.



Action was needed!

- We needed to keep pushing with Service Canada to improve the communication.
- Needed to get the wage rates to a more reasonable level.
- Needed to return to a 2-3 year LMO to reduce processing times & save cost for producers & government.



Actions

- Met with Service Canada.
- No movement as they directed us to the Feds.
- Circled around with the labour market people.
Told we need to get a wage survey done.
- Explored this & had to use a survey company with the correct methodology!!



- Came to light that the Aviary industry had a similar issue on wages.
- They used SAWP & the TFW route & had drastically different wage rates between the two programs.
- They addressed this with HRSDC & got a reduction so both programs were equal.



- We wanted to follow this route!



Actions

- Conducted an industry survey
- 67% of the Alberta Pork industry that hires.
- Big difference between LMI & our survey.
- Had meeting with HRSDC, with Alberta Pork & Alberta Ag. HRSDC were not interested in the survey.
- No wage rollback for us!



Wage Survey

- We had to get a wage survey done with the correct methodology using a survey company.
- This information HRSDC would entertain so we got it underway.



Actions

- Alberta Pork & some producers met with the office of the Minister of Immigration, Jason Kenny. Got a meeting set up with the Minister.
- Alberta Pork, along with Manitoba Pork, Industry representatives from AB & MB met with The Minister of Immigration Jason Kenny.
- Felt that there was not much accomplished!



Actions

- Letters sent to Minister of Immigration & HRSDC on the wage issue from a number of producers.
- All seemed to be falling on deaf ears....but we did not give up the battle!



Actions

- Got an invite to a meeting with MP Kevin Sorenson & The Honorable Jason Kenny.
- Small round table meeting. Very good opportunity to discuss the issues we faced & Jason seemed to listen well.
- We had some questions he could not answer!



Actions

- Got an invite to a round table meeting with The Minister of Immigration, The Honorable Jason Kenny & The Minister of HRSDC, The Honorable Diane Finley.
- Representatives from Alberta Pork, Manitoba Pork, Sunterra, Hylife & other commodities.



Results?





Yes!

- After allot of letter writing, meetings, emails some resolution!
- Wages rates brought in line to be more reasonable.
- LMO's moved back to 2 years
 - Which means work permits can go to 2 years

Wage rates

Province	Current Wage	Expected Wage on 1-Jan-12	Expected Minimum Wage Increase in 2012
AB	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
BC	\$9.64 (supervised) \$12.51 (unsupervised)	\$9.64 (supervised) \$12.51 (unsupervised)	\$10.25 on May 1st
MB	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
NB	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
NS	\$10.00 (supervised) \$12.00 (unsupervised)	\$10.00 (supervised) \$12.00 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
ON	\$10.42 (supervised) \$13.97 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$13.97 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
PEI	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
QUE	\$10.42 (supervised) \$13.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.73 (supervised) \$13.68 (unsupervised)	\$0.00
SASK	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$10.42 (supervised) \$14.28 (unsupervised)	\$0.00



Comparison NOC 8431

Low Skilled

Community/Area	Old Rate	New Rate
ALBERTA		
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	15.46	10.42
Lethbridge / Medicine Hat	14.97	10.42
Fort McMurray Area	14.67	10.42
Edmonton	13.99	10.42
Red Deer	14.60	10.42
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	15.46	10.42
Camrose / Drumheller	15.41	10.42
Cold Lake / St.Paul	15.83	10.42
Calgary / Banff / Jasper / Rocky Mountain House	15.27	10.42
MANITOBA		
Winnipeg	12.19	10.42
Southern Manitoba	13.90	10.42
Manitoba	13.30	10.42
Selkirk Area	13.08	10.42
SASKATCHEWAN		
Northern Saskatchewan	14.16	10.42
Regina Area	14.77	10.42
South-West Saskatchewan	14.90	10.42
South-East Saskatchewan	14.80	10.42
Saskatoon and Rural West	14.46	10.42
Northern Saskatchewan	14.16	10.42



Comparison NOC 8253 Skilled

Community/Area	Old Rate	New Rate
ALBERTA		
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	15.93	14.28
Lethbridge / Medicine Hat	18.08	14.28
Fort McMurray Area	16.01	14.28
Edmonton	15.18	14.28
Red Deer	18.91	14.28
Athabasca / Grande Prairie / Peace River	15.93	14.28
Camrose / Drumheller	15.72	14.28
Cold Lake / St.Paul	16.53	14.28
Calgary / Banff / Jasper / Rocky Mountain House	16.39	14.28
MANITOBA		
Manitoba	14.80	14.28
SASKATCHEWAN		
Northern Saskatchewan	15.30	14.28
South-West Saskatchewan	15.30	14.28
Saskatchewan	15.32	14.28
South-East Saskatchewan	15.00	14.28
Saskatoon and Rural West	15.32	14.28
Northern Saskatchewan	15.30	14.28



Summary

- **Low skilled worker NOC 8431. (Wage rate \$10.42)**
 - Contract to be filled in as supplied by SC.
 - Employer needs to cover return airfare
 - Accommodation:
 - Needs to be made available at a cost that is reasonable for that type of employment in the said location.
 - Advertise on the National job bank for 14 days during the 3 months prior to applying for an LMO & one or more other sources.
 - The add must include:
 - the company operating name, job duties, wage
 - the location of work (local area, city, or town)



Summary

- **Skilled worker NOC 8253. (AB wage rate \$14.28)**
 - No stipulation on airfare, accommodation, transportation etc.
 - Advertise on the National job bank for 14 days during the 3 months prior to applying for an LMO & one or more other sources.
 - The add must include:
 - the company operating name, job duties, wage
 - the location of work (local area, city, or town



Other Issues/Concerns

- Transportation/Drivers license
 - Encouraged to get it, pay increase.
- Housing acclimation
 - Better once you have some TFW, helps with settling.
- Pushed ESL classes
 - Company paid



Other Issues/Concerns

- Work permit renewal
 - Need to renew SIN
 - Need to renew AHC
- AINP
 - Some stay/some leave



Other Issues/Concerns

- Even if they are TFW you need to make it a place they want to be.
 - Think about social gatherings with the different cultures.
 - Christmas party's not so good with an English speaking comedian!



- More info can be found in the proceedings with web links to HRSDC & CIC web sites.



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