



farmrecruitment

important information for people on the land

March 2003

FARM WORKERS...

Couldn't bring in the harvest without them

If their heart's not in it they're more trouble than they're worth

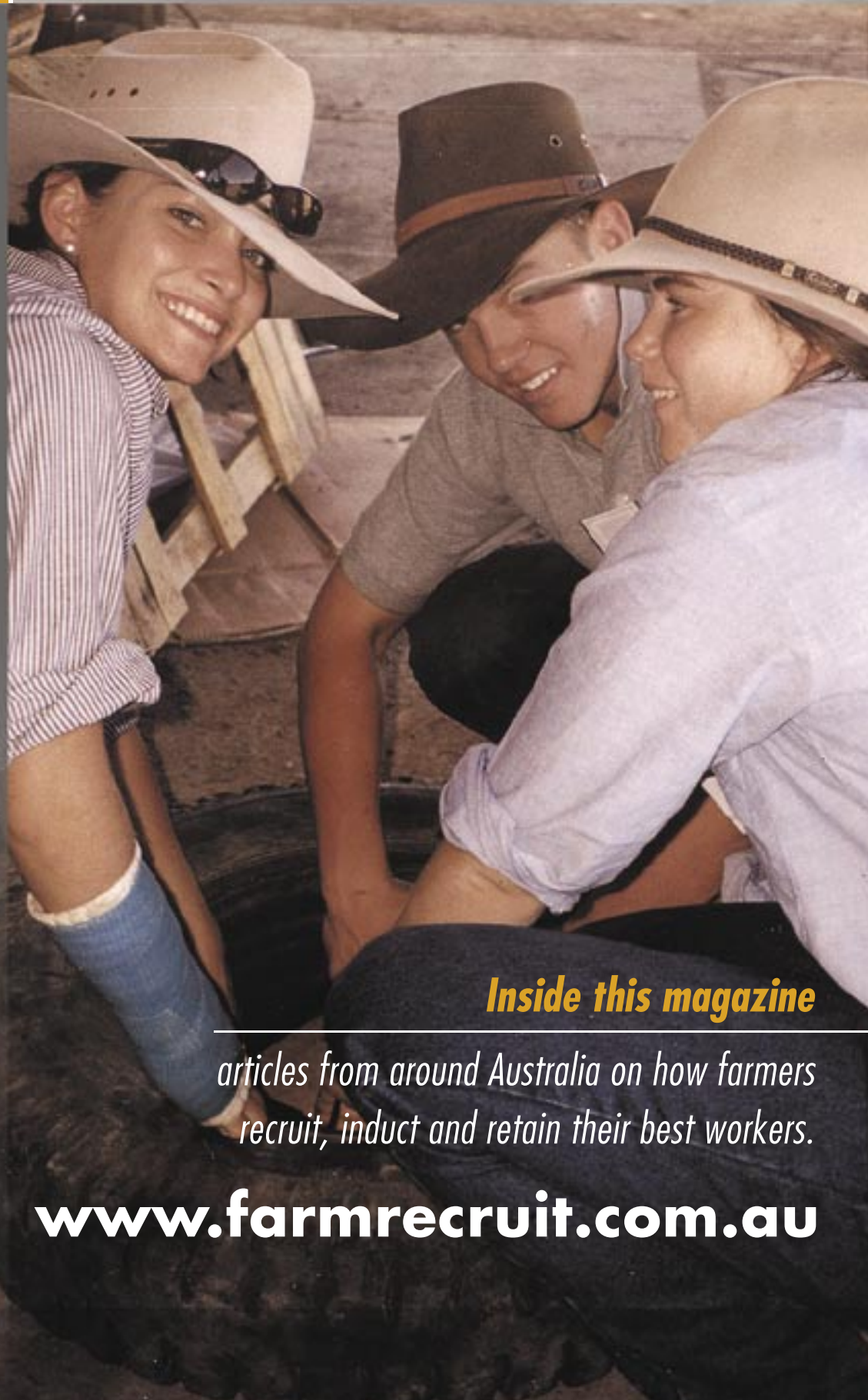
A wrongful dismissal mess costs money and heartache, it's too much bother

They're like part of the family

It's quicker to do it myself than to train someone else

They get lonely, the isolation gets to them and they move on

When you get a good one they're worth their weight in gold!



Inside this magazine

articles from around Australia on how farmers recruit, induct and retain their best workers.

www.farmrecruit.com.au

The Farm Recruitment Kit

This magazine forms part of a kit of information for farmers, farm managers and farm advisors on:

- Recruitment
- Induction, and
- Retention

of Australian farm workers.

This magazine tells the stories of farmers from around Australia who have learned about farm recruitment the hard way, from their own experiences and mistakes.

The farm recruitment CD and website provide practical guidelines on how to find and select new workers, how to introduce them to your farm so they can quickly and safely become productive members of your farm team and how to put plans in place to keep them on your farm as long term employees. It answers questions such as:

- What are the alternatives to putting on someone new?
- What if no one suitable applies?
- What if I take on someone who turns out to be a dead loss?
- What can I do if the applicant I like best doesn't have the qualifications or experience for the job?
- Why do people leave?

The Farm Recruitment CD and website also have a section dedicated to recruitment, induction and year to year retention of seasonal and casual workers. It provides standard documents to support farm recruitment and induction activity and numerous examples of real life experiences from farms around Australia.

Use this kit to help you conduct cost effective recruitment, induction and retention of good staff.

For Farm Advisors... this kit can be used to support your work with farmers. Use it as a basis for discussion about how staffing issues fit into the farm business plan and how quality employees can be used to effectively add to the farm's productivity.

Use the downloadable/printable forms and documents as templates.

Use the numerous links and web based resources identified on the CD and website to broaden your support resources and knowledge.

The production of this kit was made possible by the funding support of Farmbis, and developed by Rural Skills Australia and Strategic Economic Solutions.



To obtain more copies of the kit please call:

1800 647 798



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Welcome to Farm Recruitment



Getting good staff to work on a farm is not an easy process, I know. Standing out in an orchard at 5.30 in the morning meeting a new team of pickers, trying to check visas and everything else is not easy.

And reliable, capable workers are harder to find and are in demand in all industries.

We now have to go the extra mile to get young people to consider work on a farm or to convince older more experienced people to stay in or return to the farm workforce. We have to convince them that we are competent employers who know what we are doing. We have to offer them competitive wages and reasonable working conditions, with opportunities to develop their own skills and interests.

Some farmers are leading the way but I believe we all have to become 'professional' about our employment practices.

Getting recruitment wrong is costly - it wastes time, energy and money. The wrong worker, or a poorly trained worker, can lose valuable stock, damage machinery, misuse chemicals, cause crop losses or, worse still, they can cause severe injuries to themselves or others.

Getting recruitment right isn't that hard but we do have to put the time into finding out our legal responsibilities and how to do things properly. Learning by making mistakes is just too costly, as we all know from experience.

In dealing with workers it is fair to say you can't always do it right but you should be able to get it right most of the time. No new recruit will ever be

perfect and one of the most important things you can do for your farm is to put the effort into guiding your new workers, training them in areas where they are inexperienced, hammering home the occupational health and safety issues for your farm, and finding out just what are their strengths and weaknesses. The more workers we put through these processes then the bigger and better the pool of farm workers.

This Farmers' Recruitment, Induction, and Retention Kit is a very practical guide to getting things right. The kit lays out the general issues you need to be aware of to help you find and engage the right staff - first time. It helps you through the early days with your new recruit and provides some suggestions for keeping hold of the good ones. A separate section is devoted to the special problems faced in recruiting and inducting seasonal workers.

I hope you enjoy reading the real life experiences of Australian farmers prepared to share their experiences, good and bad, in managing employment on the farm. Take advantage of the practical guidelines and material there, to help you to recruit and retain good, productive farm staff.

This kit also highlights what is, in my opinion, THE second most important resource you will have - your state farmer organisation. No matter where you are and what you do you should join and make use of the expert advice on industrial relations matters and employment conditions and processes.

The most important resource? Your fellow farmers. You know who to talk to, who to ask for help in recruitment and training and you can support them when they go through the same process.

We all know that an inefficient farm worker can damage other farms, not just their own. So good luck and contact your farm organisation or Rural Skills Australia for any advice or assistance.

Good farming.

Wayne Cornish.

Wayne Cornish is a grazier, potato and cherry farmer from South Australia and has been Vice President of the NFF for 6 years. Wayne is a noted supporter of quality training and professional HRM practices and is Chair of Rural Skills Australia and ChemCert Australia and Deputy Chair of the Rural Training Council of Australia.

More Information:

www.farmsafe.org.au

Farmsafe Australia, through its national committee and the extensive Farmsafe network, aims to improve the wellbeing and productivity of Australian agriculture through enhanced health and safety awareness and practices.

Phone: **02 6752 8218**

and if you are not a member of your State Farming Organisation then join now!



◀◀ Wayne Cornish – taking a breather on his farm in South Australia – advocates a professional approach to employment practices.



Raising the Profile of rural employment

The Australian Agricultural Company is one of the larger trainers and employers of rural staff in the nation. More than 400 people are employed, spread over 18 properties throughout Australia. In 1997 the Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) became registered as a training organisation. The success of the training program, which focuses on promoting rural careers, led to Carmel Wagstaff being awarded Rural Woman of the Year for the Northern Territory in 2001.

As the company's training program founder and co-ordinator, Carmel Wagstaff is well qualified to comment on rural recruitment issues. She has 28 years experience of living and working on remote cattle stations. Now, her work is based in Brisbane, with all that comes with running a large and growing rural training program. However, the basic issues and principles that Carmel has discovered through experience are applicable to any farm, regardless of location and size.

One aim of the AACo has been to address the problem of workers drifting away from rural employment. Carmel attributes this general drift to a poor "social image of rural Australia" which hasn't been helped by bad publicity in the media.

"I don't think we're promoted as being the professional operators that we are. There's been a tendency to indicate that if you went out there, it really was because you couldn't do anything else," said Carmel.

Carmel and her company challenged these perceptions and have come a long way in lifting the image, profile and professionalism of rural employment.

"I think we are actively promoting the professionalism of our business. Small business in rural Australia doesn't function unless you're a good business person."

Where recruitment is concerned, Carmel recognises that some people are inherently suited to station work and living conditions. However, a rural background is not a necessary criteria for a successful rural career. More relevant is a desire to make the best out of what is possible out there.

"We can teach people the skills; we can't teach them the attitude."

Some recruits have unrealistic expectations. They wear 'rose-coloured glasses' before going out and experiencing the work and the environment first hand. Carmel gives the example of people who love horses and riding, and dream of getting a job which involves working with horses. But they can sometimes lack awareness of the actual work involved and the fact that the job will involve many other duties.

"They visualise being in a green environment with white picket fences ...then they go out to arid Australia and there's an adaption process – it's not as they had pictured."

Employers can easily miss these pre-conceived opinions at the interview stage. No matter how much the interviewer describes the positive and negative aspects of the work, employees can have quite a different mental picture of where they are going and what they are going to be doing. People can end up disappointed.

Carmel gives another example of a new employee not knowing what to expect in relation to climate. One new recruit had come up to northern Australia from

Tasmania with ‘absolutely no appreciation of the heat – he was just about dying at 37 degrees’. The new recruit clearly experienced a major shock. He stayed for about 12 hours before leaving. Carmel said new employees can be a little bit startled. The reality of the vastness of the Australian outback and climate conflicts with the books or pictures they may have seen. The only real way to prevent these kinds of situations is for the employee to really talk to people who’ve been there and experienced the conditions. Employers should encourage recruits to do this before accepting a job offer, perhaps even putting them in touch with someone who can give them the real picture.

Carmel describes staff retention as a difficult issue. But she is clear about several points. No matter how large the operation, as employers, she said, we’ve got to provide:

- good living conditions
- a good working environment
- good working teams
- reasonable pay for the job
- and a sense of job satisfaction – ‘a sense that you’re personally progressing and developing’.

When it comes to rewarding staff for their efforts, Carmel believes this can be important. If repetition is a big feature of the work, rewards can be built into the process as production incentives. However, she doesn’t believe monetary rewards are ‘anywhere near as valuable’ as rewards that enhance the employee’s experience and learning. For example, sending staff to spend a week visiting similar properties, in other locations, to witness how they operate, can be a great reward. It’s not beyond the scope of even small scale

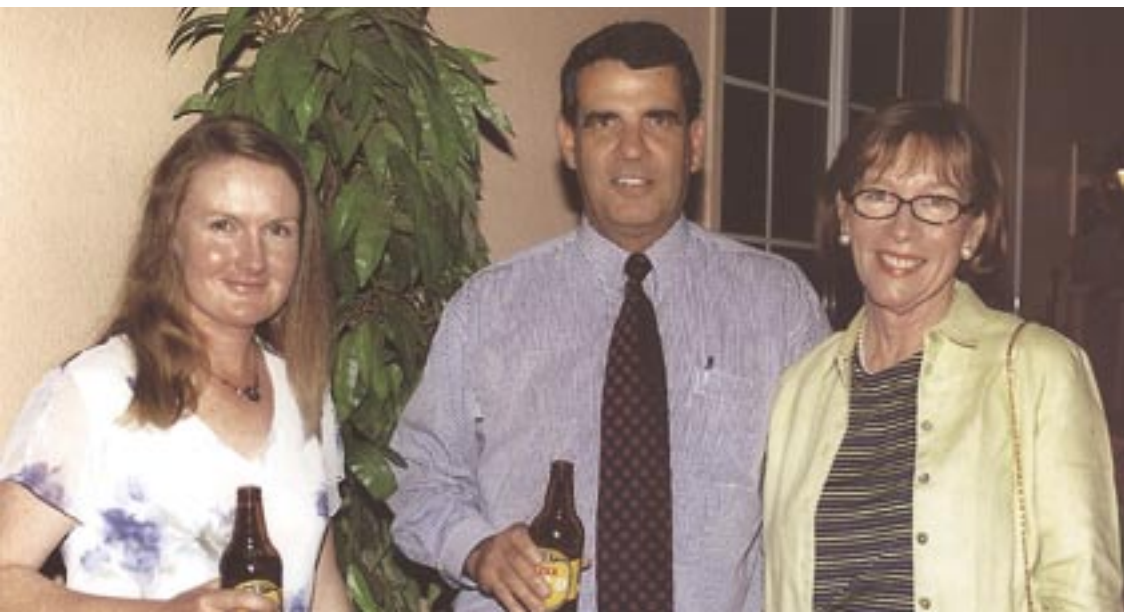
farmers to arrange this type of opportunity and has the added benefit of bringing home new ideas which improve your own farm business.

Carmel makes effective use of employee responses and feedback to continuously refine her training programs. Staff are ‘absolutely, totally encouraged’ to comment on aspects of their training, whether it be negative or positive. Quarterly feedback sheets from trainees gives them plenty of opportunity to express their opinions, while enabling the company to improve its system. For example, AACo’s performance criteria for welding and horse related duties have recently been rewritten.

“We found we had far too high performance expectations.”

Some written assessments of trainee performance have also been altered to become oral assessments, in situations where that is more appropriate.

Other employers do see AACo as ‘a bit of a leader’ in the field of developing rural training and recruitment. Some are considering becoming registered training organisations, along the lines of AACo’s strategies. Carmel believes that rural employers do have to continue to improve their employment and training activity. The rural sector is not attracting young people in the way it used to, and students have generally not been encouraged to seek rural careers. Rural employers have to be active in attracting people who enjoy challenges and have an attitude of wanting to live and learn in a rural setting.



Carmel Wagstaff, of the Australian Agricultural Company, with her husband Geoff, shares her basic principles of rural training and recruitment



Wanted:

an ability to get out of bed at 4am..

The Morice family run a beef property near the town of Deloraine, in mid-north Tasmania. This farm belonged to Debbie's father-in-law and is now managed by herself, husband Greg and son Marcus. Currently, there are no plans to employ any extra hands but previously the Morices ran a dairy farm of 650 cows and employed a number of staff over a period of five years.

Reliability and a willingness to learn are two big characteristics Tassie farmer Debbie Morice looks for in a prospective worker. She also values honesty, and likes someone who's not too frightened to ask questions. Another simple but important attribute is the capability of getting out of bed to be ready for work in the morning.

The Morices employed men and women, single and married, mature and younger workers. Generally their experiences in recruiting and training have been fairly positive.

"We started off employing a married man because we thought we were isolated and someone with a stable family would stay," said Debbie.

The fact that this first employee was older, appealed to the Morices, and they also preferred his lack of farming experience. This was because he hadn't had a chance to learn others' habits.

Later younger staff were taken on including a range of overseas trainees (with relevant work visas) who gained what was, for them, very different and valuable experiences. Arriving from countries such as Denmark, France and Ireland, these trainees had to make big adjustments. Some had experienced milking only 8 or so cows at home and were faced with 600 cows on the Morice dairy farm. Each stayed for around 6 to 9 months and Debbie said 'seven out of nine were wonderful'. The overseas trainees made the existing local trainees aware of their own relatively high levels of knowledge, which boosted their confidence.

Debbie's Golden Rules of Recruiting

Keep an open mind about the type of person you want

Do interviews, follow-up references and do medical checks

Use the 'lawn mowing test' – find out if the candidate has any practical experience to draw on

Put people on for a 12 week probationary period

Use the probationary period to induct and train staff especially in farm safety

Make a commitment to training – encourage new staff to become an apprentice or trainee

Be patient – there is lots for the new recruit to learn

Get to know your staff socially and treat all staff equally

The Morices have no regrets about their decisions to employ either older or younger people. Debbie noted that most did not grow up on dairy farms but came from town. Debbie was always very thorough about her recruiting process. As well as an interview she checked references and ensured the candidate was medically sound. She found the job of recruiting the

right person to be a tough one, but learned that even a little bit of general knowledge helps. For example, a young female applicant had shown cattle with her uncle when growing up. This experience helped her gain an apprenticeship on the Morice's dairy farm. With the town trainees, some level of experience or interest was deemed important. Debbie said the ability to carry out general household tasks can be indicative of a good worker. Their 'lawn mowing ability' is one of her husband, Greg's, telling criteria.

Debbie acknowledges that a wrong choice in recruiting can be hard on the family.

"If their heart's not in it, they'll find another job."

While she believes no one will benefit if their heart is not in it, all you can do as employers is hope the employee will come around. There needs to be some desire to be involved with the work and the people they are working with. Through all these experiences Debbie never had to sack anyone. But, she advises, if they want to go, let them go, even if they are close to finishing their training.

Once they commenced work on the dairy farm, all employees underwent a 'real learning curve'. As an employer it's important to be organized with new recruits and look like you know what you are doing. In the area of animal husbandry, for example, most newcomers had to be taught where to stand when working with the cows, to avoid being injured. As a consequence of this instruction there were no major accidents on the Morice farm 'apart from a few feet being trodden on'. One of the first modules that trainees do in their TAFE course is first aid and

workplace safety. Work safety is of major importance and was covered in Debbie's induction, which lasted for her first 12 weeks and included in ongoing training.

The Morices encouraged all their staff to participate in apprenticeships and other training. A few of their new staff did not want to commence apprenticeships, but with some incentive and encouragement they took on the challenge and reaped the rewards that came with it. Problems with aspects such as literacy and bookwork can be overcome, as Debbie has seen. 'Be patient' is Debbie's advice to farmers who are starting out in recruiting people to work for them.

Debbie also believes it is important to talk to the trainee, both about work and socially. Debbie made a point of taking staff out to dinner, to 'get to know them and get a little bit of a rapport going'. Treating everyone in a similar way, without according privileges to some but not others, was another aspect to be aware of.

There is a need to step outside the employer circle when people are not only working on the farm but living there as well. She doesn't deny there are challenges, and that sometimes 'we do have to be a bit like Mum and Dad'. But all in all recruiting and employing staff brings real benefits to your farm as long as you put the time in and do it properly.

www.newapprenticeships.gov.au

gives full details of the New Apprenticeships programme in rural and regional areas including how to find your nearest New Apprenticeships Centre or call 1800 639 629



Debbie Morice describes her "fairly positive" staffing experiences on the family's dairy farm in North Tasmania





Industrial Relations

getting it right from the start!

www.farmrecruit.com.au provides guidelines for farmers on how to get recruitment and induction right. It also gives contact details of the State Farmer Associations which can provide specific advice for farmers on recruitment, induction and employment practices.

"Be aware and get it right in the first place." This is the message made clear and strong by Denita Harris, Industrial Relations Advocate for the National Farmers' Federation. This means farmers need to ask questions about recruitment and induction, know their rights and responsibilities as employers, find the right person for the job in the first place, and get into good employment patterns right from day one.

If the basics of being an employer are understood and applied, this will save many farmers from getting burnt and lead to fewer problems down the track. From Denita's experience, it can be very painful to the "hip pocket" for those employers who don't get it right.

"It only takes one disgruntled employee to cost serious money," said Denita.

"If you get your human resource practices right, at the start, then you won't need an industrial relations lawyer down the track to help you out of the mess. It's a risk management strategy."

However, most farmers are not human resource specialists and do not have the resources to use HR professionals each time they need a new farm hand. Even so, Denita encourages farmers to take a proactive approach.

Other common problems are related to inadequate induction and training, deficiencies in communication or poor record keeping. "Sometimes things just don't work out", so there may be the need to dismiss an employee, but good recruitment, induction and employment practices can help avoid common problems.

When recruiting new staff, a farmer needs to consider both physical and mental attributes. To get the right person for the job, a farm manager almost has to carry out a psychological assessment of the person, asking themselves:

Does this person have a good attitude?

Will their personality fit in with the team?

What are their skill attributes?

Can they deal with factors such as isolation, the environment and lack of social support?

It is important to find a personality that fits in with the current staff, especially if they will be a long term full-time member. This becomes particularly important if the farm hits hard times.

Denita emphasises the importance of proper induction and training. Both the new employee and the existing staff need to feel comfortable for employee morale to be maintained. The induction process should be detailed and although it takes time it will lead to fewer problems and be cost effective in the long run. Farming is a high risk industry, so occupational health and safety is a vital step in the induction process. If new employees aren't correctly trained from the outset and something goes wrong the employer is likely to be held responsible. Poor paperwork is another area where employers can be caught out. In one example a farmer failed to keep timesheet records. The employee had kept his own because he knew his boss hadn't and later made a successful claim for underpayment.

Ms Harris urges farmers to join and use their Industry Associations as much as possible. One tangible benefit of membership is the day to day industrial advice that Associations can provide. Experienced advisors are employed to help people through a whole range of industrial processes. They have a range of tools and resources that farmers can use and would prefer a few phonecalls from farmers seeking advice at the start, than see them get into trouble later on, over issues that could have been avoided.

"We are keen to see the employer take that opportunity up, for the ultimate success of their business and to not feel uncomfortable in seeking support."

Awareness of award rates is important for farmers. Employers need to realise that claims can be made well after the employee has left the workplace.

"You can't assume your employee won't complain later," said Denita. "If you want to take a risk in breaching the award, it doesn't take much for that to be proven."

Breaches of awards can include the informal practice of giving alternative rewards. Such situations are often mutually agreed between employer and employee. While both parties may be happy with the arrangement, if it is not formally noted then any variation from the award can be deemed as a breach.

Denita believes in a 'holistic approach' when it comes to recruiting and induction. By this she means that if all basic steps are covered and done properly it

is much less likely that there will be legal problems to deal with later on. For some employers doing it right comes naturally but the many cases of industrial arbitration suggests that for many others there is a need for outside support and help. Use the Industry Associations to make sure your recruitment, induction and employment processes help you get the most out of your employees and protect you from avoidable problems.

Denita's Golden Rules of Industrial Relations

Recruit the right person for the job

*Ensure compliance with awards
(unless implementing formal agreements)*

*Sign all paperwork off immediately
(eg: letter of appointment)*

*Call your industry association for advice and information about any issue that may have legal ramifications
(eg: dismissal or changing employee status)*

*Seek assistance and advice before making major decisions, rather than after
(eg: guidelines and help in interpreting these)*

*Access the employment tools of your industry associations
(eg: checklists, award briefings)*

Go to HR / IR training sessions. These are "worthwhile attending and may prove invaluable in the long term"



Denita Harris (centre, with Tony Dwyer left and Gordon Griffin right, of Rural Skills Australia) gives some smart advice for finding the right worker and complying with regulations



Taking on Trainees

is a two way street

With the average farm operator aged 53 and nearly half the agricultural workforce over 45 bringing new blood into the rural sector is a major challenge. Taking on trainees and apprentices is one way for farmers to attract younger people to work on the farm and it can make good business sense. The young person has the chance to gain qualifications and experience, whilst the farmer has the help of a young, enthusiastic worker who can bring new ideas and approaches to the farm. However, as Queensland farmer Michael Gyldenlove can tell you, it can be a bumpy road. Finding the right young person is half the battle and farmers have to think carefully about what they expect from their trainees and how they are going to contribute to the trainee's development.

A trainee's interest in the work is what will lead to success, according to dairy, hay and beef farm manager Michael Gyldenlove. Speaking from his property 'Wybaleana' in the Brisbane Valley near Toogoolawah in Queensland, Michael recounted his experiences of taking on 15 new trainees over the past 8 years. The reward for him is the satisfaction of seeing keen young trainees through to completion of their apprenticeship and to go on to work in their chosen field. In the process Michael has had the opportunity to learn with his trainees about the latest trends in the industry and apply some of the new ideas to his farm.

One of Michael's most successful trainees is Graham Lewis. He was so impressive he won the local award for Regional Trainee of the Year in 2001. For this he received \$500, a certificate and recognition in the media. His achievements have set Graham in very good stead for a farming career, gaining his first employment on another Queensland farm. One of Michael's 'main buzzes' was when Graham won the traineeship award.

"If you can get one through you feel proud about it," said Michael.

Another trainee was referred on to a job with a pastoral company in Sydney. Seeing his trainees develop long run careers in agriculture is a major success for Michael but many of his trainees have had a hard time adjusting to rural life and work.

"The city ones want the lifestyle then realise it doesn't suit them. I guess they get a bit lonely."

A farming background of some description or some experience is important. For example, someone who has grown up on a farm and understands large animal behaviour is less likely to get frustrated with cattle. Michael can 'polish up' the ones who have had some experience, so long as they have the desire to learn. He believes interest is the most important attribute of a new trainee but, as Michael has learned, it can be the most difficult to find. He usually gives trainees several chances to 'check their level of interest'. Michael has noticed the successful trainees are those willing to learn quickly and who want to stay and help out. They will put in extra hours because they enjoy the work and want to learn about all aspects of the job.

"I push my trainees as well, let them know (for example) about the financial side, to give them an extra interest. Otherwise they won't be successful."

The new trainees, doing dairy traineeships, start off watching and observing and being taught about cows. They learn about the cows' udders, how to take cups on and off and to detect problems such as mastitis. They also learn to drive tractors and do basic things 'where they can't hurt themselves'. Michael doesn't mind putting time into training those who are willing to work. While an initial interview can give him some idea of how the person will go, he has to see them on the job to know what they'll be like.

"If their heart isn't in it, you won't succeed."

He says you need to work out quickly if they'll be suited to the work on a farm. Evidently, not everyone is suited to farm work, which has its own set of unique challenges. Unfortunately, Michael has had to sack quite a few trainees. The reasons may be simple issues such as a failure to carry out basic tasks like looking after livestock properly, or a poor attitude towards training or more serious issues such as alcohol and drug abuse. They may find it hard to get out of bed in the morning or they may wish to knock off early to go and socialise. Sacking people does lead to some frustration, as you then have to start again, repeating the process of putting on someone new.

"Some think they're home and hosed if they pass the probationary."

Michael believes farmers need to continue monitoring trainees' work to ensure that both the farmer and trainee are getting the most out of the experience.

Michael has devoted a lot of time to training and he recommends it to other farmers. However, farmers have to be realistic about the commitment involved. As Michael realised: "while I'm training I'm not doing my own work".

However, there are benefits. Taking on a trainee is a really effective way of acquiring new knowledge. So long as farmers are also willing to learn, they can gather all sorts of useful information from their trainees which can be put to use improving how the farm runs. Michael puts into practice what his trainees pick up through their courses and lectures. He believes it is important for farm managers to want to learn and change, if they are going to benefit from taking on a trainee.

Michael cautions farmers against thinking about trainees as 'cheap labour'. Developing a trainee's potential takes time and commitment. The rewards clearly come from finding a willing trainee with the enthusiasm to work well and to stay in the game through the tough as well as the good times.

Key Points

New Apprenticeships, which may be referred to as apprenticeships and traineeships, offer many benefits to employers and to New Apprentices.

Apprentices and trainees bring new ideas and approaches they have picked up through their training. Helping apply them on the farm benefits both the trainee, seeing the theory in action, and the farmer.

Interviews and probationary periods give you the chance to check out trainees and decide together whether the setup is going to work.

Apprentices and trainees may need support adjusting to both farm work and rural life. It will take time and patience.

New Apprenticeships Centres provide information to farmers on the New Apprenticeship Programme and any financial assistance that may be available.

For your nearest New Apprenticeships Centre call: 1800 639 629



Employer Michael Gyldenlove with one of his top trainees – Graham Lewis – on his dairy property in Queensland



Finding a fruit salad of opportunities

Awarded Vocational Student of the Year 2002 for his diploma in frontline management, Phillip Goodes has found a high level of satisfaction in the grape industry.

His experience is an example of finding a vocation and progressing a long way with a good employer.

If the working conditions are right and so is the employee, it's a recipe for long term success in business. South Australian viticulturalist Phillip Goodes offers his views from the employee's perspective. He has been with the newly merged company McGuigan/Simeon Wines for almost eight years; before the orchard was established in 1994.

"When the first vine was planted here I was already employed with this company. Basically I've seen it grow from day one through to where it is now," said Phillip.

However, it took Phillip a few not so positive experiences to help him appreciate the benefits of a well-run business and supportive employer. Before his current position Phillip spent time working in the canefields of Queensland as a brickie's labourer and picking fruit. His main reasons for leaving these jobs were low levels of satisfaction and the lack of prospects for learning and progressing. Phillip referred to a 'closed environment where you were just sent out to do a job with no real understanding of why you were doing it'. This prompted him to keep moving on until he found the level of interest and involvement he was seeking, in the viticulture industry. He described his initial orchard duties as a 'bit of a fruit salad' which developed over the years to his current role of vineyard supervisor.

These days Phillip can speak as much from an employer's perspective, as from an employee's. He carries out most of the recruitment for the orchard and was very heavily involved in establishing the induction

process used there. Phillip has had up to 100 staff under his supervision, most of whom he inducted into working on the orchard.

The importance of training and continuous learning is an area Phillip strongly promotes. As the staff settle in he organises them to do courses on chemical use, forklift operation and other training, 'so they've got all those quality skills'.

"Since I've taken up my role as supervisor here I've initiated a training program for all our staff who originally had no qualifications or anything – I've undertaken a process of putting them all through Certificate III in viticulture courses. They're all qualified vineyard assistants now."

In comparing his previous work with his current position Phillip can see big differences when it comes to training in the workplace.

"I had no on-the-job training in the jobs I had before. They'd come and tell you 'just go out and do this or do that', then they'd show you how to basically do it and leave you to it. I don't really call that training – they just sent you out to do a job. The job I've got now, and where I came from, are two completely different places."

In a previous job for a different vineyard Phillip wanted to undertake a chemical course. His employer 'didn't want to know about it' so he ended up using his initiative and doing it by correspondence himself. Inevitably, his new skills enabled him to find a better employer. His current employer will offer staff any

training that is of relevance to the industry. Such learning opportunities can be fundamental to the employee's enjoyment of the work, and is more likely to lead to retaining staff.

"Anyone who knows what they're doing and why they're doing it seems to enjoy it a lot more. I find our staff here are good like that because they know exactly what they're doing, and why they're doing it, and I think they get a certain amount of job satisfaction out of it as well."

Phillip has acquired a great deal of his knowledge through on-the-job training. At first he didn't know much about viticulture but over the years he has become knowledgeable about the industry.

"When I first started I thought you just put water on and grow the grapes but there's more to it – there's a lot of tricks about growing grapes."

He has been fortunate in finding a very supportive employer and, consequently, his work has been a 'great opportunity to improve myself' and it has definitely exceeded his expectations.

"It's been a really rewarding challenge to get to where I am."

Key Points

Phillip has had experience on both sides of the fence. To really get the best out of their employees Phillip believes employers should be:

approachable and understanding

firm when necessary

committed to training and learning

able to provide opportunities for the future

good listeners

confidential

*For more ideas on staff retention see the Farm Recruitment CD or visit the website at **www.farmrecruit.com.au***

» Dynamic vineyard supervisor Phillip Goodes offers his grape advice about succeeding in a chosen vocation





In There for the long haul...

Darryl Richards is a crop farmer on Stockpool in Western Australia, a 3600 hectare property east of Perth near the township of Quairading. Established in 1915, Stockpool has been farmed by the Richards family for three generations. Traditional crops of wheat and barley have more recently been joined by canola, lupins and oats. Several thousand merino sheep are also run on Stockpool. Darryl has been fortunate in finding a long term and dedicated employee in Ron Atkinson, who has been working with him for close to twenty years. As Darryl points out, finding the right person for the job is one thing but keeping them there is another altogether.

Ron Atkinson has been involved in farming for 50 years. He first worked for Darryl Richards back in 1983. He started at seeding and harvesting during Stockpool's busy season and also did some shearing there, in the days when he worked for himself. For the past five years Ron has worked full time for Darryl and now says he will stay until he retires.

Darryl describes Ron as being a well disciplined person who is allowed a high degree of freedom in the job.

"I virtually give him free rein these days. He just about runs the farm himself," said Darryl.

This level of trust in a worker is clearly the result of mutual respect developed over years, where both employer and employee have gained long term benefits from the relationship. While Darryl makes the main management decisions, he allows Ron to 'pretty much run the place' when he is away from the farm. Darryl and Ron have worked together to set things up such that running the farm is a one man job. They have developed systems to ensure there are minimal risks and that emergency contact with a neighbour is possible if necessary.

When asked about his daily work, Ron said "There are one thousand and one tasks to do," but this is what makes the job satisfying. Ron's work ranges from feeding and checking the sheep, to machinery maintenance, fencing and gate repairs. While he is often required to make decisions, anything of importance is referred to Darryl.

Darryl believes that a large part of his and Ron's success can simply be put down to good chemistry. The pair have a solid working and social relationship, with a high degree of loyalty between them. "We have always got on very, very well," said Darryl. Similarly, Ron describes his working relationship with Darryl as 'excellent'.

Darryl is a big believer in the power of positive thinking. He reckons a positive attitude is extremely important in an employee. An ability to handle the good times as well as the bad is essential and the person must be happy, and optimistic.

"I think that (a positive outlook) is imperative."

Now that Ron is working full time on Stockpool he is much more involved. "Farming methods have changed dramatically," Ron said, referring to the size of machinery and different ways of planting crops as examples. Darryl has recognised that learning and training is an ongoing process. He always attends field days to keep up with the latest cropping technology and encourages Ron to do the same.

"I don't make him, I just encourage him and let him make the decision."

Farming is obviously something Ron loves, as indicated by his description of the "fantastic times of year putting the crop in and taking it off. I get a lot of enjoyment out of farming." However, Ron says he could never have afforded to purchase a farm of his own. Working for Darryl is the next best thing. Ron

regards the Richards' property as his own, and treats it as such. Darryl offers Ron good conditions and the freedom to use his initiative. This works well as Ron noted... "the more responsibility there is, the more it makes you think yourself."

Ron feels fortunate in his situation but believes employers need to respect their workers if they want them to stay. Ron noted that good conditions do need to be matched with recognition of the 'monetary value of effort' if employers wish to retain staff. Opportunities for employees to learn, take on responsibility and use their initiative all make for long term, productive and mutually beneficial relationships between employers and employees in the farming sector.

If you have found someone who works well with you, you want to keep hold of them. Staff retention is about putting time and effort into.....

basic workplace practices

providing opportunities for learning

performance appraisal and feedback

building incentives and recognition

developing staff career opportunities

celebrating achievements

See the Recruitment and Induction for Farmers CD or the web site www.farmrecruit.com.au for more about retaining your staff.



◀ Long term employee Ron Atkinson with his employer Darryl Richards – both believe their working relationship is excellent



Overcoming the cherry wars

Dave describes his orchard – The Cherry Patch – as small-time compared to most.

His main business is Smith and Georg Training and Consulting, dealing almost exclusively with primary producers and allied industries such as wineries.

Dave Georg is a cherry grower in South Australia's north Adelaide hills. With three acres devoted to these succulent and sought-after fruits, Dave's cherries are a minor but significant feature of the family farm. However, the lessons learned in taking on large numbers of staff for the hectic harvest season have helped improve his own and others' systems of recruitment, induction and training.

"I think the principles we use apply to any sized business," said Dave.

Dave introduced a new system for induction of staff to the Cherry Patch several years ago, after experiencing problems during a bumper cherry crop. With harvesting being seasonal work, pickers are only needed for a month or so around Christmas. In an average year Dave generally employs 15 – 20 people to pick the cherries. Many are high school or uni students from the nearby suburbs of Adelaide. One season an unexpectedly large crop forced Dave to take on more workers than usual.

"I took on anyone who looked like they could pick cherries."

The problem was that some of them were a bit wild and became difficult to control, with some of the young people grabbing the opportunity to enjoy themselves a little too much.

Dave knew the pickers were 'carrying on and mucking up' whenever he wasn't directly supervising them, but he had little choice but to keep them on if the fruit was to come off in time to be sold. Because he was paying

by the hour the good workers were complaining about those who weren't pulling their weight but were getting the same wages. It was not fair the way it was happening, not only for the well-behaved workers but also for Dave and his family. Paying an hourly rate also meant the pickers took less care with the fruit they were handling.

"There was the fruit we lost when people were having a cherry war."

This experience led Dave and his wife Diana to devise a more efficient system for employing seasonal staff. They changed their wage system so that payment was per kilogram of fruit picked, rather than an hourly basis. They also developed carefully thought out procedures, which were put down on paper. All interested potential pickers are now sent an employee information brochure, which they are required to read and bring on their first day of work. This outlines the expected values, a quality policy, employment conditions and health/safety considerations. Expectations of staff include respect for each other, feeling empowered to take on responsibility, working safely and open communication. Each employee signs a declaration agreeing to this explanation of rights and responsibilities of the Cherry Patch.

The Georgs also implemented a team leader approach at their orchard, to divide workers into small manageable teams of four. Dave described this as a 'terrific system for building up leadership skills' for the young people involved. He said a team leader should ideally be a people person who is motivated to earn

a few extra dollars. For the extra responsibility each leader is paid a bonus per kilo of cherries picked by the team. Duties include training new pickers, ensuring quality is maintained and encouragement of team members. An ability to communicate is important, such as being able to tell someone they are not doing something correctly, without putting them down.

This team approach has turned out very well for Dave, who is now free to concentrate on his other work. It also means he can leave the property, knowing the leaders are keeping a close eye on things.

"With the team leaders I don't have to be out there supervising all the time. It means I can concentrate on other activities, with confidence that things are under control in the orchard."

Dave described membership of the teams as being fluid.

"The team leaders and team members can alternate from day to day, depending on who is available and what work is to be done."

A Harvest Procedure is used and the leaders are responsible for making sure this is followed. In addition to the teams of leaders and pickers, a harvest manager oversees the running of the orchard.

Due to its location, the Cherry Patch is in the enviable position of having plenty of willing workers available. This means Dave is able to pick and choose.

"We're very lucky – very rarely do we have to go out looking for pickers."

Most are students who contact the orchard seeking casual work over weekends or holidays. Dave's only criteria is they must be over 15 years of age and capable of picking fruit.

"We often employ a whole family over the years, starting with the older children and them being joined by their brothers and sisters as they get old enough. Sometimes, one or more of the parents also join up."

Most of them have a great time in the orchard. They often chat all day and at lunch times 'yarn and carry on'. However, there are a few people who can't handle the heat and the physical labour but that is often not apparent until they try it.

"Physically and emotionally they're not suited to the work. But, to their credit, they usually try."

While the pickers – mostly young students – "often couldn't care less about OH&S issues and training" their parents are often impressed with the Georgs' system. They feel reassured that the Georgs are treating their children with respect, and encouraging them in what is often their first paying job.



Cherry farmers Diana and Dave Georg know through experience the importance of good induction and training



The Professional Match-makers in rural recruitment..

Jenny Martin heads Outback Staff which has offices in Rockhampton, Sydney and Perth.

Their clients include large corporations and 'literally thousands of small operators' in a range of industries: cattle; sheep; grains/cereals; cotton; viticulture/horticulture; feedlots, and general small crops.

The director of Australia's largest agricultural recruitment agency believes farmers could make recruitment a lot easier for themselves if they used more professional assistance. The agency has been in business for 14 years and has a client base which is absolutely Australia wide. Many farms have only one employee. But it is finding that one employee that makes all the difference.

Jenny recognises a reluctance amongst farmers to use agencies for recruitment, due to a widespread view that agents 'don't know a gum tree from a high rise'. However, finding the right worker is not easy for farmers and a lot have bad experiences with recruiting. Farmers often rely on the 'popping in to the local pub' method. However, Jenny points out that recruitment agencies have a much wider pool of employees to choose from and a level of professionalism in finding the right staff. The important thing is to find an agency which has sound experience in the agricultural industry.

One area where agencies can be particularly helpful is in writing advertisements for job vacancies. Jenny said farmers are sometimes reluctant to use descriptions which make the job sound attractive, and this can lead to a loss of potential applicants. For example, one ad, written by a farmer for a stationhand, listed duties such as horse riding ability, and facilities, such as a house. However, the assets of the house (eg: air conditioning, modern kitchen, ample accommodation etc) were not mentioned. Emphasizing the good features would have encouraged more applications.

Many farmers fail to understand the importance of the ad as a recruitment tool.

Jenny said that, before embarking on advertising, it is necessary to think carefully about:

- skills and duties of the position
- facilities available, and
- room for promotion and training

Another problem is in finding workers who will stay for the long term.

"Everyone wants someone who will come and stay for ten years," said Jenny.

However, Jenny points out that times have changed and there is a whole generation of people who change jobs constantly and don't necessarily stay in the rural industry long term. In fact, the diminishing rural workforce is a major problem and Jenny believes it is 'really, really crucial' to devise positive strategies for retaining staff.

"Employers have to value and protect the current workforce. Primary producers have to entice people from the towns and cities."

While it is important to recognise employees want good conditions and wages, many are also looking for a future in their rural career. Farmers need to recognise employees need the opportunity to improve themselves and that the position shouldn't be presented as a 'dead-end job'. The opportunity for agricultural

career promotion is of central importance and should be tied to training. Jenny's basic message for farm employers is:

- plan
- train, and
- retain.

All of this needs to be considered at the outset and is part of the package of benefits which the employer offers to the employee. Career development needs to be worked into the farm's business plan and should be used to attract people into rural careers.

One of the services Jenny's agency provides is in employer/employee communication, a skill Jenny sees lacking in many farmers. For Jenny, successful employment and effective communication go hand in hand - 'one doesn't work without the other'.

"We hear millions of times – 'they didn't last the first day!'"

One reason for this, according to Jenny, is that generally farmers are not good communicators. Jenny talks with both employer and employee throughout the probation period and beyond to ensure things are working out. She has found employees are often more comfortable when talking to a third party when negotiating issues such as work practices, especially where long term staff are concerned. It is having this third party that is one of the big advantages of using recruitment and human resource agencies. And it has proved to be a very successful process as Jenny gets 'a buzz' to see so many of the young people who found work through her agency now working as farm managers.

Jenny's Golden Rules for making the most of a recruitment agency

Identify an agency with good agricultural experience that can offer both recruitment and human resource support

Plan what is needed:

- *staffing should be a part of your business plan*
- *think about the skills and main duties of the job*
- *plan to provide training and consider how you can provide promotional opportunities*

Identify how you can offer attractive facilities and conditions to the employee

Talk to your recruitment agency so they can write an effective job description and advertisement

Use an agency that can help build a good relationship with your employee, an agency that will help you to communicate effectively with your new recruit and get things off to a good start



◀ Bradley Labuschewski of Headingly Station is one of many workers to be matched with an employer via a rural recruitment agency



Get Qualified – it's a very practical course of action

Increasingly, farmers of all skills and ages are recognising the value of formal qualifications, particularly during periods of adjustment and change. Benefits include increasing skills and knowledge in areas of: communication; business; OH&S; and teamwork. Even experienced farmers, such as in the following case study, can greatly benefit from getting qualified.

Coping with the uncertainties confronting dairy industry operators has meant that most participants are undertaking some fundamental reviews of their future prospects. For the Ireland family of Mawbanna in Tasmania's north west it was time to take stock of their position and consolidate by ensuring their past frenetic pace of business and personal development could be sustained. Together, Eamonn and Christine Ireland decided to prepare by first of all ensuring their vast experience, skills and knowledge were recognised.

"While I had received a Trade Certificate in dairy farming from New Zealand in the late 70's, over past years I have attended many industry short courses and been actively involved in industry discussion groups as well as building our dairying enterprise. But this background could not previously be formally recognised," Eamonn said.

When each achieved an Advanced Diploma in Rural Business Management recently, it gave the Tasmanian dairy farmers an enormous boost in self-belief. Though they both received the same qualification, each had demonstrated that their skill sets had different bases and to a large extent were complementary.

"Achieving the formal qualification was an important step from a morale point of view: it means that 20 years experience in the dairy industry is testimony to your being a professional manager. To continue a career in the industry I believed that we would either have to develop our own enterprise to milk between 700 and 800 cows or else help corporate sector operators to manage a similar enterprise.

"Gaining the qualification put him in the box seat to successfully apply to become the Manager, for

an internationally based investment group, of part of a new development farm on 'Rushy Lagoon' in Tasmania's North East."

Eamonn will develop a milking herd of 900 cows handled through a 60-cow rotary shed. In addition, Eamonn and Christine will retain their Mawbanna operation involving 340 milking cows on a 140ha (350-acre) property and a further 73ha (180 acres) under lease to carry 220 young cattle.

Gaining the Advanced Diploma took about three months of collecting relevant documentary evidence and rigorous three-hour assessment interviews to prove they had the required knowledge and experience.

"It was quite a task to pull all the documentary evidence together for the assessor when he came to do the interview," Eamonn said. "But the interview itself, although rigorous, was nothing like doing an examination. It was a three-hour verbal assessment around the kitchen table. The threat had been taken out of the process by the build-up of information over the three months that I was working out what documentation I would need, and what particular competencies I would choose to meet."

"The process of skills recognition and certification is just recognising the prior learning you've done, the experience and skills you have. In fact, 'experience' is the stuff we do every day in running our properties and businesses. In the past we didn't think of that as learning, but it is."

"I was much better prepared for the recent job interview. I was more confident in telling them just how much I knew and what I could do."

Eamonn and Christine have proved what's possible by qualifying for their Advanced Diploma thanks to a new system of recognising people's self-acquired skills and knowledge. "Under this Skills Recognition Project, implemented by the Rural Training Council of Australia (RTCA) the Irelands and many others around the nation have demonstrated sufficient skills and knowledge to qualify for a variety of formal qualifications," said Tony Audley, the Executive Director of the RTCA.

"Business is faced with an ever increasing need to obtain and then retain a competitive edge. Employees able to demonstrate contemporary skills, knowledge and performance are in demand. An attitude of lifelong learning on the job can now be recognized. Younger people starting their careers in agriculture can undertake 'job relevant' structured learning as they go along, gradually building to nationally recognised qualifications they can take with them to another job or onto further TAFE or university study. This new system is great, much better and more flexible than anything we've seen before," he said.

People of all ages can be assessed on how competent they are – not how long they have been studying a subject, or how many courses they have completed. This project recognizes that skills and knowledge can be developed from a variety of sources including on-the-job. Throughout Australia, apprentices, trainees and students are starting to undertake customised, individual learning leading to nationally recognised qualifications from Certificate I through to Advanced Diploma.

Some young people are starting the process while still at school under the Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools program. Older people are achieving qualifications while working on farms, in nurseries and on golf courses – some of them while managing multi-million dollar sheep, beef, dairy cattle or local government enterprises.

"In the present uncertain climate where the industry is on the brink of change, recognition of the knowledge and skills of dairy farmers testifies to dairy farmers being professional business people. And it also provides a qualification that someone could use off the farm if they decide to diversify into other industries," Eamonn said.

For further information on Skills Recognition or the career opportunities available under the new Rural Production Training Package, contact RTCA on **1800 688 157**

The Farm Recruitment Kit provides guidelines on getting your skills recognised. See the section 'Getting Qualified' on the Farm Recruitment CD or website **www.farmrecruit.com.au**



◀◀ A group of graduates proudly hold up proof of their hard-earned apprenticeships in their chosen rural industry



Induction & Safety

go hand in hand

Liz knows about farming both through her work for the NSW Farmers' Association and through being born and raised in the Monaro region of NSW, where she is still strongly involved with the family's Snowy Mountain sheep and cattle farm.

Liz Young, a Regional Service Manager for NSW Farmers' Association, knows that every farm is unique, and every induction plan should also be unique. The good and bad behaviour of animals (and vehicles!), the lie of the land, the time of year and types of farm activities all create a unique range of induction and safety issues. Similarly, every farm worker also has a special set of experiences, skills and knowledge that will contribute to the safety, or otherwise, of a farm. Ensuring the safety of owners and managers, family members, workers and contractors requires careful planning, good communication and a fail-safe employee induction process.

"The best Farmers don't make assumptions about their new workers' knowledge" Liz says. "They (the farmers) point out the unique features of their farm. People need to be aware that when they enter a farm gate they're actually entering a workplace, and to treat it as such. Everyday they're dealing with machinery or stock and natural hazards that impact on workplace safety."

Liz notes that induction is the best time to get the safety message across.

"When a worker starts on a farm, that's the best time to have them understand the conditions and the dangers that exists. It doesn't matter if this is their first time on a farm or if they have been on farms all their life - they need to be told about the particular farm they are on now," said Liz.

Liz believes that hazards can be reduced if they are identified. A simple induction checklist that is discussed between the farmer and the new employee can ensure that all important information is covered. Experienced workers will know what to look out for and will ask questions but inexperienced workers are much more vulnerable. Using the checklist with every employee ensures that nothing is left to chance. Farmers need to cover both general safety issues and points that are

unique to their property, for example: where electrical equipment is kept; the idiosyncracies of each vehicle; or which stock is not regularly handled.

Creating the checklist is a good opportunity for farmers to talk about farm safety with existing employees and family members. Identifying hazards is vital, even if they seem obvious, like 'dangerous chemicals left lying around or the location of power cords'. Making it a whole team effort means you are more likely to notice hazards which have somehow become part of the scenery. Make sure workers know that you want to hear about safety issues and that you will take them seriously and act upon their suggestions. Once the checklist is made it is important to keep updating it to suit the changing conditions on the farm.

The checklist really forms the basis of a farm safety plan or policy, which every farm should have. Liz points out that:

"Responsibility for avoiding accidents and injury lies with both the worker and the employer. Revisit the plan – it will change in the event of incidents but it will also change with the seasons, with change in stock and with the purchase of new equipment."

Involving your workers in the process of developing a farm safety plan gives them ownership and responsibility, increases awareness and makes it more likely that people will do things right.

Farm safety extends beyond the employees to farm families, who may also be living on the property. Children run a particularly large risk on farms. One-off contractors, seasonal workers, volunteers, apprentices or trainees all need to be made aware of your specific farm safety issues.

Farmers are more safety conscious than ever because of farm safety legislation and increased publicity about farm accidents but Liz emphasises that farmers need

to continue to develop their knowledge and keep in touch with changes in legislation and procedures. Avoidable incidents such as loss of limbs in harvesting equipment, or injury/death due to other accidents, can be very costly.

“Compensation cases can put a huge financial burden on farmers. There is also the staff down time if their staff – or they themselves – are injured. Be proactive rather than reactive – deal with issues and hazards before you have to deal with injury or disaster.”

Farmers should not hesitate to implement safety plans, from day one. It’s a worthwhile investment

“Good farm safety practices can increase productivity and save money. I know that farmers sometimes get frustrated with legislation but the law’s not there to hinder them, it’s there to make the workplace safer. The need for legislation has come from too many injuries occurring on farms.”

A structured induction, a commitment to creating a safe workplace, good communication, and sharing the responsibility will all help to raise farm safety.

As Liz points out:

“Every person is unique, just as every farm is unique.”

Consequently each farmer must consider the unique range of farm safety risks which his or her workers and family face each day.

Liz also stresses the importance of joining a farm organisation.

“It doesn’t matter where you are or who you are, you cannot be an expert on everything and that is why every farmer should be a member of an organisation that knows their particular needs and issues and knows how to deal with government policy and regulations.”

Liz’s key to a safe farm “Be safe from day one”

What to put on your induction checklist

- Introduction – explain to new employees about your business/industry, job roles and responsibilities of others
- Job introduction – demonstrate how to do the job safely, ie- handling machinery, managing stock, farm vehicles – motorbikes, ATVs and horses, use of chemicals, fatigue and stress, heat and sun exposure, natural hazards (eg: bushfire, wildlife), and the procedures for reporting hazards
- Employment conditions – rates of pay/ hours/leave etc.
- Other requirements – hygiene/quality procedures
- Health and Safety – safe work procedures, roles and responsibilities, hazards, how to report issues etc.

How to create a safety checklist

- Know the legislative requirements
- Communicate with existing staff and family to identify hazards
- Decide on processes and procedures to address hazards
- Communicate with existing staff about processes and procedures
- Write down on paper a checklist describing each farm hazard and how to deal with it
- Revisit the checklist, routinely, with your employees and family



Liz Young and her father (Laurie Norton) discuss farm safety issues on their family farm near Bunyan NSW

On the website and CD Rom....

- **Planning and Decision Making - things to consider before you recruit a new worker**

Do I need to employ someone? What are the alternatives? What employment options are there? What do I need to know before I start to recruit? There are just one or two things worrying me....

- **Farm Recruitment – finding good workers**

Defining the Job - Attracting Applicants – Quickly and effectively getting to know the applicants- Selecting the right person for the job
– Working within legislative requirements

- **Farm Induction – getting off to a good start**

Preparing for your employee's first day – Doing the paper work
– Contracts – Procedures and expectations – Giving the employee an overview – Practical OHS – Introducing job specific tasks
– Completing induction

- **Retention Planning – keeping good workers**

What makes people leave? Basic work place practice – Performance appraisal and feedback – Building incentives and recognition
– Career paths – Celebrating achievements

- **Seasonal and Casual Workers – recruitment, induction and retention**

Recruiting seasonal workers – Induction of seasonal workers – Retention of seasonal workers – A case study from the Cherry Patch

- **Getting Qualified**

Guidelines on how farmers can get their recruitment and employment skills recognized towards an accredited rural business qualification.

- **Useful links**

A list of contact details of organizations which can help your recruitment process and can be used by farm advisors and trainers to provide material and information on recruitment and employment issues.

Need Harvest Workers?

Call 1 800 062 332

(after 1 July 2003)

Or visit:

www.jobsearch.gov.au/harvesttrail

**A National Harvest Labour Information Service Hotline
will be available from 1 July 2003**

Watch for information about this new service.



Harvest Trail
An Australian Government Initiative

The Harvest Trail – support for your needs in peak season - make sure your seasonal jobs are where the workers can see them.

Need help finding harvest workers? The Australian Government is establishing a number of initiatives to assist on the Harvest Trail.

The National Harvest Labour Information Service is one such service. It will operate from 1 July 2003. It will be operated by MADEC, a Mildura based company that understands the needs of growers. For the price of a local call, seasonal workers will be able to phone from anywhere in Australia and get up to date information about availability of your harvest jobs. There will also be a web site with information and details about jobs and a printed harvest guide which will be distributed free around Australia. Make the service work for you – ensure that your harvest jobs are included in the information.

Specialist Harvest Labour Service providers will also be available in a number of key harvest areas. Some of these specialist employment agencies are already operating. Harvest Labour Service providers recruit and place harvest workers for growers. The service is free and available to all involved in harvests. Providers will also work closely with the National Harvest Labour Information Service to help all those involved in the Harvest Trail. If there is a Harvest Labour Service in your area, use it.

To get information about harvest jobs or to find out if there are service providers near you, call 1800 062 332 after 1 July.

New Apprenticeships

New Approach • New Opportunities

www.newapprenticeships.gov.au

New Apprenticeships Centres

1 800 639 629

New Apprenticeships may be referred to as apprenticeships or traineeships in some states and territories.

New Apprenticeships help keep rural workers up to date!

**Agforce Queensland**

PO Box 13186
 George Street Post Shop
 Brisbane Qld 4003
 Phone (07) 3236 3100
 Fax (07) 3236 3077

**New South Wales Farmers' Association**

GPO Box 1068
 Sydney NSW 1041
 Phone (02) 9251 1700
 Fax (02) 9221 6913

**Pastoralists' and Graziers' Association of Western Australia**

1st Floor, Pastoral House, 277 Great Western Hwy
 Belmont WA 6104
 Phone (08) 9479 4599
 Fax (08) 9277 7311

**Victorian Farmers' Federation**

Farrer House
 24-28 Collins Street
 Melbourne VIC 3000
 Phone (03) 9207 5555
 Fax (03) 9207 5500

**South Australian Farmers' Federation**

PO Box 6014
 Halifax Street
 Adelaide SA 5000
 Phone (08) 8232 5555
 Fax (08) 8232 1311

**Tasmanian Farmers' and Graziers' Association**

PO Box 193
 Launceston TAS 7250
 Phone (03) 6331 6377
 Fax (03) 6331 4344

**Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association**

GPO Box 4845
 Darwin NT 0801
 Phone (08) 8981 5976
 Fax (08) 8981 9527

**National Farmers' Federation**

PO Box E10
 Kingston ACT 2604
 Phone (02) 6273 3855
 Fax (02) 6273 2331



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