

Unite against COVID-19



Help us support your region and plan for labour demand

If you're an employer in the horticulture industry, we need your help. It won't take long but it's incredibly important.

There's no doubt COVID-19 will have an impact on the supply of labour this year. To plan for that, we need to know what your 'normal' demand for labour would be for the next six months.

Growcom has created a short [survey](#) to capture labour demand and provide accurate month-to-month forecasts to September 2020.

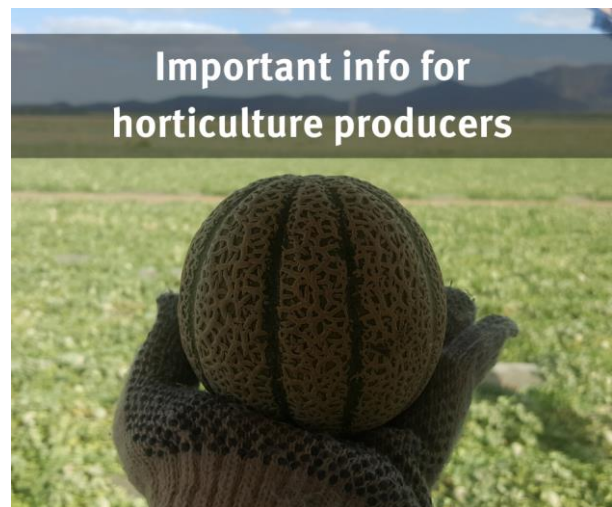
[Complete this survey](#) according to your normal plans for production, not including any assumptions you may have made about the impacts of COVID-19 on either market demand or the availability of labour.

Why?

It's important we understand what will be needed for the industry to operate as close to normal as possible. It's also important that we ensure adequate support for the region to manage the flow of workers.

The [survey](#) should be completed by individual farming operations on a postcode basis, so please provide one response for all operations within a single postcode. If you have operations in multiple postcodes, please submit one response for each postcode.

The [survey](#) will close Friday 24th April. Thanks to everyone who has already completed it.



People providing essential services to remote communities can now apply for a Remote Communities Pass

[Restrictions on travel to designated remote areas](#) are in force to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In Queensland this includes the entire Cook Shire Council area.

There are exemptions for people providing essential services, including commercial primary production of food or food products, veterinary services, aquaculture or agribusiness.

People seeking to enter a designated restricted area require a Remote Communities Pass and a Generic Biosecurity Plan.

[Apply for entry](#) to restricted areas in Queensland or get [more information](#).

Webinar: WH&S strategies to mitigate COVID-19

BDO, in partnership with DAF, delivered the third business continuity planning (BCP) webinar on Thursday 16 April 2020. Industry feedback indicated this webinar was well received and timely.

The webinar's focus was on implementing WH&S strategies with specific reference to the Safe Food Queensland Guidelines for Reducing Workforce Impacts related to COVID-19 and Queensland Health's required health plan for any sponsored labour travelling from interstate into Queensland—as a sponsoring business, a supporting health plan checklist must be submitted to Queensland Health.

[Watch the webinar](#) to hear examples related to the physical environment, organisational operations, personnel and accommodation (if applicable).

DATE CLAIMER: Mark your diary for the fourth webinar scheduled for Thursday, 30 April 2020 at 2 pm, which will cover the latest policy updates and how to factor them into your business operations. Further information will be communicated in coming updates.

New freight and export market update bulletin

The Queensland Government is working to overcome any transport and logistics operations challenges to ensure supply during COVID-19.

Read our regular [COVID-19 freight and export market update](#) bulletin for the latest information about export markets, air and sea freight availability and opportunities, and government initiatives to support trade during COVID-19.

Guide to COVID-19 in the orchard and packing shed

Working in the citrus industry? Then check out Citrus Australia's [Guide to COVID-19: In the orchard and packing shed](#).

It's a one-stop shop for citrus growers and packers dealing with COVID-19 in the workplace.

It's updated weekly with all the latest updates so you can keep across business and workforce management tips, food safety and additional checklists and resources.

Connecting Queenslanders with jobs and training

Out-of-work Queenslanders can register with a new online portal aimed at linking job seekers with job opportunities.

The Queensland Government's [Jobs Finder Queensland](#) web portal asks Queenslanders who are looking for work to provide information on their skills, location and work experience.

That information can then be readily matched to available jobs.

The initiative is part of the Government's \$4 billion package of measures to support health, jobs and business doing it tough due to COVID-19.

Quick reference guide for support available for small to medium businesses

[Payroll tax relief package](#): If you're an employer (or part of a group of employers) who pays \$6.5 million or less in Australian [taxable wages](#), you may be eligible for a refund of your payroll tax for two months, payroll tax holiday (i.e. no payroll tax to be paid) for three months or a deferral of payroll tax for the 2020 calendar year.

[Temporary relief for financially distressed businesses](#): The Australian Government is temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand.

[SME power bill relief](#): Small and medium businesses may be eligible for a \$500 rebate off their energy bill.

[Commercial tenancies](#): Relief measures for commercial tenants and landlords. A mandatory [Code of Conduct](#) has been developed by National Cabinet.

[Commercial and residential tenancies](#): Evictions will be put on hold over the next six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress, who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of the COVID-19.

Any small business impacted by COVID-19 can now contact the [Rural Financial Counselling Service](#) in the following areas:

- [Southern Queensland](#): phone (07) 4622 5500
- [North Queensland](#): phone (07) 4652 5669

[Boosting cash flow](#): Temporary cash flow support to small and medium businesses through two sets of cash flow boosts to support employers to retain employees. Support will be provided via tax-free cash flow boosts of between \$20,000 and \$100,000.

[Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme](#): The Australian Government will provide a guarantee of 50% to support short-term loans.

The Australian Government's [JobKeeper package](#) offers a subsidy of up to \$1500 per fortnight per employee to keep eligible businesses paying their staff. Employers and sole traders can register their interest in this program with the [Australian Tax Office](#).

The [JobKeeper Payment factsheet for employers](#) states the first payment will be received by employers from the ATO in the first week of May.

[Supporting apprentices and trainees](#): Eligible employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50% of their apprentice's or trainee's wage paid during 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020.

Latest health advice, current status and contact tracing alerts

Visit [Queensland Health](#) for the latest health information and instructions.

Join the [Australian Government WhatsApp group](#) for the latest news and advice.

If you develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of overseas travel, contact a doctor or call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Social distancing of 1.5 metres: [Social distancing](#) is a public health practice with the key aim to prevent sick people from coming into close contact with others to slow down the spread of a disease.

It also intends to reduce the chance of high-risk groups from becoming infected and to alleviate the

burden on our health-care systems and workers.

When is self-isolation required? [What is involved?](#)

Mental wellbeing

[Queensland Health's website](#) has information on how to look after your mental wellbeing in a crisis.

Other contacts:

[Lifeline](#) (Mental health and wellbeing):
phone 13 11 14

[Beyond Blue](#) (Mental health and wellbeing):
phone 1300 224 636

[Headspace](#) (Youth mental health and wellbeing): phone 1800 650 890



For more information visit daf.qld.gov.au or call 13 25 23

