

Media Release
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U.S. and Canadian Temporary Foreign Workers Program Analysis and Comparison Highlights the Potential for Access by Smaller Canadian Farms

Today, the BCFGA is announcing the release of a [36-page report analyzing the Temporary Foreign Worker \(TFW\) programs H-2A and SAWP](#) along with a potential pilot project that would reduce costs and barriers of SAWP employers, particularly for smaller producers.

With the goal of expanding the definition of “employer,” within the existing TFW program, the pilot project would create more flexibility, affordability, and accessibility for both employers and workers.

The Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program in Canada and the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Program in the United States are well-established cornerstones of the agricultural industry as well as a source of foreign remittances to the low and middle-income workers’ home countries. The employment programs support the food sector and food security in the US and Canada.

However, the Single-Employer-Specific Model of SAWP currently in place creates additional barriers for small farms in Canada. “The BCFGA seeks to remove or reduce the employment barriers for small growers by developing a proposal for a pilot program that mirrors the successful employer group model in the H2-A program in the US”, said Sukhdeep Brar, Vice-President of the BCFGA and grower. At present, the barriers for small Canadian farmers that prevent participation in the SAWP are:

- The ability for smaller producers to be eligible for TFW, as the amount of work on the farm is less than the minimum required for a single employer.
- The ability for TFW to transfer employers more than twice.
- Added cost producers related to fewer work days to spread the seasonal costs of:
 - Housing
 - Transportation

“Finding more ways for smaller growers to participate in SAWP, while maintaining protections for workers and the program integrity is a good project,” said Reg Ens, General Manager of WALI.

The adjustment to allow a group of employers to participate as a single entity could have major benefits to employers utilizing BC SAWP and enhance the program for the future to come.

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For more information:
Sukhdeep Brar, BCFGA Vice-President, 250-462-5687
Glen Lucas, BCFGA General Manager, 250-212-8828

URL for the Report:
https://www.bcfga.com/files/TFWE_BGFGA_Final%20Feb%2016%20%202023%20version.pdf



250-762-5226
1-800-619-9022



info@bcfga.com



www.bcfga.com



880 Vaughan Ave
Kelowna, BC V1Y 7E4