

Notice to Growers:

Employment Standards Branch visiting farms this July - August

July 7, 2017

The Employment Standards Branch regulates payment of wages. A team from the Employment Standards Branch will be visiting farms in the Okanagan in July and possibly August to provide information and education to growers and workers.

The field team will not require records to be produced during the visit, but will follow-up by mail to request any documents so as not to interfere with growers' seasonal work.

Growers must cooperate with the Employment Standards Branch during these visits - you should examine the identification provided by the team to ensure that they are official government representatives (they will have a business card or other ID).

[Here is a summary of the Employment Standards for Farm Workers](#), including minimum wage and piece rates. If you have questions on what records are required or what format to keep the records, contact the Employment Standards Hotline at 604-513-4604.

Important items:

1. Keep timesheets for each employee. At a minimum, have the employee initial or sign the sheet every week. Daily is better.
2. If paying by piecework, timesheets are still required in order to confirm that the minimum hourly rate for SAWP workers is paid.
3. If recovering a pay advance from a paycheck, Employment Standards wants to verify that the employee agreed to the advance. This means that you will need an "IOU" or note showing the date, amount of the advance, and the employee's signature.
4. Minimum wage is \$10.85 per hour. It is expected to go to \$11.25 per hour on September 15, 2017.
5. Vacation pay is a minimum of 4% of the wage, and for seasonal workers it is normal to add this amount to each pay.
6. Vacation pay is included in piece rates, so does not need to be added if paying by piecework.
7. Pay statements must include:
 - The employer's name and address, and the employee's name.
 - The number of hours worked.

- The employee's wage rate, whether hourly, salary, flat rate, piece rate, or other incentive basis.
- Any money, allowance or other payment the employee is entitled to.
- The amount and purpose of each deduction.
- How the employee's earnings are calculated if the employee is paid other than by the hour or by salary. e.g. 40 buckets at \$1.70 = \$68.00
- The employee's gross and net wages

The Employment Standards Branch does not regulate federal payroll requirements:

- Employee advances should apply all federal deductions: CPP, EI, income tax.
- Social Insurance Number is required for most people. CPP and EI is required for most people (unless very short term).
- Foreign workers require work visas and SIN numbers.