



**SKILLS**  
*Tasmania*

# Agriculture Industry Skills Plan

October 2011 - June 2014



# Table of Contents

---

Foreword	ii
1. Background	1
2. Commitments and implementation	3
3. Strategic context	4
4. Priority workforce planning issues	5
5. Priority workforce skill development issues	7
6. Our skills priorities	8
7. Action plan	11
8. Abbreviations and Definitions	13

## **RDS Partners** *Supporting social, economic and environmental change*

Research, development & extension; NRM, project management, governance and organisation development  
Specialising in agriculture, seafood and not-for-profits

4/29 Elizabeth Street, Hobart, TAS 7000    03 6231 9033    [www.rdspartners.com.au](http://www.rdspartners.com.au)  
ABN 33 125 001 452



## **Disclaimer**

The information contained in this document has been sourced from various consultations, publications and websites.

RDS Partners and its sub-contractors accept no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the information gained from these sources and recommends that readers exercise their own skill and care with respect to its use.

# Foreword

---



**Agriculture** remains one of Tasmania's key economic drivers and a bright light on a challenging horizon.

Agriculture and seafood represent 6 per cent of Tasmania's gross state product. More than 17,000 people are directly employed in farm-related activities.

Applying a basic multiplier, we can see that the farm-dependent economy contributes about \$6 billion (18 per cent) to gross state product and one job in six. In relative terms, agriculture in Tasmania is a more significant

contributor to its home economy than agriculture in any other state.

Tasmania has just 1 per cent of Australia's landmass but 12 per cent of the nation's fresh water. The ratio of arable land to population is the highest in Australia, with agriculture occupying some 24 per cent of the land. We have more usable sunshine than mainland states in the critical ripening periods of summer and autumn.

The long-term outlook for world food security is alarming. It will become even more so as we head towards a predicted world population of 10 billion in 60 years' time. In primary industries we ride the roller coaster of the markets, but producing food is the most basic human requirement.

Our place in the business of feeding the world will become crucial in the years ahead because of the natural advantages we enjoy and because of the skills we develop to make the most of those natural advantages.

Tasmanian agriculture is not the industry it was even 10 years ago. It used to be that we were the jacks-of-all-trades and masters of none. Today farming is specialised, certainly in terms of the crops and commodities that we produce. However, specialisation applies increasingly to many aspects of agriculture: the nature of research we require prior to production; the effort required to operate our businesses efficiently on the land; the professional advice upon which we rely to minimise our costs and maximise our returns; and, importantly also to the areas of representation and advocacy.

It used to be that a farm business would be handed down from father to son. Knowledge would be handed down and farmers' lore insisted that nothing could compete with the traditional way of doing things. Today we look to young farmers, more and more of them women, and rural professionals to show us the way. They are our hope and inspiration.

Those who decide to work on the land embark on a career in an industry that is forever uncertain, ever subject to the vagaries of the climate and the markets. The farmer's course is marked by government regulation and vexed choices about the long-term use of their land. Their decisions impact in the long-term on the task of succession planning and the creation of a viable business legacy that will be attractive to their children or that will become a valuable asset to be sold on.

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA), as the peak farming body in the state, has an important role to play in working with all farmers – and particularly young farmers, seeking direction and fresh ideas from them to drive agriculture forward. Today's young farmers will be farming for the next 40 years. What TFGA does as an association today, what we ask governments to do by way of policy and infrastructure development will have a bearing on how they will conduct their business for those 40 years.

So we are not just talking about farming. Occupations in the industry are diverse and include areas such as: marketing, packaging, value-added processes, scientific research, extension activities, mechanics and building, logistics, and transport and distribution.

New career paths are also opening up in the environment sector: land management and conservation, climate change adaptation, irrigation and water management, and biosecurity. The industry has also expanded to encompass industry representation and policy development, journalism and the media, consulting and analysis, teaching and myriad roles in government agencies.

There is strong demand for a full range of general business skills: business planning, financial management, human resources, occupational health and safety, quality assurance, customer service and administration.

Agriculture attracts a diverse range of people, from school leavers to those seeking a “sea change” or a way to make a contribution to the community.

There are many different points at which to enter agriculture as the career of choice. You might find an entry-level job after leaving school or gain a trade or professional qualification; you might have a degree or postgraduate qualifications; you can even get on-the-job training by your employer. You could be living in the city, or in a regional centre. A skilled worker can make a good living, and salary expectations increase with qualifications and experience. Better still, there are roles for all people - from 16 to 60.

Working in agriculture offers tangible results and immediate satisfaction. It can give you the perfect opportunity to see something that you've created, every day. You can contribute to improving quality of life for all Australians, through producing clean, green and fabulous food. And you can make a real difference.



David Gatenby  
President  
**Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association**



It is my pleasure to introduce Tasmania's Industry Skills Plan for Agriculture.

Agriculture is an important socio-economic contributor to our state, creating jobs and wealth particularly in our regional communities.

The Skills Plan maps out an achievable pathway for the agricultural sectors and enterprises to engage in effective workforce development strategies and workforce planning activities. The joint commitment by the TFGA and Skills Tasmania to the actions in the plan will assist the industry to grow its future workforce.

The economic significance of agriculture, acknowledged in the Tasmanian Economic Development Plan, lies in its potential to grow through increases in scale of operations and investments, and its expansion into niche opportunities.

If this potential is to be tapped, there will be a clear demand for an increasingly skilled workforce: skilled in market development, product design and business management as well the essential professional and operational technical skills required across the agricultural sectors. Widening and deepening the skills base of agricultural workers is critical to the realisation of commercial and social potential of agricultural production and export.

With the Tasmanian forest industry going through structural transformation, farming and agri-business are important in maintaining and creating jobs in our regional communities. This Skills Plan supports long term workforce planning for economic growth and resilient communities.

I encourage all those involved in the agriculture industry sectors – farmers and agri-business leaders; individuals, communities and government to use this plan as mechanism to meet both the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Dr Chrissie Berryman  
General Manager  
**Skills Tasmania**

---



# 1. Background

---

This Skills Plan sets the workforce development and planning priorities for and commitments from the agriculture industry for the next three years. It was developed by the TFGA through consultation across industry during May and June 2011 to determine the industry's priorities for actions to address labour supply and skills shortages. The Plan was funded by Skills Tasmania and coordinated and facilitated by RDS Partners.

The agriculture industry is diverse and characterised by multiple layers of governance and representation that cut across the various interests, including by sector and region. The TFGA has led the development of this Skills Plan as a strategically-focused framework within which various industry associations and bodies can collaborate and work with their members to lead action on the two key issues of labour and skills shortages.

The scope of this Skills Plan covers the breadth and diversity of occupations and careers associated with the industry, including:

- production (e.g. on-farm)
- processing (e.g. beyond farm gate)
- natural resource management (e.g. catchments and regions)
- marketing
- research, development and extension
- governance and policy

While the scope of the Plan focuses on actions that the industry can take most directly, the need to work with stakeholders beyond the farm gate (e.g. processors) is recognised.

The Plan also recognises the significant role that school-level curriculums and programs play in influencing both student perceptions of agriculture and choice of future careers.

The Skills Plan covers major industry sectors, including those identified as priority sectors in the recently released Tasmanian Economic Development Plan:

- vegetables
- cereals and seeds
- fruit
- wine
- meat
- wool
- poppies

The exception is the dairy industry, as a Dairy Industry Skills Plan<sup>1</sup> has recently been developed specifically for this industry.

---

Workforce development encompasses a range of activities to address key questions:

1. Are there sufficient people working in the industry?
2. Does the workforce have the right skills for the future?
3. Is training and development accessible and able to deliver the required skills?

Workforce planning and development is therefore often focused on strategic issues such as ensuring:

- the industry is attractive to workforce participants;
- entry pathways are clear to a career in the industry;

---

<sup>1</sup> The Dairy Industry Skills Plan (2009) can be obtained from DairyTas or Skills Tasmania:  
[http://www.dairytas.com.au/files/dairytas\\_dairy\\_industry\\_skills\\_plan\\_2009.pdf](http://www.dairytas.com.au/files/dairytas_dairy_industry_skills_plan_2009.pdf)  
[http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/providers/industryadvice/training\\_demand\\_profiles](http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/providers/industryadvice/training_demand_profiles)

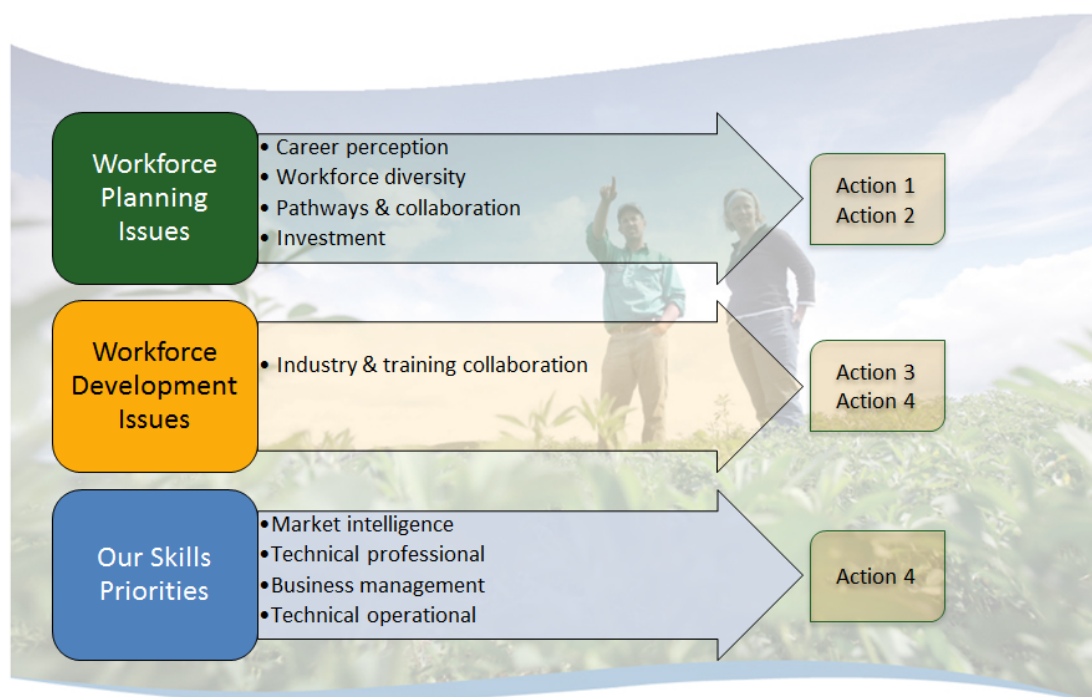
- training is appropriate to future needs and of a high quality.

Consultation with the agriculture industry revealed that there are many opportunities for the industry to address skills and labour force shortages but that some important challenges exist:

- information about opportunities for careers in agriculture is often lacking, unfocused, or not up-to-date regarding current trends;
- access to resources, programs and training systems seems complex and difficult;
- business owners and managers (often farmers) are uncertain about the value for money of training options.

The Action Plan, summarised in Section 7, focuses on improving how the agriculture industry will address workforce development priorities. It will ensure the industry is acting at the strategic level to increase the numbers of people with the right skills entering and staying in the agriculture industry.

The following diagram captures how the actions in this Plan and the key elements of workforce development and planning fit together.



## 2. Commitments and implementation

---

Workforce development and planning is a critical industry issue that is most effective where an industry organises for action at all levels: industry bodies, enterprises and employee.

This Plan initiates steps towards aligning and strengthening a coordinated approach to workforce development and planning in agriculture to build the effectiveness of the diversity of activities already underway across the industry.

### TFGA Commitments

The TFGA recognises that our role as an industry-wide body with interests and complementarities across the industry means we are uniquely placed to champion this first industry-wide strategic level Skills Plan. This creates the opportunity to effectively facilitate strategic action on the key industry development issue of workforce development and training.

TFGA has given a range of specific undertakings summarised in the Action Plan (section 7) that will see us working with industry associations to promote the importance of workforce development and planning across the industry.

Foundational to TFGA's approach will be working collaboratively with industry bodies and associations to reach individual enterprises and growers with tools and skills that will position the industry and individual enterprises to take full advantage of the growth potential of the industry.

### Skills Tasmania Commitments

Skills Tasmania is a key partner in this Industry Skills Plan, consistent with the State Government's approach to working with Tasmanian industries to support workforce development and planning and increase productivity in the state.

Skills Tasmania is investing in industry-led workforce development strategies such as this Plan, and in facilitating skill and workforce development networks.

The Actions in this plan will give focus to that investment in the agriculture industry in Tasmania.

Skills Tasmania commits to working with the TFGA and sectoral industry associations to improve collaboration between the industry, training providers and Skills Tasmania as the State Training Authority.

### Implementation

The TFGA will be responsible for the annual review of this Skills Plan and progress reporting to the industry over the period of the Plan.

As the peak industry association, the TFGA will work collaboratively with key industry associations and individual enterprises to ensure:

- establishment of an Industry Workforce Development Steering Group to oversee and coordinate actions in this Plan (jointly convened with Skills Tasmania); and,
- communication with industry and stakeholders on progress against this Skills Plan.



### 3. Strategic context

---

Throughout 2011, industry leaders have confirmed a strong and positive future for agriculture in Tasmania. The notion of Tasmania as an Australian “food bowl”, central to the engine of Tasmania’s future economy, has taken hold and to realise this potential, the agri-business and education sectors will need to work together to increase investment in workforce skill development.

Globally, there is an increasing demand for food production for an increasing population from less land, less water and increasing energy and input costs. With a long history and expertise in agricultural production and processing, Tasmania has a unique set of industry characteristics and potential for industry growth:

- approximately 1% of Australia’s land mass and 12% of the nation’s fresh water;
- the highest ratio of arable land to population in Australia;
- the most usable sunshine in Australia in the critical ripening periods of summer and autumn; and
- irrigation reform providing expanded access to water, allowing increased productivity and an increased capacity for production of higher value crops.

We also have some of the world’s most skilled farmers and researchers and an island brand founded on high value, high quality produce of excellent nutritional value.

Recent projections of Tasmania’s future climate indicate that while there may be some challenges such as increasing risk of pest and disease incursions, there are potential opportunities for new crops. There may be changes in land use with a shift to higher elevation, and some regions may become more suited to new crops. Furthermore, there is an increasing demand for products that meet the needs of convenience and high nutritional value. This provides a range of opportunities for Tasmanian agriculture industries including diversification, new products, value-adding and new business structures.

The Tasmanian State Government’s Economic Development Plan<sup>2</sup> has a focus on key agricultural sectors and integrates the State’s Innovation, Skills and Infrastructure strategies. In addition, a range of initiatives have emerged to support industry adaption to “the economic, environmental and consumer-driven pressures across the food sector, from the paddock to the plate”:

- “An Innovation Strategy for Tasmania”<sup>3</sup> highlighting the economic growth potential of Tasmanian food industry, including a focus on Tasmania’s high-value agriculture, aquaculture and food advantages. Investment initiatives include the Wealth from Water Program and the Agribusiness Skills Pipeline Program;
- Significant investment in irrigation development in Tasmania<sup>4</sup>;
- The Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy<sup>5</sup> encompassing transport, water, energy and digital infrastructure delivery, including plans to better align infrastructure with land use and regional land use plans;
- The Tasmanian Skills Strategy<sup>6</sup>;
- The AusVeg Industry Development Project; and
- The development of a National Food Plan<sup>7</sup> to examine “food security, affordability, sustainability, productivity and global competitiveness.”

This Skills Plan for Tasmanian Agriculture underpins the realisation of the industry’s growth potential. It will support the industry to work actively towards ensuring the ‘right number of the right people with the right skills’ are working and innovating in all sectors of agriculture.

---

<sup>2</sup> The Economic Development Plan. Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts <http://www.development.tas.gov.au/>

<sup>3</sup> Tasmania’s Innovation Strategy. Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts. <http://www.development.tas.gov.au/>

<sup>4</sup> Tasmanian Irrigation Pty Ltd. <http://www.tasmanianirrigation.com.au/>

<sup>5</sup> Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy. Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources. <http://www.infrastructure.tas.gov.au/>

<sup>6</sup> Tasmanian Skills Strategy. Skills Tasmania. <http://www.skills.tas.gov.au/skillstas/tasskillsstrategy>

<sup>7</sup> National Food Plan. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. <http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/food/national-food-plan>

## 4. Priority workforce planning issues

---

Tasmanian agriculture, like many sectors across Australia, faces dwindling numbers of people at all skill levels. This trend has already started to impact on enterprises, with business owners and managers reporting that they are holding off expansion plans because of concerns about “getting the right people”.

In other industry sectors, there has been a shift to investing in training and mentoring entry level and career change workforce entrants, as a new reality in this emerging commercial environment. The agriculture industry has also indicated it is making this shift.

Skills and workforce planning will be critical to support agricultural enterprises to realise their market potential. The industry consultation showed a strong focus on skills and pathways development. This includes the development of a culture of learning and development within the industry as an objective.

However, analysis of the consultation also revealed that strategies to address retention in the industry, such as industry conditions, an attractive HR culture and competitive wages, appeared to be a low priority for the industry at this time. Raising awareness of the importance of addressing retention strategies will be a critical future issue in the face of continued ageing and shrinking of the Tasmanian labour force and as the trend in workforce shortages continues to challenge the efficiency and productivity of agricultural enterprises and industries.

The following four priorities for workforce development and planning emerged from the consultation phase and are the foundation for the detailed action plan.

### **1. Improve the perception of agriculture as a career option:**

There is widespread and unanimous concern across the industry that agriculture has an image problem. There is agreement that addressing the myths and lack of knowledge about the diversity and rewards of careers in agriculture will require a range of actions across a range of workforce groups; and that these actions will need to continue over time and consistently. There is also scope to work more directly with the many school level promotions and programs (both in Tasmania and nationally) that influence student perceptions of agriculture as a future career.

### **2. Improve relevance and accessibility of training and career pathways into agriculture:**

It is clear from the consultations that, from the industry’s perspective, there is a need for: a) a better alignment of training pathways with industry; and b) improved collaboration between training providers and industry to improve the relevance and accessibility of training options.

### **3. Develop and promote career pathways for the increasing diversity of the workforce:**

Industry members understand the need to attract new sections of the Australian workforce to agriculture, and develop career pathways and conditions that reflect the increasing diversity of the future workforce, in particular:

- i. People making the transition from other industries in Tasmania’s changing economic and industrial makeup;
- ii. People who have been out of work or are returning to work and are retraining for new careers;
- iii. Humanitarian entrants settling into Tasmania, bringing skill sets or retraining for new careers; and,
- iv. Mid-career professionals electing career changes.

The federal government has invested in skills training and job placement for the first three of these groups. A key opportunity exists for members of the agriculture industry to work closely with the programs in place that support these target groups to attract new people to careers in agriculture.

There are three steps that the agricultural industry will need to undertake throughout the next three years to start to turn the curve on workforce trends for agriculture:

- Promote agriculture to this range of workforce entrants;
- Identify ways to improve the effectiveness and reach of current support programs for these groups; and
- Improve the take-up and accessibility of government resources targeted at encouraging diversity of workforce.

#### **4. Continued investment in skills development**

In addition to industry-wide actions, stakeholders identified that key commodity sectors have specific skills needs and workforce development priorities. Commodity associations identified the need for investment in actions that reflect these differences and build on industry-wide actions that address common issues.

The consultation also revealed interest in regional approaches to workforce development and planning for key agricultural regions as a strategic approach to workforce development and planning (e.g. King Island and Circular Head). Such an approach could also be of benefit in other regions where agriculture is a key industry (e.g. north-east Tasmania).

A regional approach to skills development would incorporate national and state skills development and productivity initiatives as well as meeting the needs of Tasmania's agricultural industry.

### **Industry Actions: Addressing workforce planning issues**

Action 1: Engage in an industry-wide promotional campaign.

Action 2: Articulate and promote the diversity of career pathways into agriculture.

(See Section 7 for details on these actions.)

# 5. Priority workforce skill development issues

---

Across the agriculture industry enterprises are facing shortages of the right skills required to sustain profitable operations in a changing environment.

However, it is also clear that finding out about opportunities, the relevance of training to emerging and current environments, and flexibility of training options are key barriers to enterprises investing in training and skills development.

In addition, few of the existing programs are sufficiently integrated to enable best use for the industry.

The industry can engage with the training sector to improve the linkages within and across existing programs to get better value from what is already in place, including:

- Improving access to information on opportunities including training options and subsidies available to support engagement in training;
- Better utilisation of existing communication networks and mechanisms to include key information regarding skills development opportunities;
- Improving relevance and quality of training courses;
- Improving linkages between industry and education and training providers;
- Increasing flexibility of training options; and
- Recognition of short courses within VET course attainment.

In addition, the industry is seeking a focus from the training industry on the skills priorities as identified in this Skills Plan (see Section 4).

## Industry Actions: Addressing workforce skill development issues

Action 3: Investigate funding for further workforce development and planning in agriculture.

Action 4: Improve coordination of training and skills development through a partnership between industry and government.

(See Section 7 for further detail on these actions.)

## 6. Our skills priorities

---

The industry consultation identified clear priorities for skills that will need to be developed in order to realise industry potential over the medium term. Acquiring these priority skills at the enterprise level is the foundation for a viable and prosperous business.<sup>8</sup>

The identified skills priorities span all levels of the agricultural workforce, and include:

- market intelligence
- business management
- technical (professional)
- technical (operational)

Each of these four priorities includes aspects that encompass both on and off-farm agricultural careers.

Importantly, the industry is seeking from the training sector a focus on provision of accessible, quality, and flexible training options to address these priorities.

### Market intelligence

Markets are continuously changing and the position held by Tasmanian agriculture in the value chain is undergoing key transitions (e.g. from commodity-centred to include fresh market, high value, value-added and high nutritional content product). Consumer preferences are also changing in line with demographic changes in both Australian and global populations.

Tasmanian producers and processors have clearly identified the need to increase and develop their skills in getting closer to, and better understanding new buyers and consumers, and to convert market intelligence into new product and processes.

Strong skills in market intelligence and analysis are required for viable enterprises in the future.

### Business management skills

Increasing farm size, continuing corporatisation and the vision for increased value-adding in Tasmanian agriculture will all require improved business management and marketing skills. Business proprietors and managers need to equip themselves with the skills required for making increasingly complex business decisions, including the skills to analyse financial outcomes of decisions such as investment decisions and the timing of these decisions.

It was clear from consultations that farmers understand that these changes require agribusiness owners and managers and food processors to improve their skills in business management practices. The consultations indicated that people with both technical and business skills are needed and that these skills are complementary.

Key business skills needed include:

- market intelligence and consumer trends (as noted above)
- innovation (engaging with research, development and extension)
- business planning (future strategy, budgets and investment priorities)
- market development and product design
- financial management
- human resources management
- succession planning
- marketing and supply chain processes
- technology

---

<sup>8</sup> The **Better Workplace Resources Kit** is a free resource designed to assist Tasmanian small business with contemporary employment and workplace practices. This Kit and other supporting information can be found at <http://www.development.tas.gov.au/betterworkplaces/>

## Technical (professional)

Technical consultants and researchers play an essential role in the agriculture industry, particularly as the industry in Tasmania faces rapid change and new opportunities. The number of people taking up professional careers in research and extension is decreasing, with concerns that this will have a negative impact on the industry's capacity to innovate and develop. People skills, specialist extension skills and business management skills are increasingly important for these positions.

Key technical (professional) skills requirements include:

- rural sociology
- people skills<sup>9</sup>
- farm business management including supply and value chains
- information technology, precision equipment
- agronomy
- irrigation technology and engineering
- quality assurance
- marketing and product development
- natural resource and other environmental management skills
- project management and development
- logistics
- research, development and extension
- financial, economic and investment skills
- policy and analysis skills

The need for "employability skills" was also raised as important, and for professional technical positions the following components were identified:

- team work (including ability to work in multi-disciplinary teams)
- policy and governance in the agriculture industry
- communication skills
- people skills
- innovation
- uptake of new technology

## Technical (operational)

The consultations identified that a shortage of core agricultural skills continues at both entry and operational levels across a range of industry sectors. Further, concerns were expressed about the relevance and quality of training now available in "core skills", which was identified as a key factor contributing to the lack of uptake. Core skills identified were:

- occupational health and safety (OH&S)
- first aid
- all terrain vehicle (ATV)
- chainsaw
- computer and technology skills
- basic tractor
- basic chemical handling
- forklift
- compliance (OH&S, QA, Environmental, and understanding of other relevant legislation)

Again, the issue of "employability skills" was raised in relation to operational level employees. In particular the following skill needs were prioritised:

- literacy and numeracy
- work ethic<sup>10</sup>
- understanding of the basics of farm business models and value and/or supply chains
- awareness of the structure of the agricultural industry
- team skills
- social intelligence and self-management
- lifelong learning

## Raising awareness and action on skills development at the enterprise level

Responsibility for skills development lies primarily at the enterprise level; however industry associations can significantly influence the capacity of individual enterprises to act on skills development. Commitment to

---

<sup>9</sup> Including technology transfer; facilitation; adult learning principles; ability to train and mentor within the industry and enterprise; human resources and industrial relations skills.

<sup>10</sup> Including time management, continual improvement attitude, and lifelong learning attitude.

prioritise and exercise leadership with respect to workforce development and planning is a critical strategic issue for all industry sectors.

By prioritising workforce development as a critical strategic issue, industry associations can raise awareness amongst members, increase access to subsidies and the training industry and work with members to take up enterprise level actions on workforce development and planning.

The following three actions respond to the skills priorities identified through consultation (as discussed above), and identify the dual roles of individual enterprise and industry associations.

<b>Actions that require prioritisation by industry associations</b>		<b>Responsible stakeholder</b>	<b>Industry development responsibility</b>
A	Develop market intelligence skills and improve enterprise access to information through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to and take-up of available market intelligence resources</li> <li>• Increased awareness of and take-up of education and training opportunities available</li> <li>• Better access to available subsidies for development opportunities</li> </ul>	Individual enterprises	TFGA Industry associations and networks Training and education stakeholders DEDTA Enterprise Connect
B	Increase investment in developing business management skills* at all levels within enterprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to and take-up of available business management resources</li> <li>• Increased awareness of and take-up of education and training opportunities available</li> <li>• Better access to available subsidies for development opportunities</li> </ul>	Individual enterprises	TFGA Industry associations and networks Training and education stakeholders
C	Develop priority technical skills* through improvements in the training system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better promotion of training opportunities available</li> <li>• Better alignment of opportunities with industry needs</li> <li>• Identification of emerging skills gaps and skill the training providers.</li> </ul>	Individual enterprises	TFGA Training and education stakeholders

\* As identified in the discussion above.

## Industry actions: addressing the skills priorities

Action 4: Improve coordination of training and skills development through a partnership between industry and government (*as per workforce development Action 4, Section 5 above*).

(Refer also to Section 7)

# 7. Action plan

The TFGA will be responsible for review of this Skills Plan and reporting progress to the industry over the period of the Plan (2011 – 2014).

As the peak industry association, the TFGA will work collaboratively with key industry associations and individual enterprise to ensure:

- establishment of an Industry Workforce Development Steering Group to oversee and coordinate actions in this Plan (jointly convened with Skills Tasmania) including:
  - identifying resources required and costs of implementation of actions; and
  - setting timeframes for actions.
- communication with industry and stakeholders on:
  - skills and workforce development information;
  - training and education programs and opportunities; and
  - progress against the Skills Plan.

#	Action commitments	Responsible stakeholder	Supporting stakeholders
1	Engage in an industry-wide promotional campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote agriculture as a vibrant future career opportunity to identified demographic groups</li> <li>• Promote the key role of agriculture in food production, health and food security</li> <li>• Communicate the business potential, profitability and opportunities for innovation in agriculture</li> <li>• Communicate the diversity of job roles and opportunities, and access to lifelong skills through agriculture.</li> </ul>	TFGA	Industry associations and networks  Training and education stakeholders  Education programs
2	Articulate and promote the diversity of career pathways into agriculture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry associations host clear information and provide accessible entry points and training pathways</li> <li>• Profile stories targeting identified groups: people transitioning from other industries; career changes; people who have been out of work or returning to work; humanitarian entrants</li> <li>• Target the message to workforce entrants through school, schools programs and other educational career pathway planners e.g. Job Services Australia providers and DEEWR</li> <li>• Improve linkages with primary education bodies and school career pathway planners to ensure they are up-to-date with current context and the future of agriculture</li> <li>• Improve awareness of, access to and participation in industry work placements</li> <li>• Investigate innovations in employment and training of seasonal and casual workforce</li> <li>• Improve individual enterprise access to skills and</li> </ul>	TFGA	Industry associations and networks  Training and education stakeholders  Education programs (both national and state)  DEEWR Local Employment Coordinator  Job Services Australia providers



#	Action commitments	Responsible stakeholder	Supporting stakeholders
	training programs and resources to inform, train and support new workforce groups to take up careers in agriculture.		
3	<p>Investigate funding for further workforce development and planning in agriculture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of further industry skills plans for specific sectors in agriculture</li> <li>• Development of regional skills plans (e.g. King Island, Circular Head, the North East)</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the importance of retention strategies and develop a process for developing workforce retention strategies.</li> </ul>	Skills Tasmania	<p>TFGA</p> <p>Industry associations and networks</p> <p>Regional development stakeholders</p>
4	<p>Improve coordination of training and skills development through a partnership between industry and government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an interface resource between industry and the training industry to improve access to and awareness of training opportunities</li> <li>• Develop capacity of the industry to influence the training industry to focus on industry identified skills priorities</li> <li>• Develop a map of training providers and opportunities</li> <li>• Utilise existing industry networks and communication channels to promote opportunities, events and funding.</li> </ul>	<p>Skills Tasmania</p> <p>TFGA</p>	<p>Industry associations and networks</p> <p>Training and education stakeholders.</p> <p>Education programs</p> <p>UTAS</p>

# 8. Abbreviations and Definitions

## Abbreviations

ATV	All terrain vehicle
DEDTA	Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
ILO	Skills Tasmania Industry Liaison Officer
OH&S	Occupational health and safety
QA	Quality assurance
TFGA	Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association
VET	Vocational Education and Training

## Definitions

Core skills	Skills required for people to participate in our society (learning, reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy), as defined in the Australian Core Skills Framework <a href="http://www.deewr.gov.au">www.deewr.gov.au</a>
Core agricultural skills	Entry-level skills required in agriculture, for example OH&S, first aid, ATV licence, chainsaw operation, basic tractor operation and basic chemical handling.
Education programs	Education programs may include, but are not limited to: PICSE (Primary Industry Centre for Science Education); PIEF (Primary Industries Education Foundation); TL3 (Tasmanian Life Long Learning).
Employability skills	Skills required not only to gain employment, but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions. Employability skill groups include: communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning skills and technology skills. <sup>11</sup>
Industry associations and networks	Industry associations and networks may include but are not limited to: Dairy Tas; FGT (Fruit Growers Tasmania); PGT (Poppy Growers Tasmania); TAPG (Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group); TFGA (Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association); WITL (Wine Industry Tasmania Ltd); AIAST (Australian Institute of Agricultural Science & Technology) Tasmanian Branch; PET (Primary Employers Tasmania); APEN (Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc)); and producer networks (e.g. Coal River Products Association; Meander Valley Farmers Network).
Regional development stakeholders	Regional development stakeholders may include, but are not limited to: RDA (Regional Development Australia); NTD (Northern Tasmania Development); Cradle Coast Authority; local development boards; municipal councils; local economic development groups (e.g. Dorset Economic Development Group, Meander Valley Enterprise Centre).
Responsible stakeholder	Those parties who have sufficient influence, resources and commitment to lead a strategy or action.
Supporting stakeholder	Those parties who will have direct impact on a strategy or action and whose engagement will be important for a positive outcome.
Training and education stakeholders	Training and education stakeholders may include but are not limited to: RTOs (Registered Training Organisations); Tasmanian Education Department; Tasmanian Polytechnic; TSI (Tasmanian Skills Institute); UTas (University of Tasmania).
Workforce development	Workforce development is a strategic concept, and can include high level strategic planning across the whole workforce of an industry, the state or the nation. <i>“Workforce development integrates workforce analysis and planning, human resource management and skills development to bridge the gap between current and future workforce needs. It enables employers to attract, retain and develop their workforce and increases the capacity of individuals to participate and be productive in the workforce. It encourages partnerships and a better understanding of the impacts of skills deployment.”</i> <sup>12</sup>
Workforce planning	Workforce planning is a strategic activity at the enterprise level, enabling an enterprise to identify, develop and sustain the workforce skills it needs to achieve its strategic goals.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry & the Business Council of Australia March 2002, Employability Skills for the Future, DEST, Canberra.

<sup>12</sup> The Tasmanian Skills Strategy, p7.