

Considerations for Farms Hosting Temporary Foreign Workers

Temporary Foreign Workers take on much more than just a new occupation when they seek work abroad. It is a commitment that involves many changes and adjustments. These changes, uncertainty, amongst other challenges can impact one's mental health.

Below is a list of possible considerations you can implement to improve employee satisfaction and mental health.

Consideration	Possible Solution(s)
<p>TFW's are leaving their family and friends behind to work abroad.</p> <p>(Their main peer support person(s) could be included in this group of people)</p>	<p>All workers should have access to Wi-fi so they are able to connect with their friends and family back home.</p> <p>Consider the time change. Do they have an opportunity to speak with their loved ones during the run of a day?</p>
<p>If they speak little, to no English</p>	<p>Are there words and phrases you can learn to better connect with your employees?</p> <p>Have a translator app downloaded to use when needed.</p> <p>Is there an opportunity to connect and teach each other words in your languages?</p> <p>Make sure to be patient and talk slowly when communicating.</p>
<p>Social connection</p> <p>(Humans by nature are social and thrive off having a sense of community)</p>	<p>Are there community boards in town? Is there a local Facebook page that residents share events on? Take the time to share these things with your workers. Introduce them to some of the opportunities and networks that exist around/outside of your farm.</p> <p>Host events/dinners to encourage your employees to spend time and get to know one another. (Examples: Corn boil, after work washer toss, etc.)</p>
<p>Culture/ Traditions</p> <p>(Do not go on the assumption that every employee shares the same celebrations as we do in Canada. Be considerate of the possible differences in religion, traditions, and celebrations.)</p>	<p>Are we providing the opportunity for these employees to partake in the celebrations and practices that are important to them?</p> <p>Is there anything we can do to acknowledge their traditions and celebrations? (Showing we care and want them to feel at home.)</p>

<p>Mentor program or buddy system</p> <p>(For farms with both returning and multiple TFW's)</p>	<p>If you have TFW(s) that have been working on the farm for several years now, is it possible for you to promote them to a mentor like position? These employees would be the ones the new TFW's would report to and could conduct wellness check ins.</p> <p>(It may be easier to connect with someone who has been in their shoes/ speaks their language.)</p>
<p>Housing</p>	<p>Living conditions can also contribute to mental health. Are the living conditions you are providing to your TFW's safe, clean, and have enough space for each person to live comfortably?</p>
<p>Routine</p>	<p>Having a routine puts many at ease. When your workers are settling in, consider helping them form a routine and informing them on what to expect. Although not all days look alike when it comes to farming, you can still give them a good sense of the kind of jobs they will be helping with, and what their schedule will be.</p>
<p>Recognition and care</p>	<p>Consider putting together a care package (Examples: "Welcome to Canada", "The tastes of home", "A special treat for you", "Thanks for everything you do".)</p>
<p>Life balance</p>	<p>Encourage workers to make time to do the things they love and other self care activities outside of work. Can you encourage this behaviour by lending them some painting supplies, fishing gear, etc.?</p>