



Getting Ready to Hire for this Season

Presented by:

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Advisors (BBA) Program

Columbia
Basin **trust**

**BASIN
BUSINESS
ADVISORS**

Agenda

- **Pitching Your Farm to Job Seekers**
- **Employment Standards in Agriculture**
- **On-Farm Safety**
- **Wage Planning & Budget for Payroll**
- **Next Up: Working Group 1**

Pitching your Farm to Job Seekers

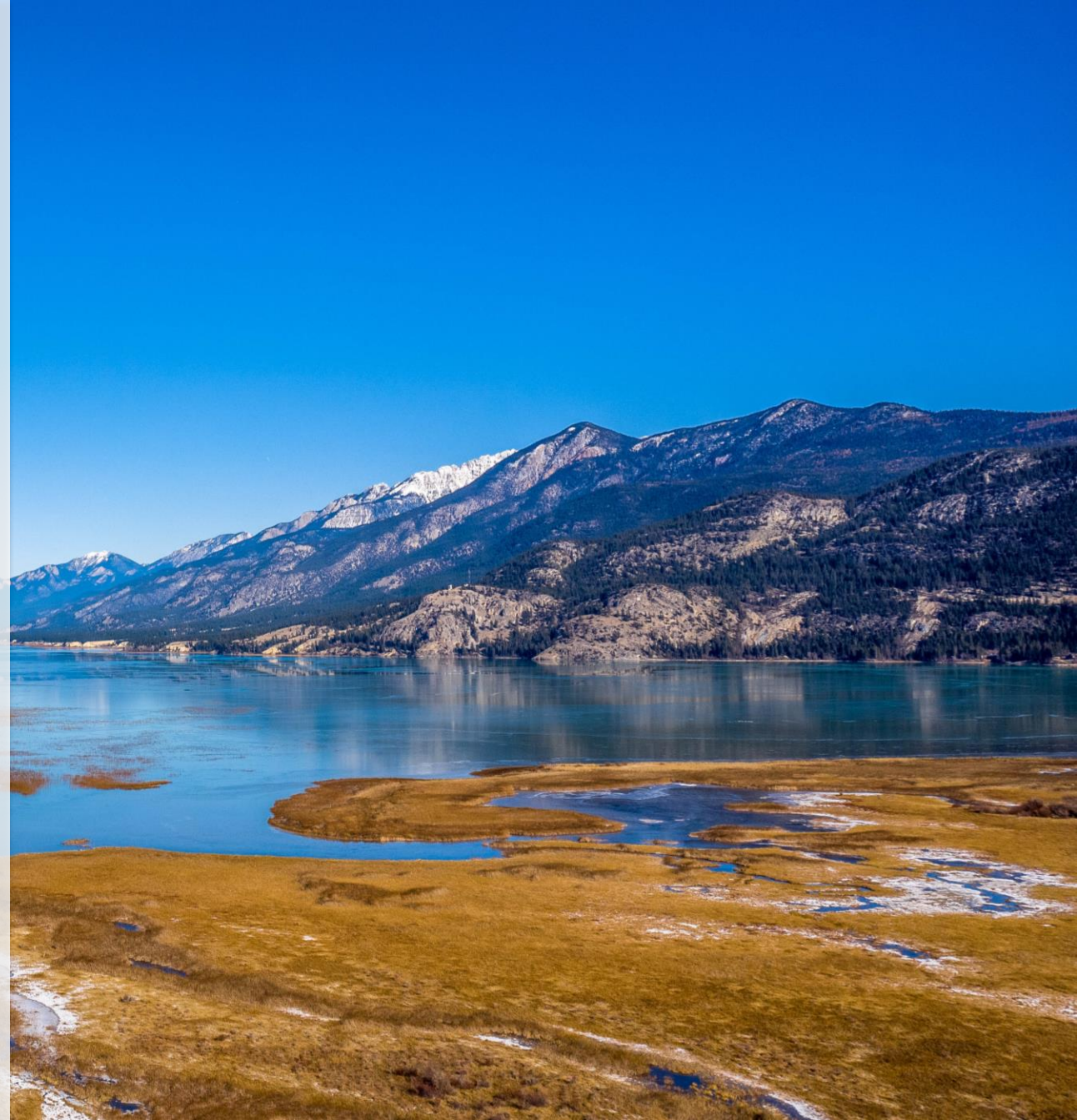


Crafting a Mission and your Company Values

Company Values:

- Cooperation and Collaboration (Team work!),
- Clear Communication,
- Curiosity,
- Can do Attitude,
- Compassion,
- Conservation

Our Mission is to lead innovation and grow the highest quality agricultural products, while respecting the people with whom we interact and the natural environment upon which we depend.





What are your labour needs?

Why are you hiring?

What are your farm goals for this season?

What type of labour do you need?

- Casual?
- Seasonal PT or FT?
- For specific tasks or a wide range of duties?
- Year-round labour?
- Skilled or Supervisory Role?

Assess the farm workplace

- Is your farm where a prospective employee would want to work?
- Think about the employee experience – what skills, training tools and workplace elements or upgrades are needed to generate success?
- **Know yourself.** *Consider your people management skills, time and energy levels.*

Elements of an Attractive Work Environment

- Competitive wages,
- Flexible work schedule,
- Opportunities for training,
- An appealing incentive program,
- Housing options,
- A good work environment,
- Good people to work with,
- Good equipment in safe condition, and
- Future potential - opportunities for growth and responsibility.

Source: Employee Reference Information Handbook, Government of BC



Pitching Your Farm

What's your farm's elevator pitch?

- Introduce your farm and your farm's vision and mission; keep it brief!

Create your Job Description:

Make it stand out!

- Include a photo when possible
- Include a short blurb about farm location and highlight special features
- List non-wage benefits

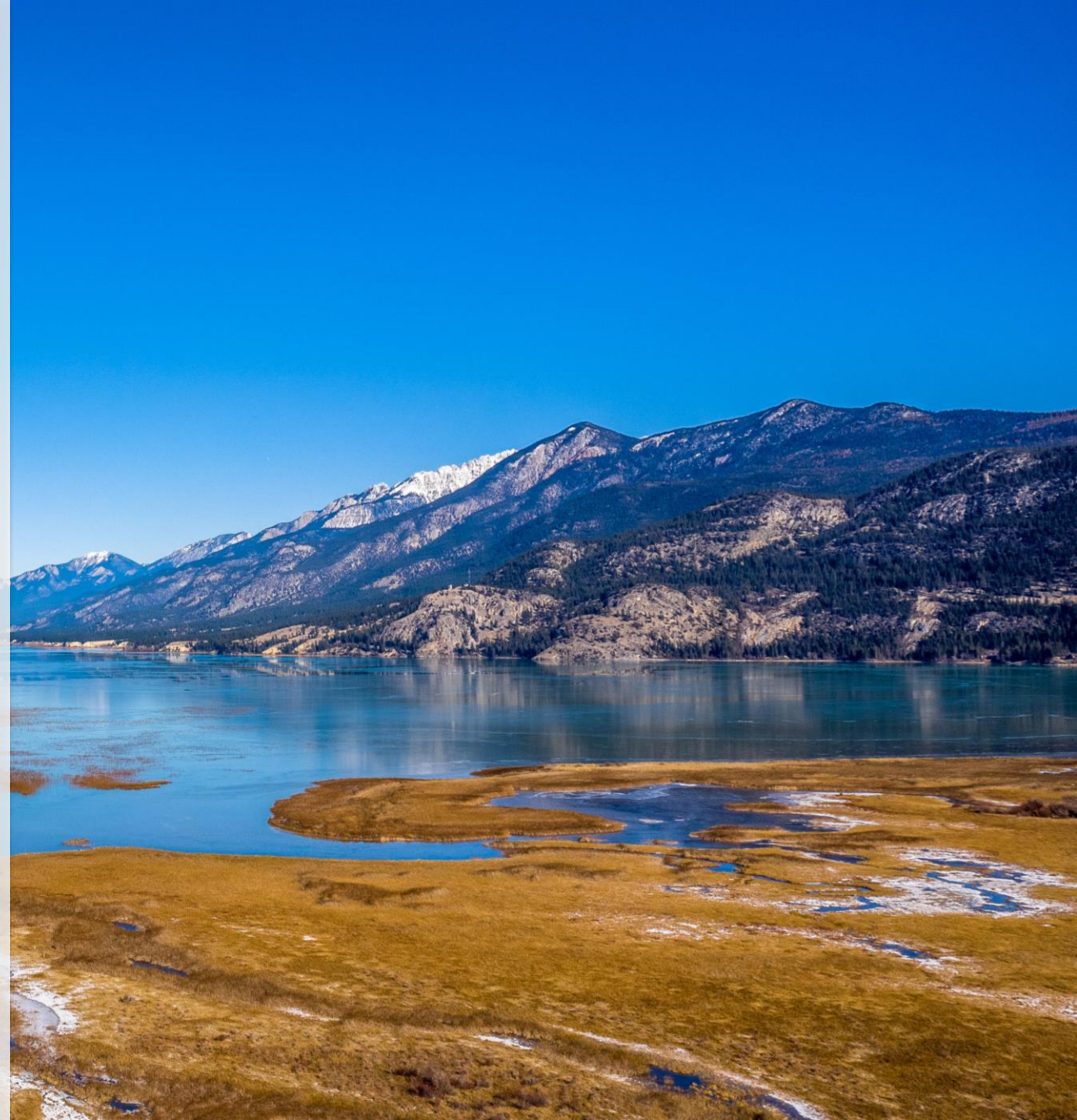
What is your unique selling point as an employer?

Job Description Essentials

- **Name of your Business and Position to be filled**
- **Brief Description of Operation – *link to you farm/business website***
- **Overview of the Role**
 - Required & Preferred Qualifications and Experience
 - Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
 - Key Duties/tasks and Responsibilities
- **Review of Job Terms**
 - Wage by the hour or salary is clearly stated, also list any benefits
 - Term of Employment for seasonal positions
 - Hours per week; state up front if weekend days or irregular hours are required
- **Application Process**
 - Closing Date/Start Date
 - Send resume and cover letter to: ripe@ripevalleyfarm.ca

Reminders

1. Assess your labour needs for the upcoming season.
2. Write your farm Mission Statement.
3. Consider what makes your farm an appealing place to work (Values/Unique Offerings).
4. Create a compelling job description.



Employment Standards in Agriculture



Employment Standards Basics

Employers have legal and moral responsibilities to their employees and must meet minimum employment standards

- *Manage payroll*
- *Maintain hours of work: farm workers are exempt from overtime pay*
- *Schedule employee time off*
- *Have an action plan for what to do when an employee quits, is fired, or laid off*
- *May be required to provide company policies and procedures in an Employee handbook*





Agriculture Specific Standards

- Farm workers that get paid hourly, by salary or by any other method must be paid at least the minimum wage.
- Farm workers do not receive overtime or statutory holiday pay. *When in doubt check with Employment Standards.*
- If a farm uses a farm labour contractor that is not licensed, the farm may become the employer of the farm workers.

Reference source: [Hiring farm workers - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/skills/employment/hiring-farm-workers)

Mandatory Paid Sick Leave in BC

Came into effect January 1, 2022:

- Employees are entitled to **5 paid sick days per calendar year**, *after 90 days of employment*
- Employees entitled to 3 job-protected unpaid sick days under Employment Standards Act
- Replaces paid Covid-19 policy

[Reference Source: Paid sick leave - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment_relations/sick_leave/paid_sick_leave.htm)

Returning Seasonal Employees

- Returning seasonal employees **are also subject to 90 days eligibility rule.**
- The employee must have been fully laid off, not temporarily laid off.
- A Temporary lay off occurs when less or no work is given to the employee – with the plan to return to a regular work schedule.



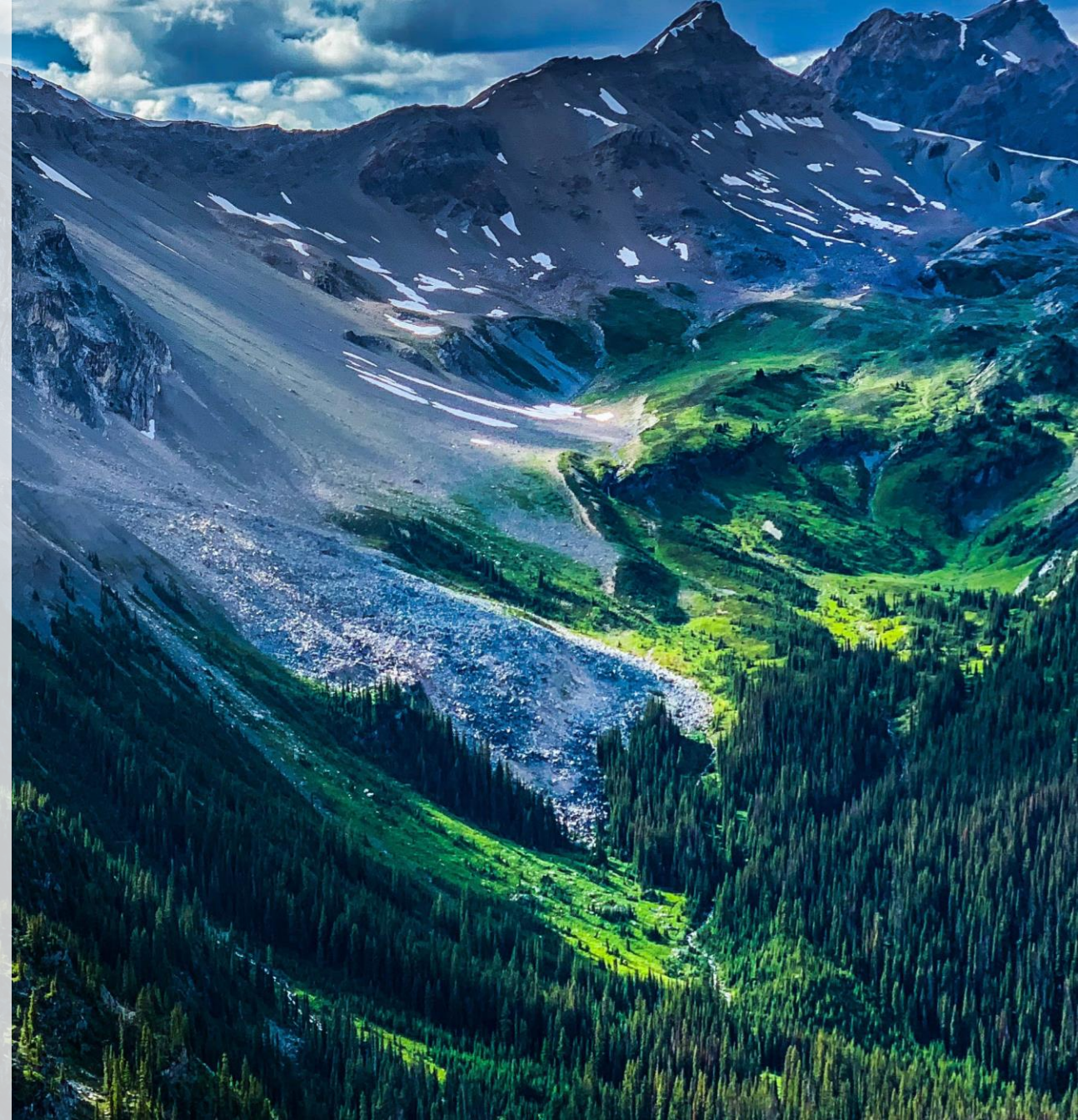
Payroll Basics

- Source Remittance or Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs)
- Contact information, create Personnel file.
- Time Sheets – *what detail do you need?*
- TD-1 and TD-1 BC
- Record of Employment (ROE)
- T4 and T4 Summary

Farm Volunteers and Unpaid Internships

- Is the work socially valuable and done for civic, charitable or humanitarian reasons?
- Is compensation expected?
- Are services offered freely and without coercion?
- Are services different in scope, duties and expectations from other paid positions?
- Is the person working on an as-needed basis?
- What is the nature of the relationship between the volunteer and the enterprise, when viewed as a whole?

Reference Source: [Interns and Volunteers: Beware of “Free” Labour - Kent Employment Law](#)



When in doubt...

- In BC interns are to be paid minimum wage unless internship is required by student's education program
- Interns should not be assigned dangerous or high-risk tasks
- Contact insurance provider to confirm coverage of liability for interns on and off farm

Refer to:

[Federal labour standards for interns and student interns - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-standards/section-14)

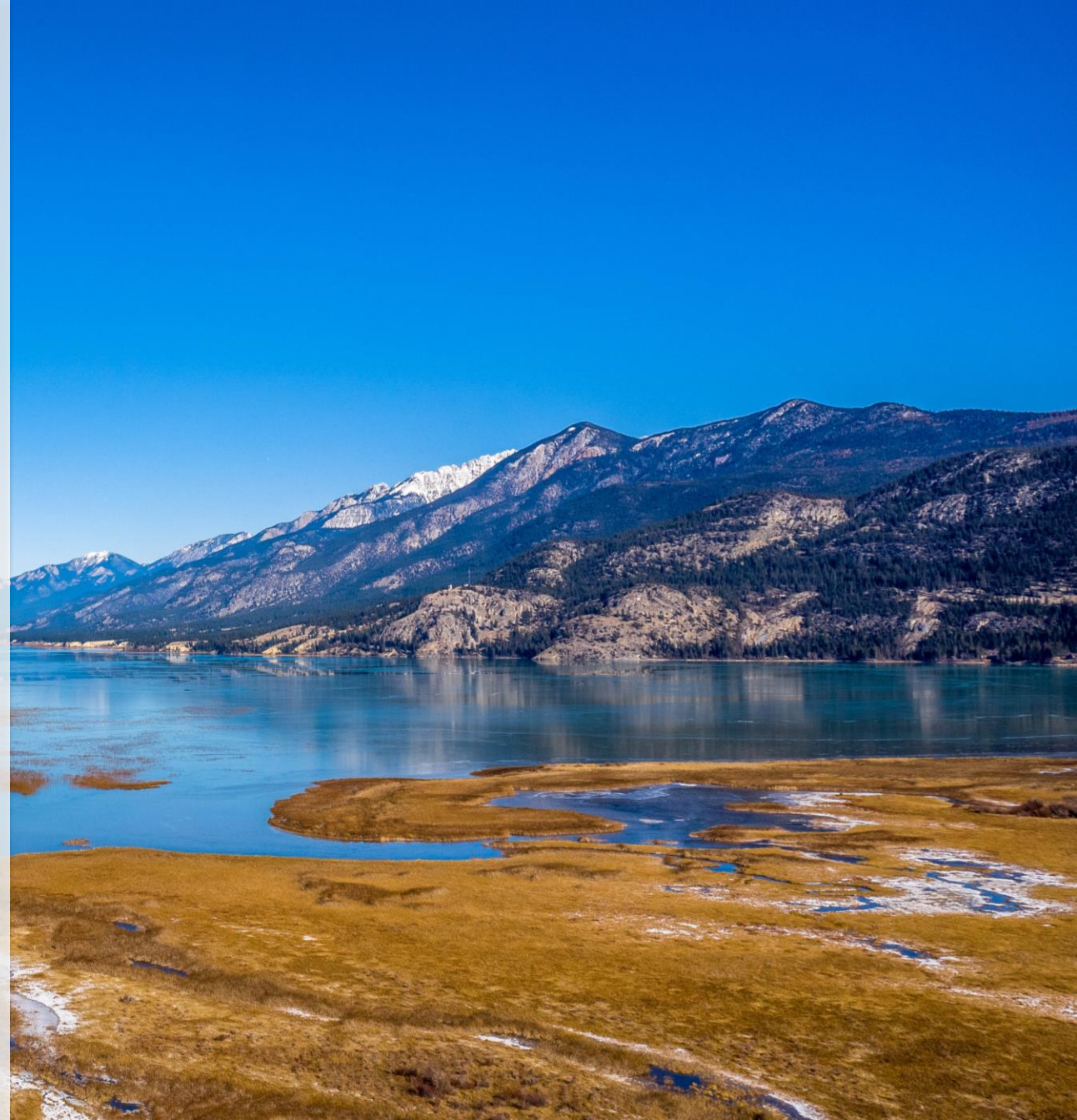
OR Contact the Employment Standards Branch

- Verbal or written contracts are void if in contravention of the law.
Contact an employment lawyer for legal obligations

Reminders



1. Register with CRA and have a payroll system in place.
2. Familiarize yourself with Employment Standards regulations and documents.
3. Create or Adopt an Employee Handbook for on-farm policies and procedures.
4. Prepare required employment forms/packages.





On-Farm Safety

Employer Responsibilities

Pre-Season

- Establish a valid occupational health and safety program.
- Train your employees to do their work safely and provide proper supervision. Provide supervisors with the necessary support and training to carry out health and safety responsibilities.
- Ensure adequate first aid equipment, supplies, and trained/certified attendants are on site to handle injuries.

Source: [Roles, rights & responsibilities - WorkSafeBC](#)



Employer Responsibilities

- Regularly inspect your workplace to make sure everything is working properly.
- Fix problems reported by workers.
- Transport injured workers to the nearest location for medical treatment.
- Report all injuries that required medical attention to WorkSafeBC.
- Investigate incidents where workers are injured or equipment is damaged.
- Submit the necessary forms to WorkSafeBC.

Source: [Roles, rights & responsibilities - WorkSafeBC](#)

Understand what other documentation may be needed on your farm

- Documented training sessions (e.g. date, who attended, trainer's name and topics covered).
- Workplace and equipment inspections (e.g. date, what was inspected, assessment and corrective actions).
- Input/Application records.
- Bullying and Harassment reported by workers.

Documentation may be requested by WCB anytime during on-farm inspections

Guidelines for Health and Safety Planning

Worker count is based on maximum at any point in the season & sets requirements:

Large = 20 + workers require a formal written program & health and safety committee.

Medium = 10 or less are required to have a safety program. Not formal, written.

- 10- 19 workers must also have a designated worker H&S representative

Small= less than 10 workers involve everyone in regular health and safety meetings.

Source: Guide to Developing a BC Agriculture Employee Handbook, Province of BC



WorkSafe BC – Ag Sector Resources

- Resources outlining Employer health and safety responsibilities on the job site
- Training and Education Employers and Employees
- Registration with WCB is required for employers (unless exempt)
- WCB Annual Payroll Report and Payment is remitted annually - **due Feb 28** for previous year

A man with brown hair and a beard, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and blue jeans, stands in a greenhouse. He is holding several small black pots containing green seedlings. The greenhouse has a curved metal frame and translucent plastic covering. In the background, there is a blue plastic tub and some soil on the ground.

AgSafe BC

- Comprehensive Ag safety training
- Training available in video and written forms with multiple language options
- On farm training options available – connect with local Rep
- Employer and employee training
- Resources: signage, templates and forms can be found online or ordered from AgSafe website
- Optional Certificate of Recognition (COR) incentive program rewarding employers for effective Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Farm Risk Management

- Risk management looks different for each type of agricultural operation
- Assess farm risks and select appropriate safety regime
- Use safety plans and measures to mitigate risk
- Farm safety applies to all visitors including customers, friends and family
- Connect with the BBA for more risk management tools.



Reminders

1. Register with WCB
2. Identify safety risks on your farm
3. List specific items/equipment that require attention and training
4. Develop a farm safety program using guidance from WCB and AgSafe
5. Include farm safety training in worker orientation
6. Plan for regular safety meetings or check-ins as needed



A man with brown hair and a beard, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and blue jeans, stands in a greenhouse. He is holding a black plastic seedling tray with several green plants. The greenhouse has a curved metal frame and translucent plastic covering. In the background, there is a blue plastic tub and some soil on the ground.

Wage Planning and Budgets

Why do you need a plan?

- To determine if you can afford to pay for each position you would like to hire
- To have anticipated labour expense by month included in annual cash flow projections
- To be prepared for payroll expenses in weeks before you are revenue generating
- To make informed decisions about necessary yields and sales targets to be profitable after labour expense



Wage Planning Considerations

Specifics on wages & wage subsidies in Session 2!

- How many hours/week and weeks of the year needed?
- What is your overall budget for payroll?
- Plan your payroll along with your seasonal cash flow!
- Type of Wage – hourly vs. piece rate

Piece Rate Wages for Agricultural Work

- Calculation for piece rate work: **Piece rate x volume or weight picked**
- Employers must post notices on-site that state what the piece rate is for each crop, size of the picking containers and volume/weight needed to fill a container.
- Vacation pay (4%) is **included** in piece rates, except for daffodils.
- Picking cards - record total volume or weight harvested.
- If an employee's wage is below minimum wage for the hours they worked, the employer must top up their payment so that it's equal to minimum wage.

Piece Rate Wages for Agricultural Work

Crop	Rate effective January 1, 2024
Apples	\$23.14 a bin (27.1 ft ³ / 0.767 m ³)
Apricots	\$26.63 a 1/2 bin (13.7 ft ³ / 0.388 m ³)
Beans	\$0.317 a pound / \$0.699 a kg
Blueberries	\$0.537 a pound / \$1.184 a kg
Brussels sprouts	\$0.221 a pound / \$0.487 a kg
Cherries	\$0.305 a pound / \$0.672 a kg
Grapes	\$24.60 a 1/2 bin (13.7 ft ³ / 0.388 m ³)
Mushrooms	\$0.319 a pound / \$0.703 a kg
Peaches	\$24.60 a 1/2 bin (12.6 ft ³ / 0.357 m ³)
Pears	\$26.06 a bin (27.1 ft ³ / 0.767 m ³)
Peas	\$0.396 a pound / \$0.873 a kg
Prune plums	\$26.06 a 1/2 bin (13.7 ft ³ / 0.388 m ³)
Raspberries	\$0.483 a pound / \$1.065 a kg
Strawberries	\$0.466 a pound / \$1.027 a kg
Daffodils*	\$0.186 a bunch (10 stems)

*This rate does not include vacation pay

- Piece rates have increased with BC's average annual inflation rate.
- New rates came into effect on January 1, 2024 (a 6.9% increase).
- On December 31, 2024, the minimum wage for farm workers employed on a piece work basis will change. For details, visit <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/forms-resources/igm/esr-part-4-section-18#2025-rates>

Mandatory Employment Related Costs

Employers are required by law to pay mandatory employment related costs (MERCs). In BC these include:

- Canada Pension Plan (CPP)
- Employment Insurance (EI)
- Vacation Pay
- WorkSafe BC (WCB)
- Employer Health Tax (annual payroll larger than \$500K)

Payroll Planning Calculator

		Hourly Wage	# weeks	Hours/Week	
Wages	\$ 15,120.00	\$ 18.00	28	30	
Vacation Pay	\$ 604.80	4%			
WCB	\$ 302.40	2%			
CPP	\$ 907.20	6%			
EI	\$ 302.40	2%			
TOTAL WAGE	\$ 17,236.80				
		MERCs Approximately 14% increase to hourly wage			
	2024 WCB Rates	1.70	Vegetables		
		1.76	Orchard		
		1.44	Apiary		
		2.97	Ranch		

Current BC Minimum Wage is \$17.40 per hour (as of June 1, 2024).

*Min. Wage increased by 3.8% (\$0.65) from \$16.75 to \$17.40 on June 1, 2024

* Min. Wage increased by 6.9 per cent (\$1.10) from \$15.65 on June 1, 2023.

WCB rates vary by industry and year to year.

Employers in good standing can be eligible for discounted rates.



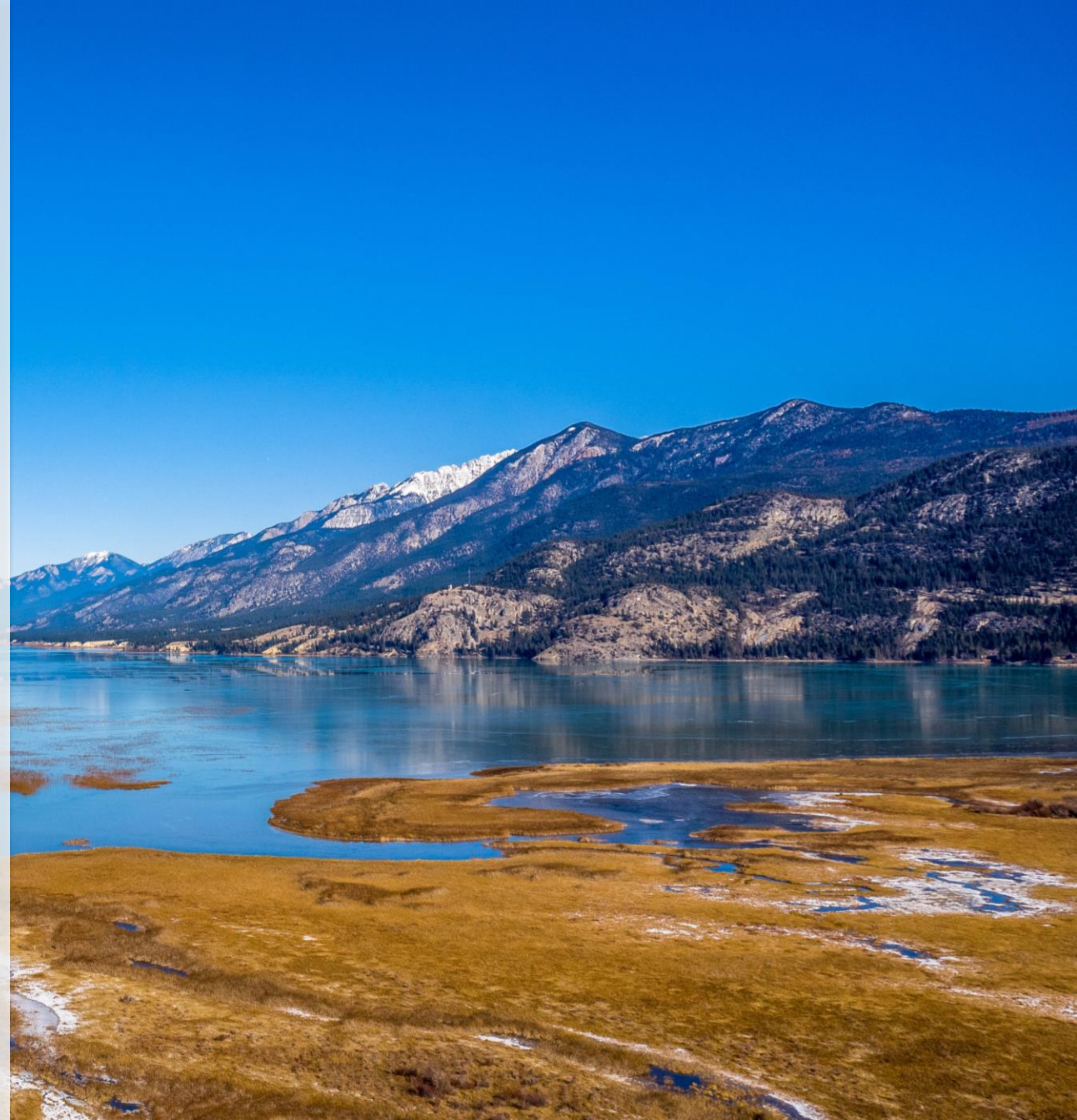
Farm Budget Essentials

- Plan your cash flow for projected monthly expenses
- Calculate and budget for payroll expense
- Plan for payroll remittances
- MERCs usually remitted by 15th of each month

Reminders



1. Plan the number of employees, hours and weeks of work needed for the season.
2. Calculate average weekly and total payroll for the season.
3. Assess your cash flow to budget for payroll.



Action Items

*In preparation for Working Group 1
on November 12th at 9 a.m. (PT)*

Preview the BBA Working Group 1
Activities on the private page.



Ripe Valley Farm, Field Lead (example)



Join our incredible team! Ripe Valley Farm is a 5-acre vegetable farm with a farm stand and 100 member CSA.

Our mission is to produce high quality vegetables using ecologically sound farming practices while providing living wages for employees and giving back to our community with the Food Boxes for Families program.

We are located within 30 minutes of the mountains, river, and lakes with recreational opportunities in your time off.

Ripe Valley Farm, Field Lead (example)

Desired Qualities:

- At least 3-years hands on experience on a vegetable farm
- Previous experience managing field staff
- Basic tractor and implement operation skills
- A positive attitude and ability to work efficiently
- Post secondary degree or diploma in agriculture preferred

Job Details

- Starts April 14 ends Oct 27, 40 hours/week
- Wage range \$20 - \$25
- Extended health benefits
- Free produce for personal/family use

Main Duties

- Organize and direct field staff to ensure seeding, planting, cultivation, irrigation, harvest and timelines are met.
- Transplanting, mechanical weeding, operation of handheld power tools
- Maintain careful records
- Create a positive and efficient work environment

To Apply

Send a resume and cover letter describing your interest in the job and relevant skills and experience that match the job description to ripe@ripevalleyfarm.ca

Apply by March 1, 2024



Thank you!

www.bbaprogram.ca