



Ontario Agri-Careers Support Initiative

# 3 Practical Industry Solutions to the Employment Challenge in Food and Beverage Processing



The shortage of workers in the food and beverage processing industry is similar to what is being experienced across other manufacturing sectors in Canada.

In 2022, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters surveyed 563 manufacturers from across the country on their labour shortage and the impact to the Canadian economy. For the second consecutive year, more than 80% of manufacturers reported facing labour and skills shortages, up sharply from 60% in 2020 and 39% in 2016. And in the last year alone, labour and skills shortages in the manufacturing sector cost the Canadian economy almost \$13 billion, a consequence of lost sales, penalties for late delivery, and postponed or cancelled investment projects.

As companies are dealing with broader societal and industry-based challenges related to labour shortages, they are also recognizing their own unique situations and possible solutions. As part the Ontario Agri-Careers Support Initiative (OACSI), [Maple Leaf Foods](#), [Burnac Produce](#) and [Bimbo Canada](#) developed solutions that are shareable and applicable to other businesses.

## Helping jobseekers explore opportunities in food and beverage processing

Jobs That Feed was the brainchild of Burnac Produce to address their immediate job vacancies. The initiative was not just a job board available to other businesses, but a place for jobseekers to explore the industry and the types of careers available through video and information also shared via social media and radio. An impressive 519 people applied for jobs during the initial four week period.

In addition to the job board functionality, Jobs That Feed offers a behavioural assessment tool to help jobseekers and employers understand the best job fit based on personal traits and aptitudes.

Looking to enhance your recruitment efforts? Check out [Jobs That Feed](#).

## Perfecting in-person job fairs

Perfecting the in-person job fair was the focus for Maple Leaf Foods. The company found that job fairs organized in partnership with communities, external providers (i.e., Indeed) or organized onsite or locally all proved successful. In fact, Maple Leaf Foods experienced a significant and sustained increase in hiring across the company due to a series of tactics including career fairs from 98 individuals to 146 during the project timeline.

Ready to undertake your own company job fair? Check out the Employer Guide to Hosting a Job Fair — Everything You Need To Know.

## Engaging temporary foreign workers to address immediate labour needs

Understanding the details of engaging temporary foreign workers and the approach to collaborating with the local community was the priority for Bimbo Canada. While other solutions to the current labour crisis can require large amounts of capital and research, temporary foreign workers provide, in some cases, quicker and substantial relief. While there is a cost to hiring a temporary foreign worker, the analysis suggests that the benefit outweighs the cost.

Are you thinking about hiring temporary foreign workers but aren't sure how the program works? Check out the TFW Employer Guide developed by Food and Beverage Ontario in conjunction with Bimbo Canada.

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