

# The Agri-Food Pilot

*This fact sheet explains the law in general. It is not intended as legal advice for your particular problem. Because each person's situation is different, you may need to seek legal advice. The information in this fact sheet was reviewed by a lawyer, and was last updated on 16 February 2021.*

The Agri-Food Pilot is a pilot program that provides a pathway for permanent residency (PR) for certain agricultural workers. This fact sheet explains who can apply under the program, what the eligibility requirements are, and how to add a family member to your application

## What is the Agri-Food Pilot?

The Agri-Food Pilot is a pathway for PR. Currently, the program is only a 3-year pilot. Applications are accepted as of 15 May 2020 until 14 May 2023. Once an application is submitted and approved, the applicant becomes a permanent resident in Canada.

## Who can apply under the program for permanent residence?

Migrant workers who meet the program's eligibility requirements may apply.

## What are the eligibility requirements to apply for PR under the program?

The program provides a pathway for PR for experienced and non-seasonal agricultural workers in specific industries and occupations.

You must satisfy the following requirements:

1. You work in an **eligible industry**;
2. You work in an **eligible occupation**;
3. You have the required **work experience**;
4. You have a **job offer** that meets the requirements;
5. You meet the **language requirements**;
6. You meet the **educational requirements**;
7. You have enough **settlement funds** (if applicable); and
8. You meet the **temporary residence status requirement** (if applying within Canada).

Each of these requirements is explained in detail below. We recommend that you seek legal advice before submitting an application if you are not sure whether your situation satisfies one or more of the requirements.

### 1. You work in an eligible industry

This means that you must be working for an employer in Canada in one of the following industries:

- NAICS - 1114 Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production
- NAICS - 1121 Cattle ranching and farming
- NAICS - 1122 Hog and pig farming
- NAICS - 1123 Poultry and egg production
- NAICS - 1124 Sheep and goat farming
- NAICS - 1129 Other animal production
- NAICS - 3116 Meat product manufacturing

Note: NAICS stands for North American Industry Classification System.

## 2. You work in an eligible occupation

This means that you must be working in Canada in one of the following occupations:

- NOC - 8252 Agricultural service contractors, farm supervisors and specialized livestock workers
- NOC – 8431 General farm workers
- NOC – 8611 Harvesting labourers
- NOC – 6331 Butchers, meat cutters and fishmongers – retail and wholesale
- NOC – 9462 Industrial butchers and meat cutters, poultry preparers and related workers
- NOC – 9617 Labourers in food and beverage processing

Note: NOC stands for National Occupation Classification. For more information on descriptions of each occupation, visit: <https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/Home/Welcome/7e1084caca6d498899a49011a997fee5?GoCTemplateCulture=en-CA>. You can find the descriptions of an occupation by searching for its corresponding NOC code.

## 3. You have the required work experience

This means that you must have at least 12 months (1,560 hours) of the required work experience in the past three years. Your work experience must be:

- Authorized;
- Not self-employed;
- Paid;
- Full-time (at least 30 hours per week);
- Non-seasonal;
  - This means that participants in the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) cannot directly apply through the pilot program.
- In one or more of eligible industries (NAIC) and occupations (NOC); and
- In the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

If you have switched between jobs, any work experience can still be included in counting the 12 months, as long as the work is within the eligible industries and occupations. However, any work that is done on an open work permit, or any unauthorized work, will not count towards the 12-month requirement. Paid vacation up to two weeks within a one-year period, whether inside or outside Canada, can count as work towards the 12-month requirement.

## 4. You have a job offer that meets the requirements

You must have a valid job offer at the time you apply for PR under the program. The job offer must meet the following requirements:

- In one or more of eligible occupations (NOC) and industries (NAIC);
- Full-time (at least 30 hours per week);
- Non-seasonal;
- Indeterminate (no end date);
- Genuine;
- Outside of Quebec; and
- For a wage at or above the prevailing wage.

Please note that the prevailing wage is the median wage (rather than the minimum wage) of the occupation in your region. Median wages by occupation can be searched at: <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>.

## 5. You meet the language requirements

This means that you must meet the **Canadian Language Benchmark level 4** in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English or French. To meet this requirement, you will need to schedule a language test with an agency approved by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and pay the fee. For English, you may take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or the CELPIP (Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program). For French, you may take Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC). The test results must be less than two years old when you apply.

## 6. You meet the educational requirements

This means that you must have completed secondary education. To satisfy the requirement, you must either complete high school in Canada, or the equivalent from outside Canada.

If you received secondary education from outside Canada, you will need to provide an educational credential assessment (ECA) report from a designated organization or professional body. The ECA report must:

- be less than 5 years old on the date of your application; and
- have been issued on or after the date the organization was designated.

For more information on getting your ECA, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/agri-food-pilot/education-assessed-how.html>

## 7. You have enough settlement funds (if applicable)

This requirement does not apply if you are already working in Canada at the time you apply. If you are not working in Canada at the time you apply, you will need to prove that you have enough funds to settle in Canada with your family. The funds must be yours and cannot be borrowed from another person.

Your family includes everyone in your family, even if they are Canadian citizens or not coming to Canada with you. The amount of funds needed varies based on the number of family members. To calculate the number of family members, you should include the following individuals:

- yourself;
- your spouse or common-law partner;
- your dependent children; and
- your spouse's dependent children.

For more information on settlement funds, including how much funds are required for your specific family size, visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/agri-food-pilot/proof-funds.html>.

## 8. You meet the temporary residence status requirement (if applying within Canada).

If applying from within Canada, you must maintain your temporary resident status during the processing of the application. For more information on temporary resident status, see our fact sheet on *Loss of Status and Options for Renewing or Restoring your Status during COVID-19*.

### Can I add family members to my application?

Yes. If you are eligible to apply under the program, you can add family members as dependents to your application, including your spouse or common-law partner, your dependent children and your spouse or common law partner's dependent children. Please note that you must disclose all dependents in your application, even if they are not accompanying you to Canada.

### Where can I find more information about the program?

For more information about the program, including the application process, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/agri-food-immigration-pilot/about.html>.