



# News Release

For immediate release

## Minister Bibeau launches program to create 2,000 youth jobs in the agriculture sector

May 5, 2021 – Ottawa, Ontario – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Today, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, and the Member of Parliament for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, Francis Drouin, hosted a virtual event to announce an investment of up to \$21.4 million to enhance the Youth Employment and Skills Program (YESP) and fund about 2,000 jobs for youth in the agriculture sector. They were joined by Chair of the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum Justin Williams, and representatives from three past program participants: Delta, British Columbia's Crophorne Farm Ltd.; Coaldale, Alberta's Kasko Cattle Co.; and St-Eugène, Ontario's Les Fruits du Poirier.

The YESP aims to support agri-food employers and provide young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 30 with job experience in agriculture that could lead to a career working in the sector. In 2020, the Government of Canada invested \$9.2 million for the YESP, to fund nearly 1,000 jobs. Today's investment more than doubles last year's allocation.

Eligible applicants include producers, agri-businesses, industry associations, provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous organizations and research facilities. Support can cover the period from April 15, 2021 to March 31, 2022. Applications for the YESP are now being accepted and forms are available through the [webpage](#). For more information, please contact [aafc.yesp-pecj.aac@canada.ca](mailto:aafc.yesp-pecj.aac@canada.ca), or call: 1-866-452-5558.

Young people were among the hardest and fastest hit when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, experiencing more job losses than any other age demographic. Meanwhile, the agriculture sector has been facing increased difficulty accessing labour since the beginning of the pandemic. By promoting youth employment in the agriculture sector, the Government of Canada is ensuring a resilient food supply chain and keeping the sector strong.

### Quotes

"By doubling our youth jobs program, we are providing thousands of young people with rewarding experiences that could lead to a career in agriculture. In a time of labor shortages, this enhancement will also allow many employers to fill vacant positions."

- *The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food*

"Now more than ever, young Canadians need support to launch their careers. Through the Youth Employment and Skills Program, the Government of Canada is helping more youth discover the limitless potential of careers in agriculture, while also enhancing the sector, which is vitally important to rural communities across Canada."

- *Francis Drouin, Member of Parliament for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell*

"The Youth Employment and Skills Program helps alleviate some of the pressing labour issues in Canadian agriculture, while also giving youths exposure to our industry when that exposure is becoming increasingly rare. We hope programs such as this can help foster the next generation of Canadian farmers and get the younger generations talking about Canadian agriculture as a career prospect."

- *Justin Williams, Chair, Canadian Young Farmers' Forum*



"The YESP program has been an easy program to use. We've appreciated that it helped us hire a young person and expose them to some of the opportunities in the field of agriculture."

- *Ryan Kasko, General Manager, Kasko Cattle Co Ltd.*

"For the past two years, we have participated in the Youth Employment and Skills Program. The program is quite well suited to reality and not too complicated. It helped us get two young people with an interest in farming."

- *Robert Poirier, Owner, Les fruits du Poirier*

## Quick Facts

- Budget 2021 proposes to invest \$5.7 billion over the next five years to help young Canadians—including from low-income households—pursue and complete their education, to provide additional relief from student loan debt for young graduates, and to create new job skills development and work opportunities.
- The Youth Employment and Skills Program (YESP) offers employers who hire youth for agricultural jobs support for up to 50% of wages, to a maximum of \$14,000. Indigenous applicants and employers who hire a youth facing barriers are eligible to receive up to 80% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum of \$14,000.
- YESP offers 100% of costs for relocation, to a maximum of \$5,000, if the youth must relocate for the position.
- YESP is part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS), an Employment and Social Development Canada-led horizontal initiative involving 11 federal departments and agencies.

## Additional Links

- [AAFC Youth Employment and Skills Program](#)
- [Youth Employment and Skills Strategy \(YESS\) - Employment and Social Development Canada](#)

## Contacts

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