

Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Summary



13,942
workers

11.4% of total*



2,536
businesses

10.8% of total*



2
education programs

0.3% of total*



8,320
available jobs

10.2% of total*

**Refers to total across six priority sectors (manufacturing; health care; professional, scientific, and technical; tourism; agriculture and agri-food; and construction).*

Key Takeaways

Agriculture and agri-food in Simcoe County accounted for a workforce of 13,942 (2021), with workers concentrated in grocery stores; greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production; and specialty food stores.^{1,2} The number of workers in this sector increased by 612 between 2015-21, but the number of businesses decreased by 202.^{3,4,5} Losses were larger in some industries, such as food merchant wholesalers, which lost nearly 900 workers over this period.^{6,7,8}

The majority of organizations in this industry expected growth in their operations. According to survey results, 66.7 per cent of participants expected to expand their business operations over the next five years (2023-28).

Education and training programs were under-represented in this sector, with only two programs (0.3%) offered. Both programs were micro-credentials. Businesses in this sector

reported that they would need new entry-level or front-line workers and would also need skilled trades apprentices, experiential learning students, skilled trades journeypersons, and college and university graduates.⁹

Agriculture and agri-food will require access to industry-specific needs such as new entry-level or front-line workers, skilled trades apprentices, and experiential learning students. Of those surveyed in this sector, 63.6 per cent stated needing additional entry-level or front-line workers. Other needs were highlighted by survey respondents, all of which had response rates of 45.5 per cent; respondents said they would require skilled trades apprentices; experiential learning students such as co-op students, interns, and project-based placements; new skilled trades journeypersons; and new college or university graduates.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Recommendations

Recommendation	Potential Implementation Partners (Examples)		Implementation Complexity		
	Lead	Support	Low	Medium	High
Work with education and training institutions to proactively target organizations in the sector to connect them with work-integrated learning opportunities including in applied research and capstone courses with industry in the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-secondary institutions County of Simcoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local associations such as the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture and Holland Marsh Grower’s Association 	✓		
Work with education and training institutions to explore augmenting programming options to strengthen and expand diploma-, certificate-, and micro-credential level education opportunities (e.g., programs at Durham College , University of Guelph , and Fleming College , and other post-secondary institutions).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local associations such as the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture and Holland Marsh Grower’s Association Post-secondary institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of Simcoe 			✓

Source: Stiletto Analysis

1 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 2 Stiletto Analysis, 2022
 3 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 4 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 5 Stiletto Analysis, 2022
 6 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 7 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 8 Stiletto Analysis, 2022
 9 Stiletto Analysis, 2022

About the Study
 The 2022 County of Simcoe Labour Market Research Study examined workforce, industry / business, and education assets in the six priority sectors of manufacturing; agriculture and agri-food; tourism; professional, scientific, and technical services; health care; and construction. The study identified how the County of Simcoe could build on strengths and harness opportunities to strengthen its labour market and promote long-term prosperity.