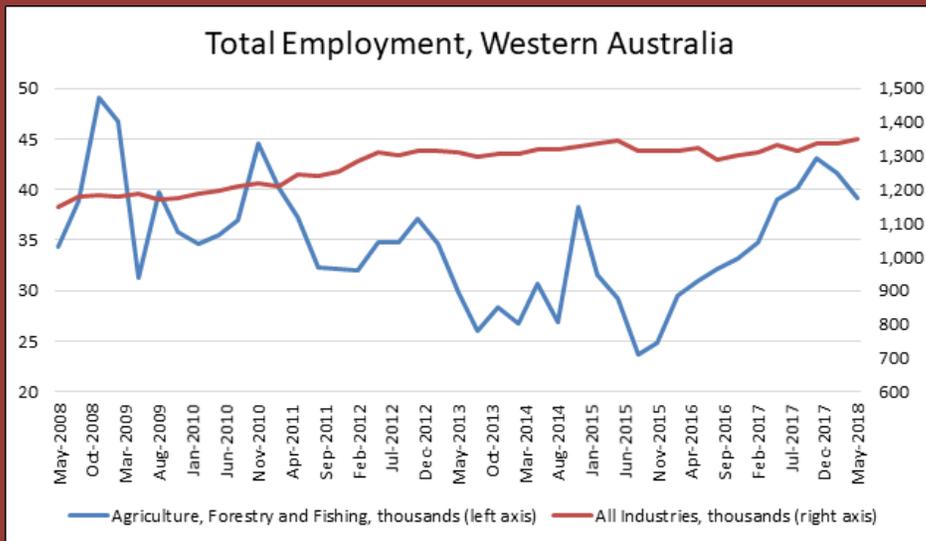


Agriculture Jobs Growing



The number of people working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry has grown at about the same rate as the total Western Australian workforce, over the past ten years.

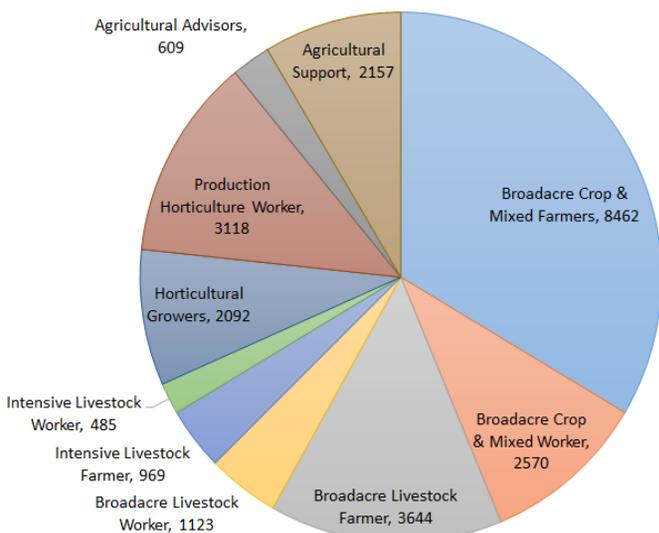
However employment levels have been quite volatile. The rise in employment from mid-2015 might reflect the increased availability of labour following the tailing off of resource construction projects.

Western Australia is an important producer and supplier of safe, high-quality agriculture products such as grains, meat, fruit and vegetables, dairy products, processed foods and live animals. The international market is significant with up to 80% of agricultural production exported.

Around 53% of persons employed in the agricultural industry are owners or family workers, not employees.

What Are The Jobs?

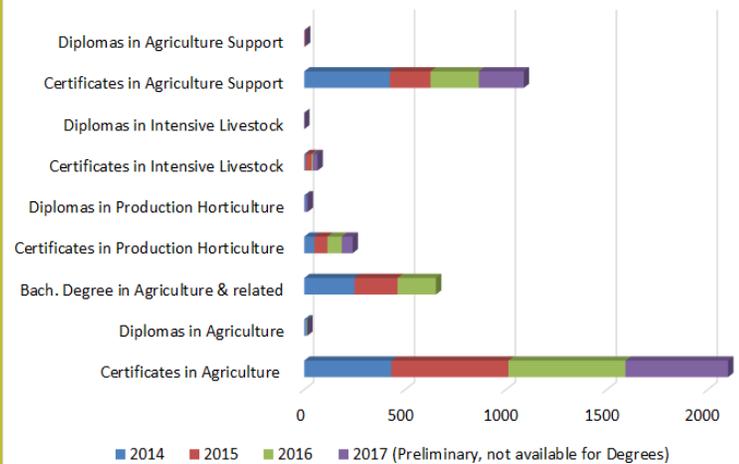
The 2016 ABS Census provides the main occupations of WA residents. This graph shows broad occupational groupings related to agriculture.



Education and Training

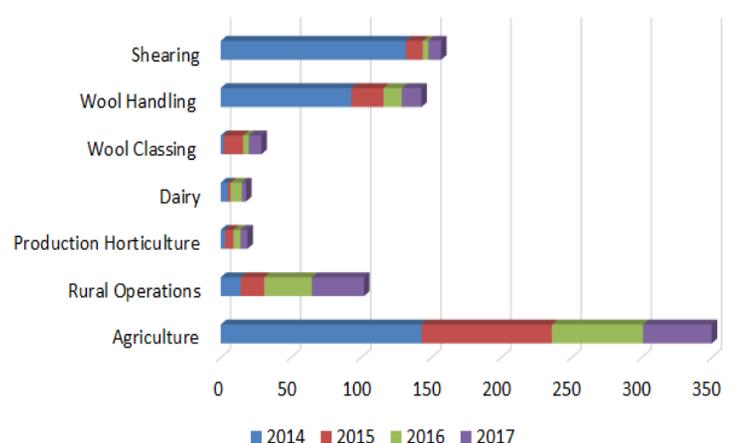
37% of Western Australians whose main employment is in agriculture or agricultural services have post schooling, formal education/training (13% degree or higher, 8% Diploma and 16% Cert III/IV). This compares to 60% for the whole workforce (27%, 11% and 22%).

Course Completions, WA



The number of education and training course completions has been reasonably consistent over the past four years. A high proportion (59%) of these VET learners are school students.

Traineeship Completions, WA



The number of Traineeship completions has decreased markedly since 2014. Reductions in funding for existing employees were not a significant driver of this decline.

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS AND WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation predicted that global food production needs to increase by at least 70% by 2050 and the National Farmers' Federation has recently laid down a bold vision to grow the sector by almost 70 per cent in the coming 12 years to achieve \$100 billion in farm gate output. Most of this growth can only be achieved through significant productivity improvements.

Productivity demands continue to drive increased corporatisation of farming, which often entails the consolidation of smaller and/or family farms, the need for greater capital investment and demand for employees with higher skill levels. Agrifood businesses are also becoming increasingly integrated along the supply chain of producers, processors, distributors and sales.

New and improved technologies, such as precision farming, drones, GPS, big data and analytics, and the 'internet of things', are improving agricultural productivity. However, a lack of access to the internet, for online information and data, in some rural and regional areas can be an impediment to growth.

Changing consumer expectations are impacting on agrifood production and processing. These include concerns the quality and integrity of food production systems, food provenance and impacts on the environment. There is also a movement to niche production of differentiated and value-added products that command higher prices in the global market. The export of live animals continues to be a sensitive issue within the community. Genetic modification is one of the main technologies being adopted for improving crop production, although some debate regarding potential health and environmental impacts continues.

Broader issues such as biosecurity; environmental sustainability; water management and irrigation design; soil management; carbon farming and climate change continue to impact on agricultural production. Strong growth is forecast for intensive horticulture, such as vertical farming and protected cropping.

Labour shortages continue to affect some agricultural employers. Although the industry is strongly supported by Agricultural Colleges, Muresk Institute and Higher Education, it generally lacks a post-school training culture and is seen to offer limited career pathways. Businesses report that: employment opportunities in agriculture are often not seen as attractive or competitive; the use of seasonal labour is high; and sourcing experienced technical and supervisory employees is particularly difficult.

Increasing complexity of farming operations and access to global markets require an increased level of technological and business sophistication. A lack of skilled staff is commonly cited by the sector as a barrier to innovation. Employers are increasingly seeking higher-level skills. Overall there is likely to be a long term decrease in employment for low skilled labour and a sustained increase in demand for technically, professionally and business skilled labour.

Industry Workforce Development Priorities include increasing and promoting the:

- . Overall education and skill level of the sector, especially concerning new technologies, new agricultural techniques (eg intensive farming) and agribusiness skills (eg operating in global markets, business management, applied research and product development, marketing, packaging and brand management, supply chain management and traceability, and food handling/processing);
- . Uptake of higher level educational qualifications such as Certificate IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma and at Higher Education levels;
- . Availability and uptake of accredited training through short courses and skills sets by people already working in the Agrifood industries;
- . Entry of young people into the sector by increasing participation in entry level training by school students, school leavers and others through the development of VET delivered to school student programs, encouraging pre-apprenticeship training, and encouraging industry take-up of Traineeships;
- . Quality of training delivery to addresses current industry needs, especially with regard to new technologies, online availability, work integrated learning opportunities, and regional access; and
- . Availability of valued jobs and careers through publicising exemplars and role models, encouraging career pathways and planning, and facilitating movement into the industry from other industries.