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Harvesting a solution:

Temporary foreign workers key to mitigating agricultural labour shortages

June 2024

Executive summary

Goal

This report aims to provide an overview of the importance of temporary foreign workers (TFWs) for small and medium-sized agri-businesses in Canada, and related recommendations, as the program is under review.

Facts



- **Agri-businesses face persistent labour shortages.** In 2022, they amounted to **\$2.8 billion**¹ in lost contracts or sales, thereby limiting sales and production growth. Agri-businesses have been and remain unable to find local candidates for the work on offer, and the problem is not going away. Estimates suggest there will be 100,000 vacant jobs² in the agriculture sector by 2030.



- Foreign workers have been instrumental in bridging labour shortages. In 2023, **3 in 10 agri-businesses hired foreign workers** (51% in Quebec) and 26%³ indicated that they plan to hire more TFWs in 2024.



- **Agri-businesses highly value TFWs.** Overall, 92% reported that TFWs helped them meet demand for their products or services and 89% stated that they helped them stay in business.⁴



- The Seasonal Agriculture Worker Program (SAWP) - Mexico and Caribbean countries (55%) and the Agricultural Stream (43%) are the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) streams that are most used by agri-businesses in Canada.⁵



- Many employers see TFWs come back every year. Although there may be isolated bad actors that should not be tolerated, the majority of agri-businesses strive to foster a safe and healthy work environment and provide the prevailing wage rate, housing, transportation, and health care (Table 1). Overall, **94% of TFWs' employers have been found to be compliant with the program's requirement.**⁶

Recommendations

To improve the efficiency of the TFWP, CFIB recommends:

- **Reducing red tape** associated with hiring TFWs, notably by streamlining the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) process.
- Allowing for the **sharing or transferring foreign workers** as an option (e.g., multi-employer work permit).
- **Rebasing the housing deduction** to reflect market value and costs and allowing for annual indexation. It is currently \$30, which does not reflect real housing prices.
- Allowing employers to **match the wages offered by another employer** with an LMIA in the same area to strengthen retention and curtail poaching. Provisions under the Employer Compliance Regime currently limit this.
- **Reimbursing** the employer for the costs associated with the administration and enforcement of the compliance inspection, should the LMIA not be issued.
- Introducing a **mechanism to compensate initial costs** covered by the employer whose employee has been poached and **streamlining access** to new TFWs.

Agriculture, a sector vital to the Canadian economy and mostly made up of SMEs

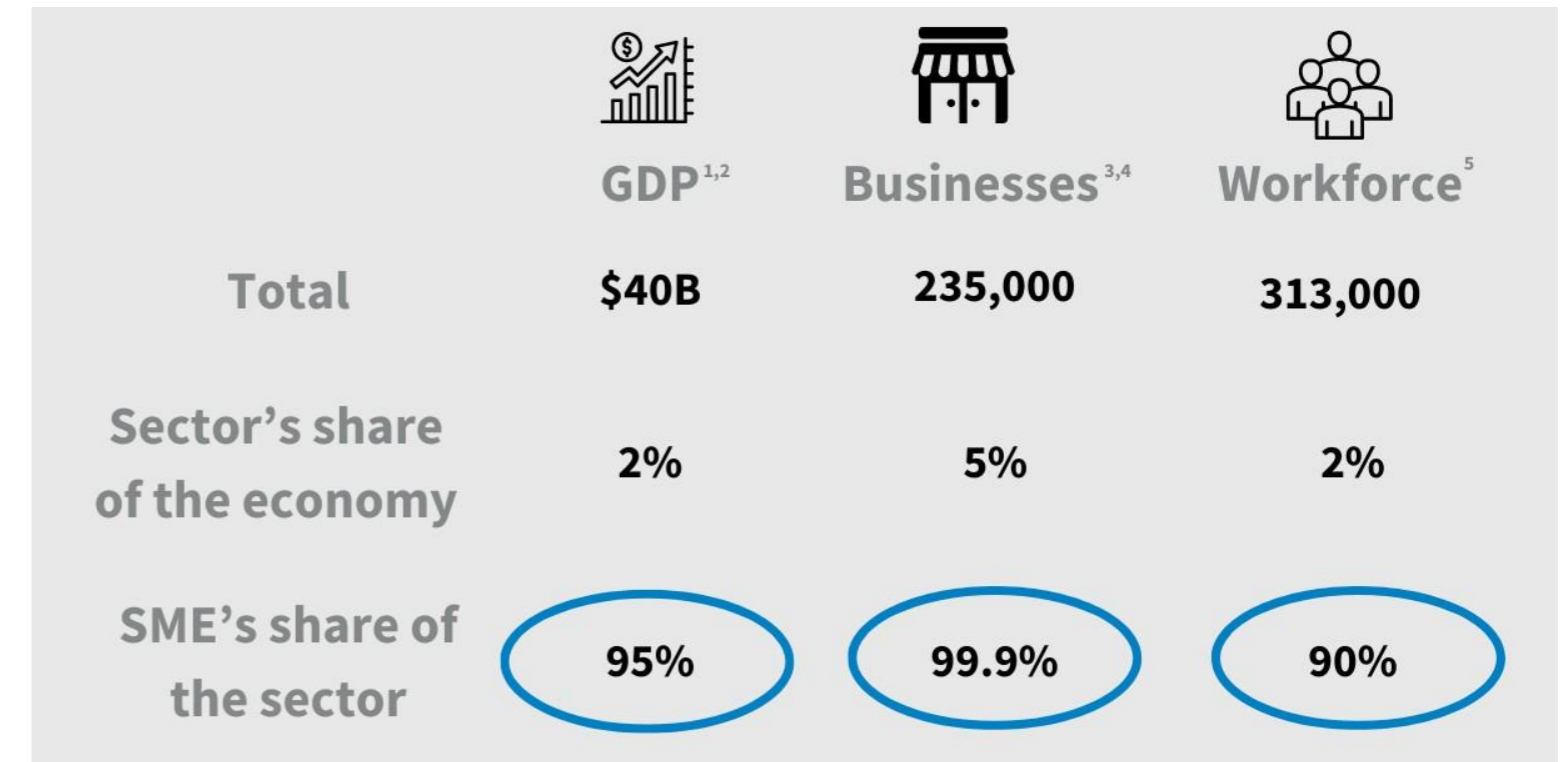
The agriculture sector is fundamental to the Canadian economy and plays a crucial role in meeting both local and global food demands.

In 2023, the sector contributed \$40 billion to the GDP, representing 2% of the national total, and employed over 300,000 individuals (Figure 1). Renowned for its diverse, high-quality products, Canada is a leading global exporter with \$92.8 billion in agricultural and processed food exports.⁷

Small and mid-sized businesses (SMEs, 1 to 499 employees) account for about 95% of the agricultural sector GDP, make up the majority of businesses (99.9%), and employ 90% of the workforce in that sector.

It is therefore important to hear what agri-businesses have to say, understand their experiences and challenges, and support them in their mission of feeding Canada and the world.

Figure 1: The agriculture sector in Canada in 2023



Sources:

1. Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0434-03 Gross domestic product \(GDP\) at basic prices, by industry, annual average \(x 1,000,000\)](#)
2. Innovation, Science and Econ. Dev. Canada, Key Small Business Statistics 2023. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/sme-research-statistics/sites/default/files/documents/2023_ksbs.pdf
3. Statistics Canada. [Table 33-10-0806-01 Canadian Business Counts, with employees, December 2023](#)
4. Statistics Canada. [Table 33-10-0807-01 Canadian Business Counts, without employees, December 2023](#)
5. Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey data, custom tabulations.

Persistent labour shortages threaten the agriculture sector's vitality

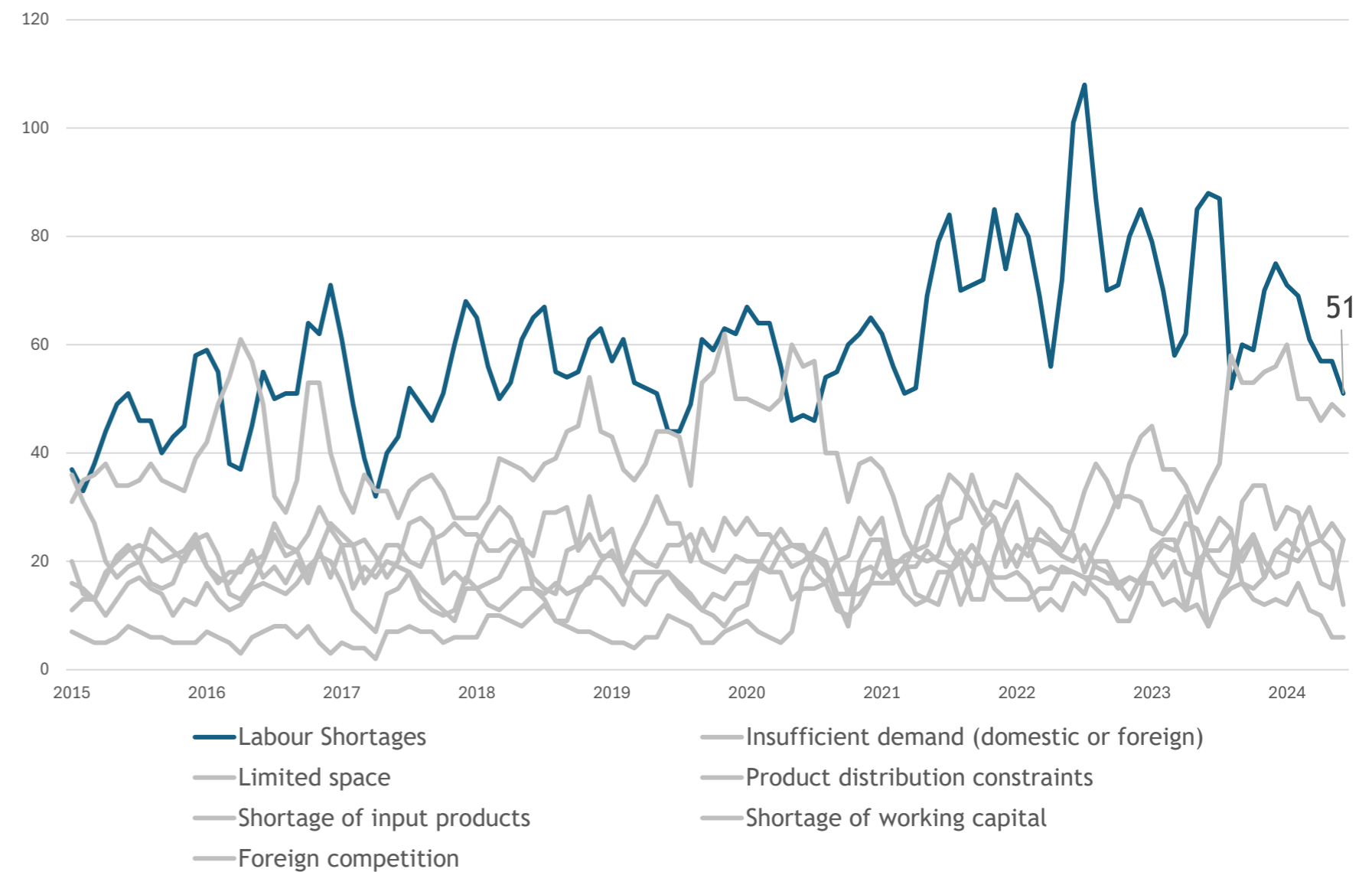
For the last decade, agri-businesses have consistently ranked labour shortages as one of their top limitations on sales or production growth⁸ (see Figure 2). This is not without consequence.

In 2022, 1 in 2 SMEs in the agriculture sector were unable to hire all the workers they needed to run their current operations.⁹ These labour shortages translated into staggering economic losses, amounting to as much as \$38 billion in lost/postponed contracts or sales in the economy, with \$2.8 billion¹⁰ in the agriculture sector alone. This figure represents foregone revenue that would have helped agri-businesses pay off debt and invest in their business and/or their employees.

Further, employers have had to invest more of their own time in business operations due to labour shortages, resulting in an adverse effect on their work-life balance. In 2022, agri-business owners worked an average of 58 hours per week,¹¹ far from the typical 35-hour workweek.

Despite efforts to advertise job positions, agri-businesses have noticed a hesitancy among Canadian workers to apply, citing recruitment challenges such as perceived lack of interest (38%), inconvenient and remote place of work (6%), and concerns about physical demands (5%).¹² Finding local candidates is proving a challenge for Canadian agri-businesses.

Figure 2: Shortages of skilled, unskilled, and semi-skilled labour as limitations on sales or production growth in the agriculture sector, 2015-2024 (% response)



Source: CFIB, Monthly Business Barometer, Limitations on sales or production growth, Agriculture sector, 2015-2024.

Note: 'Shortage of skilled labour' and 'Shortage of unskilled, semi-skilled labour' have been combined into 'labour shortages.'

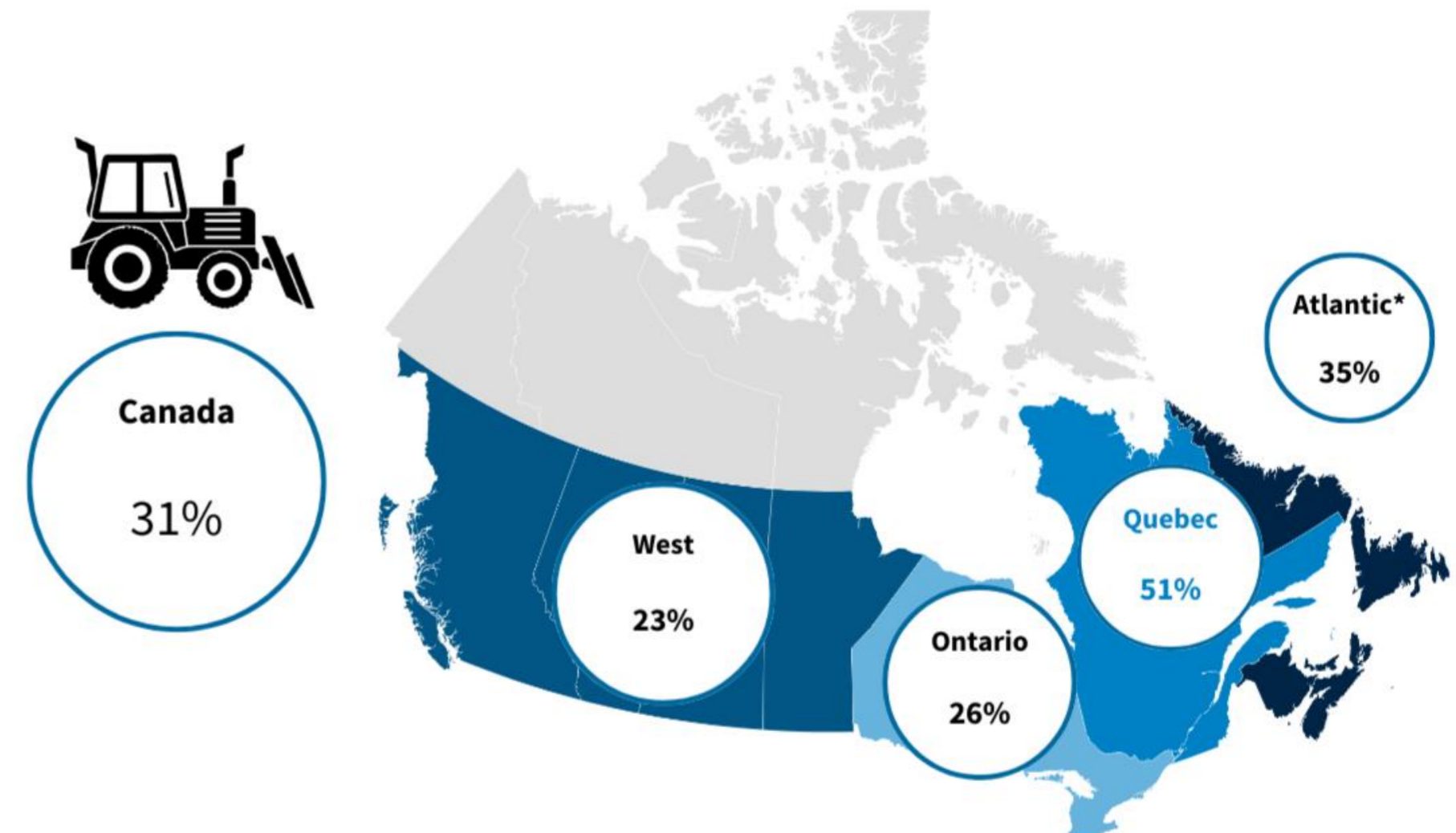
To continue to operate, agri-businesses seek out foreign workers...

Foreign workers significantly enhance the dynamism and sustainability of small businesses in the agricultural industry. In 2023, 3 in 10 agri-businesses hired foreign workers. Notably, in **Quebec**, foreign workers represent an even more significant part of the sector, with **1 in 2** small businesses having employed them (Figure 3).

As an important sector in the Canadian economy, the inability of agri-businesses to secure local workers is concerning. The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council estimates that there will be more than 100,000 vacant jobs in the agriculture sector by 2030.¹³ This is not surprising given the already limited availability of domestic labour in agriculture, which will only diminish with Canada's population ageing.¹⁴

The limited domestic labour supply in the sector gives agri-businesses little choice but to turn to workers from outside Canada. Foreign workers play a key role in narrowing the domestic labour gap, thereby having a direct impact on food security, sustainability and the economic development of the sector.¹⁵

Figure 3: Percentage of agri-businesses that have hired a foreign worker in the past 12 months, by province



Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 544.

Question: In the last 12 months, has your agri-business hired foreign worker(s)? (Select one).

Notes: 1. Respondents that selected 'No,' 'Don't know/Unsure,' and 'Not applicable' are not displayed.

2. * Small sample size (<40).

3. 'West' refers to British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan; 'Atlantic' refers to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island.

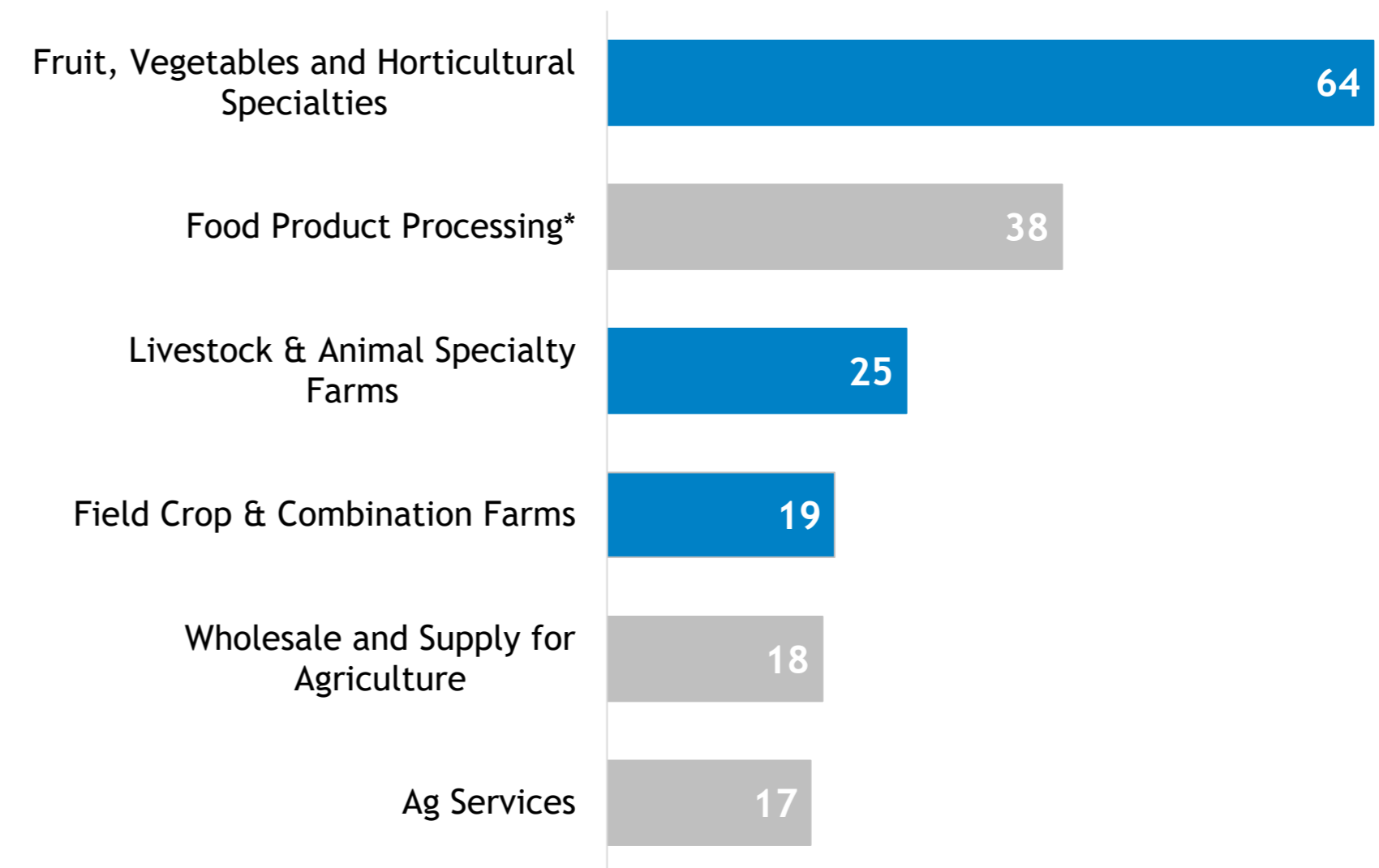
... especially in sectors more dependent on manual labour

Sub-sectors characterized by labour-intensive occupations,¹⁶ such as fruit, vegetables, and horticultural specialties (64%), livestock and animal specialty farms (25%) and field crop and combination farms (19%), have shown a higher tendency to employ foreign workers within the past 12 months (Figure 4). This trend can be attributed to the intricate demands of these sectors, where manual labour is essential for tasks ranging from harvesting to the care of livestock.

Despite rapid technological advancements, automation is not always suitable for certain types of agriculture or cultivation, which remain reliant on human labour. Approximately one-third (32%) of these businesses cite incompatibility with their business model as a primary barrier to automation.¹⁷ Furthermore, although automation will relieve the need for some human labour, it requires a skilled workforce to operate and maintain and comes at a high cost (i.e., a fully automated John Deere tractor can cost up to half a million US dollars¹⁸).

If agri-businesses are unable to automate and face labour shortages, they turn to TFWs.

Figure 4: Percentage of agri-businesses that have hired a foreign worker in the past 12 months, by agricultural sub-sector (% response)



Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 544.

Question: In the last 12 months, has your agri-business hired foreign worker(s)? (Select one).

Notes: 1. Respondents that selected 'Don't know/Unsure' and 'Not applicable' are not displayed.

2. * Small sample size (<40).

The TFWP: One program, four different ways to recruit foreign workers

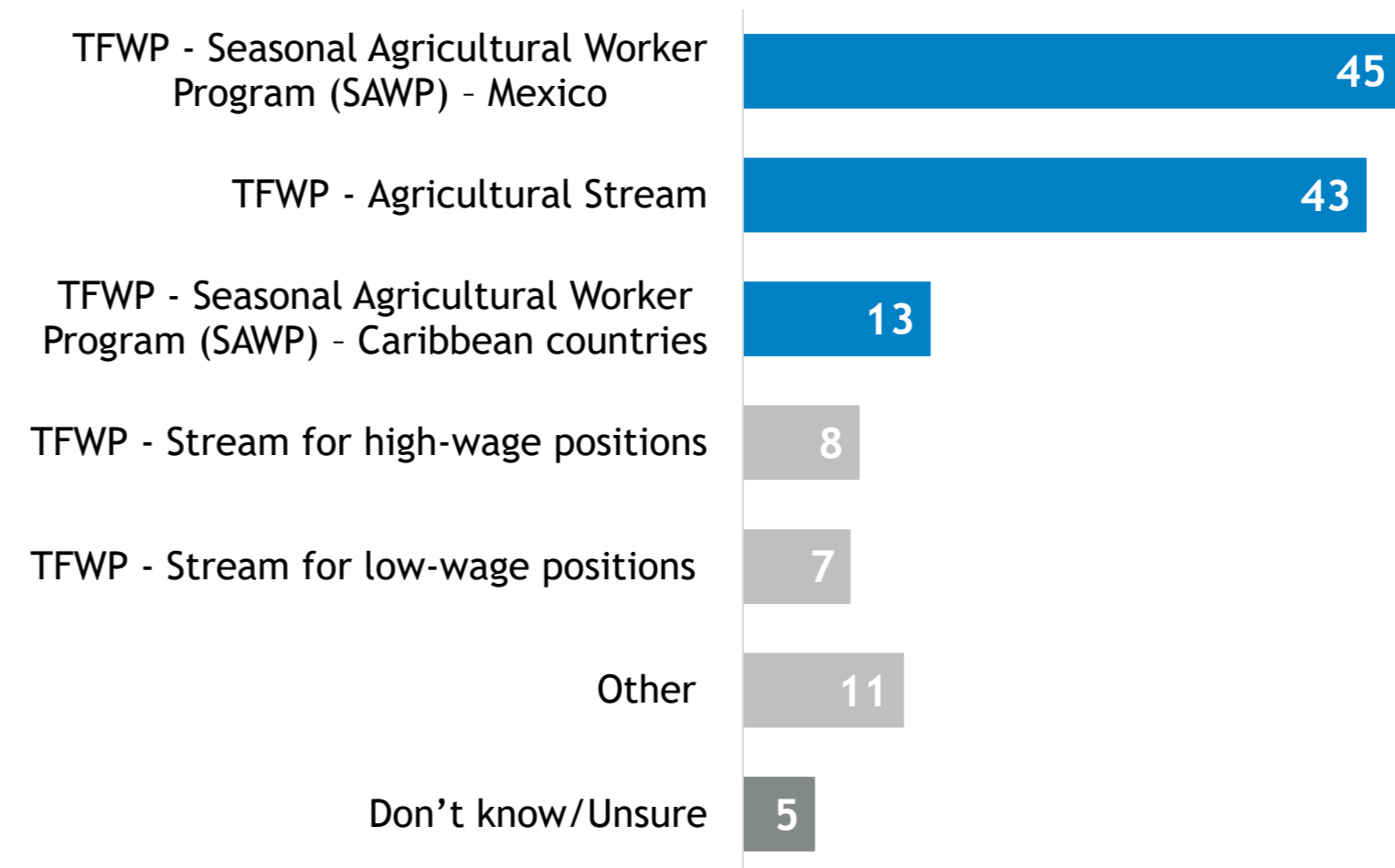
The Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) is a key solution for agri-businesses when they are unable to find local workers. The TFWP allows agri-businesses to hire foreign workers through four different sub-streams: the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), the Agricultural Stream, the High-Wage Positions Stream, and the Low-Wage Positions Stream.

Most agri-businesses use the SAWP (Mexico and Caribbean countries)¹⁹ (55%) and the Agricultural Stream (43%), designed specifically for the agriculture sector. The two other streams, i.e., High-Wage Positions (8%) and Low-Wage Positions (7%), are less frequently used by agri-businesses (Figure 5).

While the Agricultural Stream is available to foreign workers worldwide, the SAWP is restricted to citizens from Mexico (used by 45% of agri-businesses) or participating Caribbean countries (used by 13% of agri-businesses).

It is therefore not surprising that among the 64,660 TFWs employed in the agriculture sector in 2022, just over four-fifths of all temporary foreign workers came from Mexico (44.3%), Guatemala (25.1%), or Jamaica (13.3%).²⁰

Figure 5: Immigration streams or programs used by agri-businesses (% response)



Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 164.

Question: Which immigration stream or program did your agri-business use? (Select all that apply).

Note: "Other" represents International Mobility Program (IMP), international students, etc.

For more detailed breakouts by major agricultural sector and province, see Appendix 1, Figure 8.

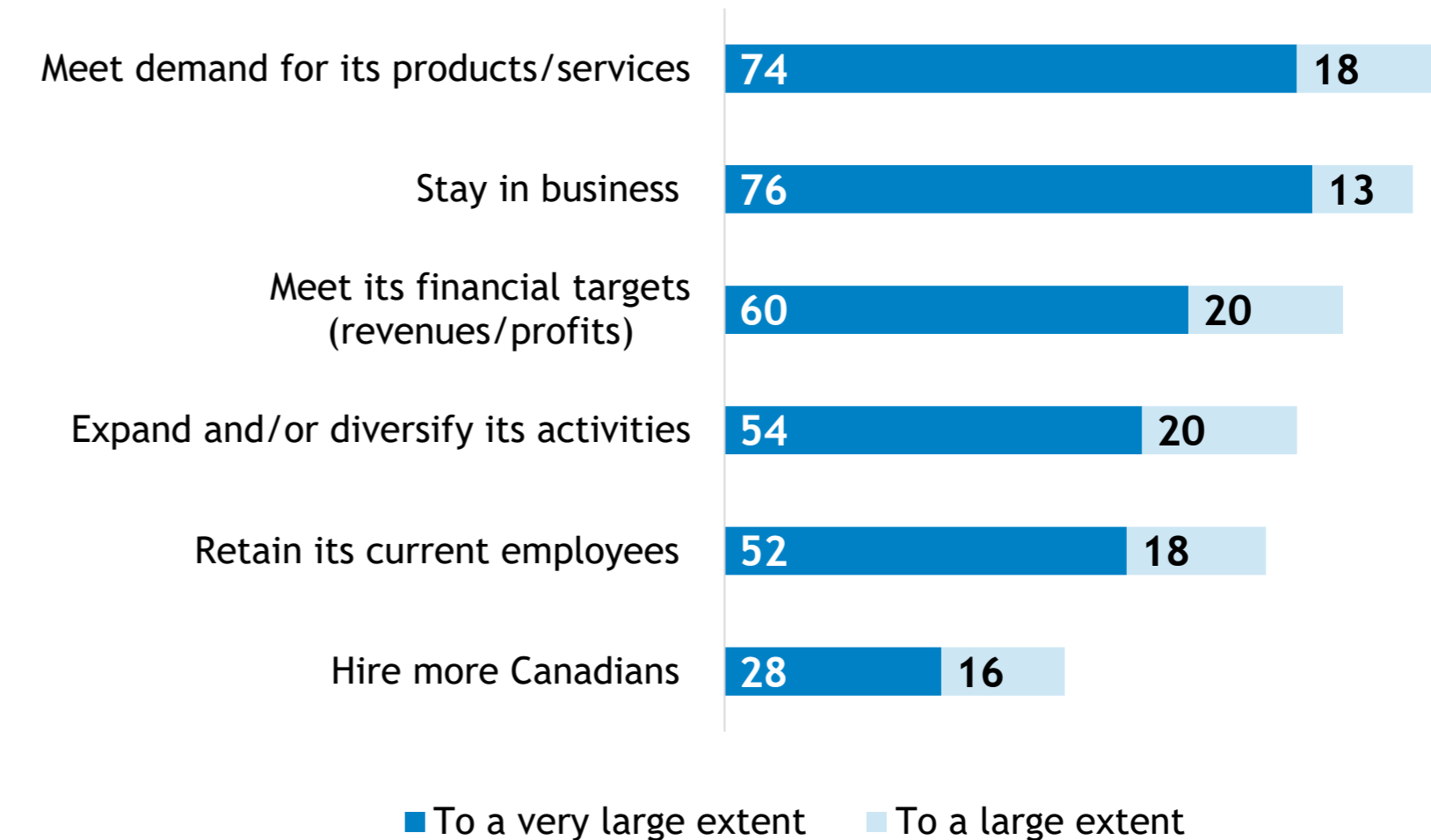
The TFWP benefits agri-businesses and Canada

Using the TFWP helps agri-businesses to fill critical gaps in their labour force, accounting for nearly one fourth of the sector’s workforce in 2022.²¹

As TFWs play an essential role in filling positions for which small businesses cannot find local candidates, a lack of TFWs may have a detrimental impact on Canadian employees. According to a study by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), more than half (55%) of employers who were unable to hire some or any TFWs had to ask existing Canadian employees to work overtime to compensate for the shortfall, while 33% of these employers reduced opening hours or closed down locations.²²

Moreover, of employers who hired TFWs, 92% reported that those workers helped them meet demand for their products or services, 89% stated that they helped them stay in business, and 80% were able to meet financial targets. These workers help mitigate the impact of labour shortages, reducing the loss of business opportunities (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Extent to which hiring temporary foreign workers has enhanced employers’ organizational abilities, to a very large or large extent (% response)



Source: ESDC, Employer survey 2020 (for the period 2015 to 2020) in Employment and Social Development Canada, “Evaluation of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program,” June 2021, Evaluation Directorate - Strategic and Service Policy Branch. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/evaluations/temporary-foreign-worker.html>

In agri-business owners' own words, they highly value foreign workers and the TFWP



My current workers are hard-working and always available to work. They want to learn and improve. They are always in a good mood. They are a pleasure to work with. Moreover, without them, my business would have to drastically reduce the number of hives it operates [...] It allows my company to maintain a certain level of profitability that I wouldn't have without them."

Fruit, Vegetables, and Horticultural Specialties
business in Quebec



We are very happy with the foreign workers. We have many workers who come back year after year. We would not continue growing vegetables if this program did not exist."

Fruit, Vegetables, and Horticultural Specialties
business in Ontario



Overall, the program is essential to us - we cannot hire local employees."

Fruit, Vegetables and Horticultural Specialties
business in Ontario

Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 547.

Hence, employers invest significantly in TFWs, covering costs beyond wages and training

Table 1:²³ Employer requirements and expenses per TFWP stream (an extended version of this table can be found in Appendix 1, Table 2)

TFWP STREAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPENSES	SAWP MEXICO AND CARIBBEAN	AGRICULTURAL STREAM	LOW-WAGE POSITIONS	HIGH-WAGE POSITIONS
\$1,000 LMIA processing fees			✓	✓
Prevailing wage*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Round-trip Canada/home country	✓	✓	✓	
Transportation home/work	✓	✓		
Housing	✓	✓**	✓	
Health Insurance when not covered prov./terr.	✓	✓	✓	✓

* The prevailing wage is reviewed annually to reflect the median hourly wage or higher for the particular occupation and work location. A different definition applies in Quebec.

** Employers can deduct a maximum of \$30 per week from the TFW's wage (for on-farm housing and off-site housing) or employers must ensure that the rent does not cost more than 30% of the TFW's gross monthly earnings.

Employers also invest time and effort in their TFWs

Agri-businesses must demonstrate a genuine need for hiring a TFW. They must show that there are no qualified local candidates available to fill the position as part of the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) process, which requires a lot of paperwork.

Employers are required to conduct in-depth recruitment efforts lasting, for most streams, at least 14 days and conducted within the three months preceding the LMIA application. Recruitment efforts must persist until LMIA approval (except for the Agricultural Stream). Additionally, employers must document details like the number of local applicants interviewed, reasons for non-hiring, and potential impacts on the Canadian labour market by foreign workers.

In addition to managing the paperwork, agri-business owners also have to factor in lengthy processing times. For example, in 2020, the average LMIA processing time was between 10.5 and 16 weeks for the High-Wage Stream.²⁴ Once employers have obtained a positive LMIA, *foreign workers* must apply for a work permit. Work permit processing times vary by stream and are subject to change depending on the season. Work permits for the SAWP can be processed in as little as 18 days.²⁵ For other streams, processing times can range from 4 weeks for workers from Guatemala and Mexico to 20 weeks for those from India.²⁶

As a result, employers need to plan months in advance when they want to use this program. This means they need to start looking for local candidates many months before the summer much earlier in the year, but it is highly unlikely that Canadians will be looking for summer jobs six months in advance. In addition, it can be difficult to anticipate market needs as they may change throughout the year.

Given this and the fact that reducing red tape and regulatory burden is the number one priority for agri-businesses in 2024 (81%), CFIB recommends that the government look at **streamlining the LMIA process and reducing red tape associated with hiring TFWs.**²⁷

Furthermore, to apply for an LMIA for low-wage and high-wage positions, employers must pay a \$1,000 processing fee. Under the International Mobility Program (another immigration program that enables employers to hire foreign workers without an LMIA), the employer compliance fee is refunded if no work permit is issued.²⁸ This is not the case for the LMIA. There is no reimbursement if the LMIA application is rejected, or if no work permit is issued under it (for example due to applicant rejection or lack of suitable candidates). Therefore, **should the LMIA not be issued or utilized, we recommend reimbursing the employer for the costs associated with administering and enforcing the compliance inspection, which will therefore not take place.**



The whole LMIA process is time consuming ... It is a large burden for smaller operations with limited office resources like my farm.

- Fruit, Vegetables and Horticultural Specialties business in British Columbia



But it is still necessary to debunk the myths surrounding TFWs

Myth #1: “TFWs are not paid sufficient wages.”

- When hiring TFWs under the program, employers must pay them the wage determined by the applicable collective agreement. When those temporary foreign workers are hired in non-unionized positions, the employer has to pay them, at a minimum, a prevailing wage established by the program.
- A majority of TFWs are paid the same wage as Canadians (85%) and only 3.5%²⁹ are paid less. This means that it is rather unlikely the TFW will put a downward pressure on domestic wages. Immigrants and domestic workers may complement rather than compete with each other.
- Furthermore, depending on the stream, the costs and obligations of hiring a foreign worker are not limited to wages and working conditions. They include transportation, housing, and health insurance costs, among others (see Table 1).

Myth #2: “TFWs are being mistreated by their employers.”

- ESDC conducts regular inspections to ensure the health and safety of foreign workers and 94% of employers inspected were found to be compliant based on 26 different criteria.³⁰
- Employers highly value foreign workers and aim to ensure their satisfaction, so they want to come back the following year. Agri-businesses want to retain good employees and seek streamlined pathways to permanent residency for those who wish to stay. Streamlining PR processes benefits both employers and employees, fostering a healthier and more sustainable work environment.

“ I would not have the same people back year after year if they were mistreated or not paid, etc. Tough politics around this program. I sponsored 3 guys through Covid time that have recently obtained their permanent residency after 2.5 years.

- Field Crop & Combination farm in Ontario

”

“ We have had a very positive experience as our workers have been with us for 8 years or more. Finally, they have the recognized employer program in place as the cost and time to submit applications are crazy.

- Fruit, Vegetables and Horticultural Specialties business in Alberta

”

There is always room for improvement



It would be nice to be able to share workers with other farms when we are slow and other agri-businesses could use the help ...”

Fruit, Vegetables and Horticultural Specialties
business in Ontario



We should be able to share a worker if 4 is not sufficient, and 5 too many ... regulations are too stiff!”

Livestock & Animal Specialty farm in Quebec



We have hired foreign workers since 2006 and each year it is harder to justify why we need the extra help and why Canadians will not fill these jobs. Paperwork galore ... went through numerous ‘random’ integrity investigations ... most unpleasant interrogation for an employer.”

Field Crop & Combination farm in Ontario

Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 547.

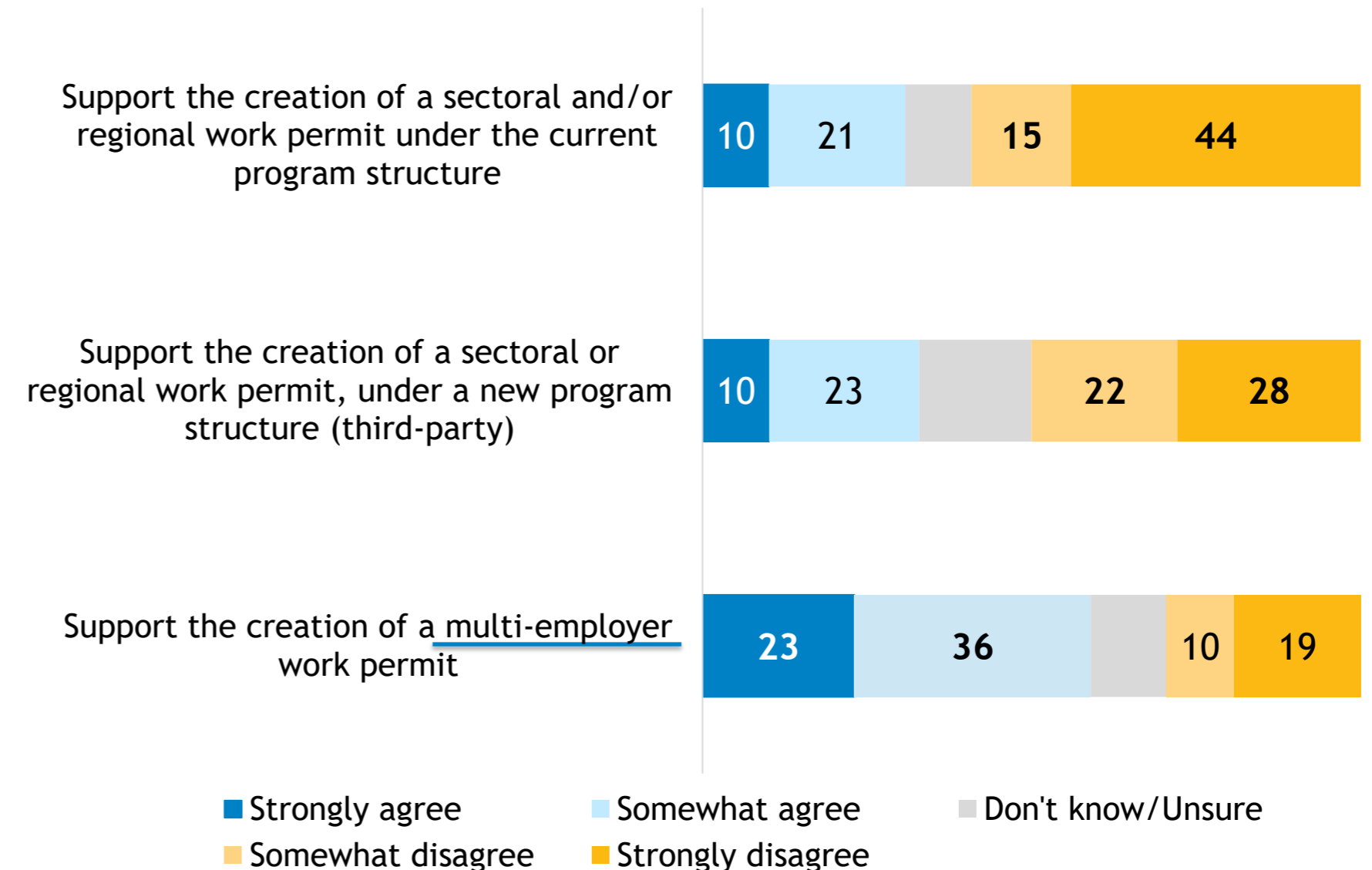
Sharing or transferring foreign workers should be an available *option*

Currently, most TFWs are employer-specific work permit holders. This means that one employee is linked to one agri-business. However, many agri-businesses would welcome the possibility to share employees among multiple employers.

Of all the alternatives listed by CFIB to its agri-business members, most agri-businesses (59%) would support the introduction of a **multi-employer work permit as their preferred option** (Figure 7). A multi-employer work permit would allow TFWs to have multiple employers depending on business needs. Each employer identified on the work permit would be accountable only for the employment terms and conditions set out in their section of the agreement, and costs would be shared on a prorated basis.

For example, two CFIB members are brothers, each owning two farms. They wish to share workers between their two farms and have the flexibility to transfer employees to the other brother’s farms when activity is low on one farm. Nevertheless, under the current program, employers are not able to share workers between two farms even if they are owned by the same person. Implementing a multi-employer work permit would not only allow employees to move between farms owned by the same brother but would also enable them to work for either brother’s farm without requiring another permit.

Figure 7: Level of agreement on potential work permit programs (% response)



Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 156-159.
 Question: Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about the possible creation of sectoral, regional or multi-employer work permits. (Select one for each line).

But sectoral or regional permits could be too flexible and lead to poaching

The majority of agri-business owners do not support sectoral and/or regional work permits. Whether it is under the current program structure or under a new structure (where a third party recruits, retains, and dispatches a pool of foreign workers), 59% and 50% of agri-businesses, respectively, do not support these options. Agri-business employers fear that a sectoral or regional permit under the current program structure

will accentuate employee poaching when an employer offers a slightly higher salary to his competitor's employee to go and work for them.

To mitigate these concerns policymakers should:

✓ *Allow employers to raise wages to help with retention*

The current employer compliance regime limits an employer's ability to try to retain an employee by matching wages or working conditions offered by another. They must provide substantially the same wage as was set out in their LMIA application, allowing for indexation. If a business owner finds the financial capacity **to match the wages offered by another LMIA-approved employer**, they should be able to match those wages. This would benefit the TFW and enable the employer not to lose out on the time and effort they dedicated to recruiting and training the worker.

✓ *Provide more guarantees for employers*

With sectoral and regional open work permits, employers are at greater risk of losing foreign workers in whose recruitment and training they have invested a lot of money. This could create a chilling effect if an increasing number of employers wait for others to recruit foreign workers only to poach them without expending as much effort or costs increases. Mitigation would be necessary and could include **compensation or indemnities for compliant employers who covered the original expenses of employees and a fast, streamlined way of finding new temporary foreign workers.**

✓ *Third-party brokers, not the solution*

Providing for a third party to recruit and retain a pool of foreign workers and dispatch workers where and when they are needed, on a fee recovery basis, to employers who retain their services (like a placement agency) was not widely supported by agri-businesses (59% against this option). While it could help mitigate some of the risks and costs, respondents felt that third parties are not always aware of the business's needs and can add another layer of red tape for business owners, as well as complicate communication.

Conclusion and recommendations for the federal government

Data shows that TFWs play a crucial role in addressing the chronic labour shortages faced by the Canadian agriculture industry and in sustaining its vitality. They enable agri-businesses to meet demand for their products and services (92%) and stay in business (89%).³¹ Without foreign workers, doors would be closed and Canadian jobs would be lost.

Hiring foreign workers entails substantial investments extending beyond wages and training to include expenses like transportation, and time and effort to bring them to Canada. These investments foster a commitment to providing optimal work environments and to encourage TFWs to return the following year. It is very common for agri-businesses to have the same TFWs come back year after year. Some even sponsor TFWs to become permanent residents.

To better align the program with the practical needs of agri-businesses, they should have the option to share or transfer workers between farms and employers. When reviewing the program, policymakers must ensure its structure does not incentivize employee poaching and reflects market realities. Our recommendations to policymakers are as follows:



Reducing red tape associated with hiring TFWs, notably by streamlining the LMIA process.



Allowing for the **sharing or transferring foreign workers** as an option (e.g., multi-employer work permit).



Rebasing the housing deduction to reflect market value and costs and allowing for annual indexation, which is currently \$30 per week.



Allowing employers to **match the wages** offered by another employer with an LMIA in the same area to strengthen retention and curtail poaching. Provisions under the employer compliance regime currently limit this.



Reimbursing the employer for the costs associated with the administration and enforcement of the compliance inspection, should the LMIA not be issued.



Introducing a **mechanism to compensate initial costs** covered by the employer whose employee has been poached and **streamlining access** to new TFWs.

Appendix 1³²

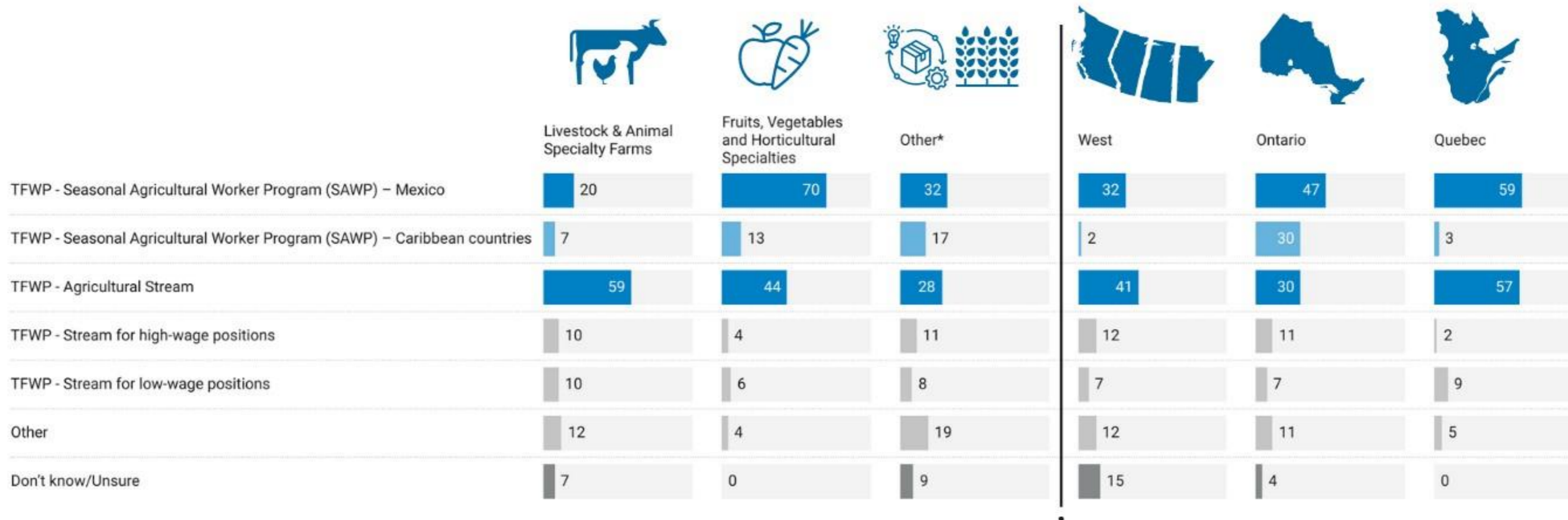
Table 2: Employer requirements and expenses per TFWP stream

TFWP STREAM REQUIREMENTS AND EXPENSES	SAWP MEXICO AND CARIBBEAN	AGRICULTURAL STREAM	LOW-WAGE POSITIONS	HIGH-WAGE POSITIONS
\$1,000 LMIA processing fees			✓	✓
Prevailing wage*	Same wages and benefits as those provided to Canadian and permanent resident employees working in the same occupation.	Same wages and benefits as those provided to Canadian and permanent resident employees working in the same occupation.	Highest between: Median wage on Job Bank or within the wage range of current employees for same job, work location, skills and experience.	Highest between: Median wage on Job Bank or within the wage range of current employees for same job, work location, skills and experience.
Round-trip Canada/home country	Cover round-trip travel from the country of origin to Canada.	Cover round-trip travel from the country of origin to Canada.	Cover round-trip travel from the country of origin to Canada.	
Transportation home/work	Ensure transportation between on-site or off-site accommodation and the workplace.	Ensure transportation between on-site or off-site accommodation and the workplace.		
Housing	Provide TFWs with adequate, suitable and affordable housing	Provide TFWs with adequate, suitable and affordable housing**	Provide TFWs with adequate, suitable and affordable housing	
Health Insurance when not covered prov./terr.	Pay for private health insurance for the time when TFWs are not covered by the provincial/territorial health insurance system.	Pay for private health insurance for the time when TFWs are not covered by the provincial/territorial health insurance system.	Pay for private health insurance for the time when TFWs are not covered by the provincial/territorial health insurance system.	Pay for private health insurance for the time when TFWs are not covered by the provincial/territorial health insurance system.

* The prevailing wage is reviewed annually to reflect the median hourly wage or higher for the particular occupation and work location. A different definition applies in Quebec.

** Employers can deduct a maximum of \$30 per week from the TFW's wage (for on-farm housing and off-site housing) or employers must ensure that the rent doesn't cost more than 30% of the TFW's gross monthly earnings.

Figure 8: Immigration stream or program, by sub-sector and region (% response)



Source: CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 544.

Question: Which immigration stream or program did your agri-business use? (Select all that apply).

Notes: 1. "Other*" includes Field crop combination farms, Ag services, Food product processing, and Wholesale and Supply for Agriculture.

2. "West" includes BC, AB, SK, MB.

3. Atlantic provinces are not shown due to low sample size.

Endnotes

- ¹ CFIB, Bomal, Laure-Anna, Small businesses in Canada hit hard: The big financial toll of labour shortages, November 2023.
- ² CAHRC, Sowing Seeds of Change. Agriculture Labour Market Forecast 2023-2030, February 2024. Retrieved from: <https://cahrc-ccrha.ca/resources/document/agriculture-labour-market-forecast-2023-2030>
- ³ CFIB, Your Voice survey - December 2023, December 7-19, 2023, n = 144. Question: Compared to 2023, does your business intend to do more or less of each of the following in 2024? (Select one for each line).
- ⁴ ESDC, Evaluation Directorate - Strategic and Service Policy Branch, Employer survey 2020 (for the period 2015 to 2020) in Employment and Social Development Canada, Evaluation of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, June 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/evaluations/temporary-foreign-worker.html>
- ⁵ CFIB, Agri-business survey, Dec. 18, 2023-Feb. 7, 2024, n = 164. Question: Which immigration stream or program did your agri-business use? (Select all that apply).
- ⁶ ESDC, Government of Canada takes action to improve employer compliance and better protect temporary foreign workers, September 27, 2023. Retrieved from: [Government of Canada takes action to improve employer compliance and better protect temporary foreign workers - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/evaluations/temporary-foreign-worker.html)
- ⁷ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Overview of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. Retrieved from: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/sector/overview>
- ⁸ CFIB, Monthly Business Barometer, Limitations on sales or production growth, Agriculture sector, historical 2020-2024.
- ⁹ CFIB, Your Voice survey - September 2022, n = 125. Question: Which of the following best describes your business situation regarding labour shortages (described here as difficulties hiring, retaining, or getting staff to work the hours needed)? (Select one).
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About CFIB

CFIB is a non-partisan organization exclusively representing the interests of 97,000 small and medium-sized businesses in Canada. CFIB's research capacity is second-to-none because it is able to gather timely and concrete information from members about business issues that affect their day-to-day operation and bottom line. In this capacity, CFIB is an excellent source of up-to-date information for governments to consider when developing policies impacting Canada's small business community.

To learn more, visit [cfib.ca](https://www.cfib-fcei.ca).

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