



CANADA

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Careers.com

# Agribusiness Workforce Preparations for COVID-19

Survey research results on preparations and actions taken by the agriculture industry during the COVID-19 pandemic



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# AgCareers.com's Response

## Resources Library

AgCareers.com is committed to providing support to agricultural employers during the pandemic. For more information, view the [AgCareers.com COVID-19 Resource Page](#).

## Temporary & Seasonal Job Postings

AgCareers.com realizes that a lack of temporary labour creates great challenges. To bridge this gap, AgCareers.com is offering [FREE temporary and seasonal job postings](#) during the pandemic.

## On-Demand Webinars

Organizations can help their employees by encouraging continued online learning at their convenience. AgCareers.com is offering [on-demand webinars for FREE](#) during this time. Topics vary from Handling Difficult Conversations, to Building High Trust Teams, and many more.

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# About the Survey

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly changing. AgCareers.com continues to keep a pulse on employers' thoughts about recruitment and other key employment issues.

To identify trends during the pandemic, AgCareers.com conducted two surveys of agricultural employers. Additional surveys will be conducted to continue to understand the impact of COVID-19.

Eighty-seven Canadian organizations participated in the first survey, and 56 in the second survey.

### *Employer Survey:*

Survey 1: March 11 – March 19, 2020

Survey 2: March 25 – April 1, 2020

AgCareers.com also surveyed employees and job seekers about COVID-19's impact on their employment. More than 100 Canadians participated in the first survey, and nearly 73 in the second.

### *Job Seeker/Employee Survey:*

Survey 1: March 16 – March 26

Survey 2: March 29 – April 5

The following outlines survey highlights to support the agricultural industry.



# Communication

## Employer:

Almost all organizations have now taken measures to communicate and inform employees about COVID-19.



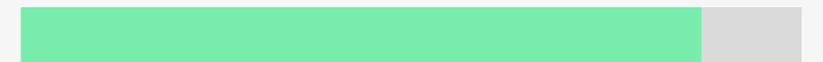
## Employee:

We asked employees to rate (from poor to excellent) the training and education provided by their employer in preparation and during the outbreak.

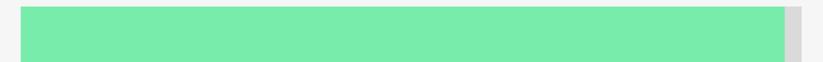
Employees rated their employer better than average (57%). One-third of employees rated their employer as below average. These results were similar in both surveys.

*Has your organization taken measures to communicate and inform employees about COVID-19 and how employees can best protect themselves/minimize exposure?*

Survey 1: 82% Yes



Survey 2: 95% Yes





# Planning & Preparation

## **Employer:**

An increasing percentage of organizations have a business continuity plan in place to minimize risks to the business (73%, up from 50% in Survey 1).

## **Employee:**

Employees rated their employer's preparedness to deal with COVID-19; 55% of employees rated their employer better than average. Nearly one-third of employees rated their employer as below average.

Overall, employees concern about their employer and employment decreased slightly from our first survey to the second.

**Comparing employees' concerns for their employer vs. concern for their own employment; employees are still more worried that their employer will suffer, than their personal employment status.**





# Remote Work



## Employer:

75% of employers allowed some or all employees to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis. One-quarter of employers said their employees were unable to work remotely.

*Has your organization accommodated work from home/remote working as recommended by health officials?*

	Survey 1	Survey 2
Yes, for all employees	18.39%	12.50%
Yes, for some employees, but not all	66.67%	62.50%
No, employees are unable to work remotely	14.94%	25.00%

Participants in both surveys agreed that the least likely to work remotely were operations roles (warehouse/manufacturing).



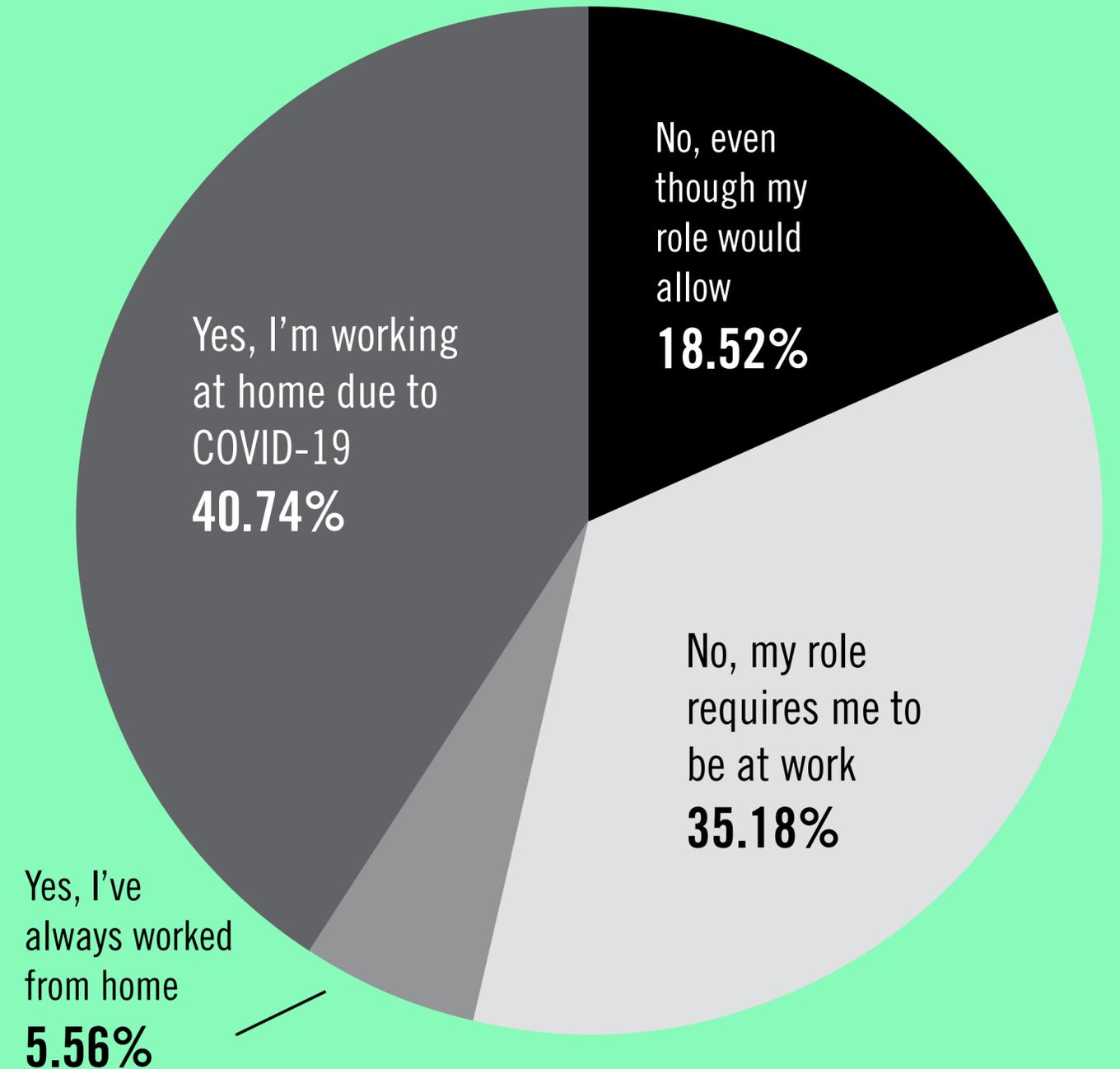
# Remote Work *continued*

## Employee:

Just over 40% of Canadian employees report they are working from home because of COVID-19, same as the first survey. Thirty-five percent said their roles require them to be at work.



*Are you currently working from home because of COVID-19?*





# Coverage

## Employer:

Increasing numbers of Canadian employers now have a plan to provide coverage for sick or absent employees. Employers' dominant coverage plan for sick or absent employees is now work rotation – minimize exposure among staff with on and off schedules. Nearly 30% of employers are also using role shifts – bringing employees from other functional areas in to temporarily cover.

*How does your organization plan to provide coverage for sick or absent employees?*

- Survey 1:
1. Ask 'well' employees to cover (with or without overtime pay)
  2. No additional plans (go without)
  3. Work Rotation/Role Shifts (tie)

- Survey 2:
1. Work rotation - minimize exposure amongst staff with on & off schedules
  2. Role shifts - bring employees from other functional areas in to temporarily cover
  3. Ask 'well' employees to cover (with or without overtime pay)



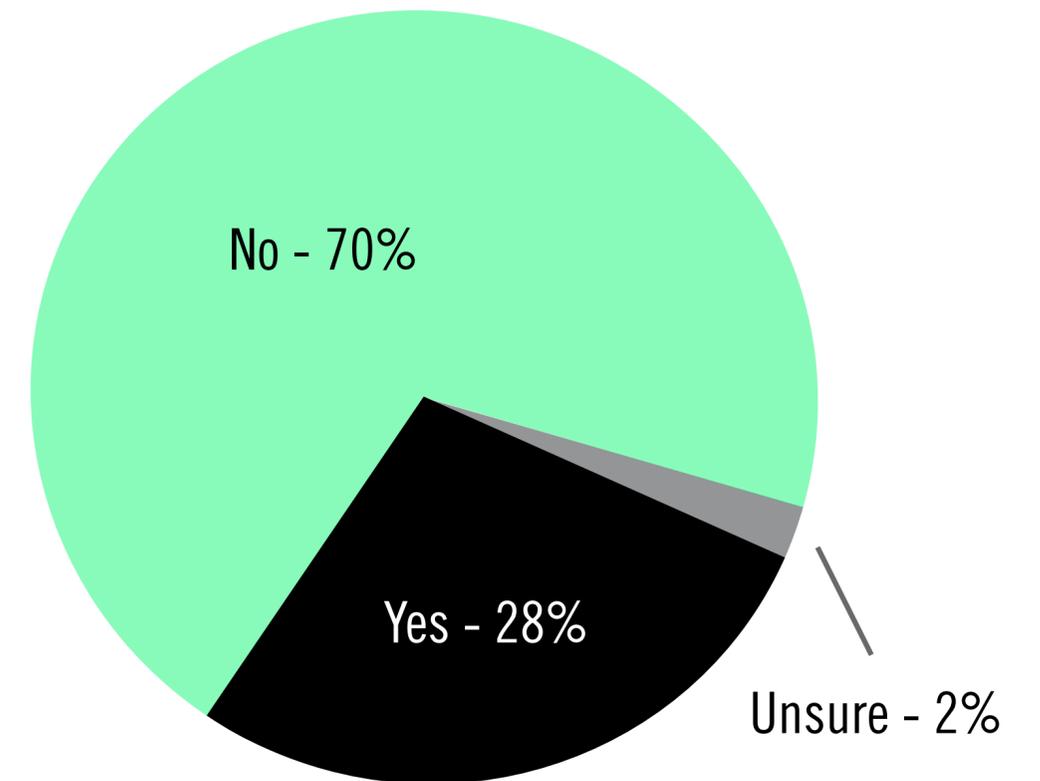
# Employment

## Employer:

So far, most Canadian ag employers have NOT taken action to manage employment numbers within their organization (layoffs, furlough, reduction in force, etc.).

For those that have acted, reallocating staff to other departments was the most frequent action.

*Have you taken any action currently to manage employment within your organization thus far (layoffs, furlough, reduction in force, etc.)?*





# Employment *continued*



## Employee:

We asked employees if COVID-19 changed their employment status. Positively, 79% said there's been no change.

The most common change was a reduction in work hours (8%) and temporary lay off (6%).

No change at all	79.25%
Reduction in hours	7.55%
Temporarily laid off	5.66%
Indefinitely laid off	1.89%
Dismissed from employment	0.00%
Other	5.66%



# Internships



## Employer:

More than half (59%) of organizations were expecting to have intern(s)/summer student(s) in 2020.

Of these, the bulk (55%) were still evaluating their plans. More than 20% were moving forward as planned.

We are still evaluating what our plan will be	55.17%
Nothing, we are planning to proceed as planned	20.69%
Discontinuing program, but offering student(s) opportunity for next summer	6.90%
Keeping interns on, but doing so remotely	3.45%
Discontinuing program completely & informing students	3.45%
Reducing the number of total interns/summer students	3.45%
Discontinuing program but still supporting student(s) with financial commitment	0.00%

*\*6.90% of respondents stated "other"*



# Hiring

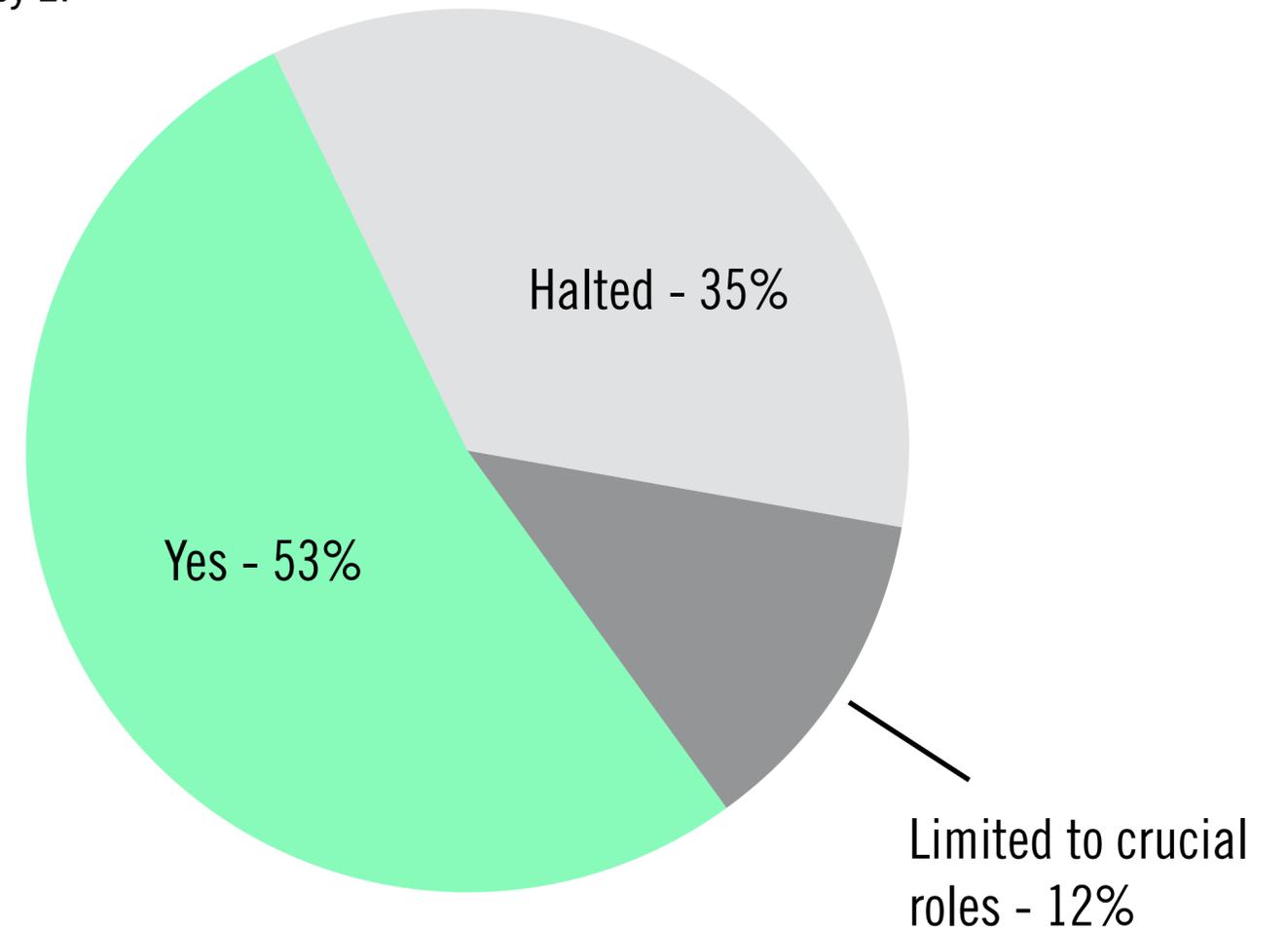
## Employer:

The majority of employers are continuing recruitment and hiring efforts despite COVID-19.

More employers are increasing recruitment to cover potential employee shortages due to illness/absenteeism.

*Are you continuing your recruitment and hiring as projected despite COVID-19?*

Survey 2:





# Hiring *continued*

## Employee:

We asked job seekers and employees how the pandemic changed their employment mindset. In the first survey, 50% were exploring options, while that increased to 60% in the second survey.

In survey two, 32% were actively searching before COVID-19 and still are looking.

COVID-19 has led to an increase in potential candidates, as 28% weren't looking, but are searching now. Twenty-two percent said they weren't searching before but are casually looking now to understand their options. Over 6% weren't looking prior to COVID-19 but are aggressively searching now to manage risk.

I wasn't actively or casually looking & still am not	32.31%
I was actively looking for a new job & still am	32.31%
I wasn't looking but am casually looking now to understand my options	21.54%
I was actively or casually looking but am not now	7.69%
I wasn't looking but am aggressively looking now to manage risk	6.15%



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Connect with us for COVID-19 resources:  
<https://www.agcareers.com/covid19canada>

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