

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PROGRAM (YESP)



What is the YESP?

The YESP, delivered by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), enables young Canadians to gain hands-on experience in the agriculture and agri-food sector.

The program supports hiring youth aged 15 to 30 for work experience and skill development opportunities, by providing non-repayable contributions to agriculture and agri-food related employers for the youth's wages and benefits.

The YESP is part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS), designed to help youth gain valuable work experience and prepare for rewarding careers.



Funding

For the 2026-27 program year, up to **\$13.47 million** is available to support hiring approximately **1,260 youth** across Canada.

Standard support	Enhanced support	Additional funding
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Eligible employers can receive up to **\$14,000 per project** to cover **50% of the youth's wages and benefits**

For Indigenous applicants and projects that hire a youth facing a barrier to employment, AAFC may contribute **80% of wages and benefits, up to \$14,000 per project**

If applicable, up to an **additional \$5,000** may be available for costs to relocate the youth for the project and/or for supports that address the youth's barrier to employment (refer to the webpage for more details)

Who can apply?

Agriculture and agri-food related employers in Canada that can provide youth with work experience and skill development opportunities in the agriculture and agri-food sector, including:

- For-profit and not-for-profit organizations
- Provincial, territorial, and municipal governments
- Individuals or sole proprietorships
- Indigenous organizations
- Academic institutions



Project eligibility

NEW for 2026–2027

When applying, employers must identify the youth they will hire for the project, and associated costs. A completed Participant Information Form must be submitted with the Project Application Form.

Youth participants must be

- Aged 15 to 30 at the project start date
- Unemployed or underemployed
- A Canadian citizen, permanent resident, or have refugee status in Canada
- Not in receipt of Employment Insurance (EI) during the project

Activities the youth participant will undertake must

- Begin no earlier than the date your application is deemed complete by the program, but not before April 1, 2026 or the youth's 15th birthday
- End by March 31, 2027
- Be of a meaningful length – generally, two months or more
- Offer agriculture or agri-food related work experience
- Align with AAFC's mandate

Visit the YESP webpage and follow these steps to apply:

- 1 Download and complete the Application Form
- 2 Complete the Participant Information Form (PIF)
- 3 Attach the PIF and any supporting documents
- 4 Click Submit
- 5 Check "After you apply" for next steps

For more information

agriculture.canada.ca/en/programs/youth-employment-and-skills

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