



SIMPLE. PRACTICAL. TRUSTED.

SECTION 11
**TRAINING &
MENTORING**

VBP+ PRODUCER
REFERENCE MANUAL

SECTION 11

TRAINING & MENTORING





STAFF TRAINING &
COMPETENCY

OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH & SAFETY

ORGANIZATIONAL
CULTURE & WORKING
ENVIRONMENT



01 STAFF TRAINING & COMPETENCY



Every worker should have sufficient skills and training to perform their job safely and competently, and the opportunity to improve and learn relevant new skills.

It is the responsibility of an employer to ensure workers are trained to complete tasks in a safe, competent manner. The larger and more complex the operation, the higher the level of training required to ensure competency.

Operations are encouraged to review requirements for training records and understand the legal definition of “competent” in their province. Generally, for people to be considered competent in the health and safety aspects of their work, they will:

- ✓ Be qualified to do the assigned work because of knowledge, training, and experience
- ✓ Know the hazards and risks associated with the job or task to be performed; and know appropriate precautions and controls to mitigate them
- ✓ Be able to work in a manner that does not endanger their health and safety, or that of others
- ✓ Know the laws and regulations that apply to their work

(Source: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)

Beef producers are encouraged to participate in continuous learning opportunities in order to hone the productivity and efficiency of their operation and the industry. The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) recommends producers and their staff regularly undertake learning opportunities related to the Five Principles of Sustainable Beef Production:

- ✓ Food Safety & Quality
- ✓ Animal Care/Welfare
- ✓ Natural Resources
- ✓ Efficiency & Innovation
- ✓ People & Community

FORMAL TRAINING

Formal training can take place through post-secondary education (i.e. diploma, degree), apprenticeship, certification (i.e. firearms PAL, first aid, VBP+), or licensing (i.e. Class 1, air brakes).

ON THE JOB TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP

For generations, agriculture knowledge has been passed on through mentorship, coaching and hands-on experience. On the job training can be extremely effective when a seasoned staff member mentors new hires, sharing insight on how to perform tasks and supervising early efforts.

SELF-LEARNING

Reading, completing short courses, and attending seminars/webinars, or conferences enable self-learning. Networking with peers and subject matter experts, as well as involvement with industry committees or boards, also builds knowledge.



02 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY



Strategies are implemented to minimize hazards and reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

Every workplace has risks that could pose a hazard, and employers are responsible for communicating hazards to workers. In collaboration with their staff, employers are encouraged to identify potential hazards and take steps to minimize associated risks. This helps protect workers, family members, and even friends that may help occasionally.

Employers should always exercise due diligence to prevent accidents, and workers are obligated to participate in safety programs. Common practices to ensure workplace safety include:

- ✓ Providing PPE for workers (i.e. helmets, gloves, masks)
- ✓ Conducting safety meetings and providing a positive safety culture
- ✓ Posting health and safety signage (i.e. “children playing”, “confined space”)
- ✓ Developing emergency response protocols and having first aid supplies available
- ✓ Developing standard operating procedures or safe work practices to prevent injury, equipment damage, or environmental spills
- ✓ Documenting “near misses” or “close calls” to prevent future occurrences
- ✓ Practicing firearms safety (i.e. locked gun cabinets, trigger locks, PAL training)

Depending on provincial OHS legislation and number of employees, producers may be legally required to develop a Health and Safety Program, which must include:

- ✓ A formal health and safety commitment statement
- ✓ Risk assessments
- ✓ Hazard control strategies
- ✓ Descriptions of training programs
- ✓ Emergency response plan

Many resources exist to help in creating a farm/ranch safety policy, including:

- ✓ Farm safety training programs
- ✓ Provincial health and safety resources
- ✓ Workers Compensation resources for injury prevention
- ✓ Life and/or disability insurance programs for workers
- ✓ Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) certification
- ✓ Certificate of Recognition (COR) program



03 ORGANIZATIONAL WORKPLACE & CULTURE

Staff and employees are treated with respect; and management strives to create a healthy working environment.

Operations are expected to promote a culture of respect and equality, and meet all applicable employment/labour laws and human rights legislation. Creation of career development opportunities and community involvement are encouraged; and employees should be free to express concerns without fear of negative outcomes.

Workplace equality means no discrepancies in pay based on gender or age, and no favouritism of family members versus paid workers. This is particularly important when you have a diverse staff. Skilled managers are mindful of gender parity, religious sensitivities, and other cultural differences; they recognize that a respectful, inclusive workplace is also a productive one.

Temporary foreign workers often play an important role in the Canadian farm labour force; however language barriers can sometimes pose a challenge. It is the employer's responsibility to accommodate workers whose first language is not English: signage and written instructions should be available in languages workers will understand. Employers should consider supporting foreign workers with English language training.

How can producers improve the workplace?

- ✔ Encourage open, transparent communication
- ✔ Examine employee retention/turnover rates
- ✔ Review employee performance and wages
- ✔ Provide appropriate working hours
- ✔ Ensure equal opportunity for advancement to all workers
- ✔ Provide training opportunities and chart paths for worker advancement
- ✔ Develop a Code of Ethics/Conduct for the workplace
- ✔ Solicit staff input into operational planning and decision-making
- ✔ Provide leadership and guidance if problems arise

Consider creating a Human Resource Workplace Management Document that includes the following:

- ✔ Organizational reporting structure
- ✔ Job descriptions and responsibilities
- ✔ Training plans
- ✔ Salary/pay scales
- ✔ Employee grievance and dismissal policies



VBP+ STANDARD

ASSESSMENT SCORING

- 0** No occupational health and safety or human resource management initiatives in place.
- 1** Informal staff safety training and human resource management initiatives; provide a safe, discrimination-free workplace; receptive to employees expressing concerns.
- 2** Verbal safety, training, and human resource management plans; provide a safe workplace where employees are included in planning and operational decisions; workers encouraged to report near misses.
- 3** Written and regularly updated training programs, health and safety policies, and workplace management document; roles and responsibilities of management and workers clearly articulated, culture and values of the organization defined.