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IMMIGRANT RETENTION & FOOD PROCESSING IN RURAL MANITOBA

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IMMIGRANT RETENTION & FOOD PROCESSING IN RURAL MANITOBA

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Executive Summary

In the fall of 2012, the Rural Development Institute conducted research into employee retention in rural food processing small and medium enterprises. This project was conducted on behalf of Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives. Retention strategies from both the employer and employee perspectives were identified, in addition to examining which retention strategies are most important for immigrant employees.

Eleven business owners and 9 of their employees from Manitoba’s central region were interviewed about retention strategies and their presence within the business. This research found that retaining employees in Manitoba’s rural small and medium food processing businesses takes a combination of sufficient compensation and a respectful workplace. Participants in this research project indicated that while pay and benefits are by far the most important factors affecting their decision to stay in a job or workplace, compensation is not the only factor and the importance of respect, clear roles, and flexibility cannot be underestimated. The research also determined that neither employers nor employees identified substantial differences for retention strategies between immigrant and non-immigrant employees. The findings in Table 1 list the most important retention priorities from employer and employee perspectives.

Employers Perspective (n=11)	Employees Perspective (n=9)
Compensation	Compensation
Open Door Policy	Clear Tasks and Roles
Recognition	Flexibility
Respect	Respect
Flexibility	Recognition

Table 1: Two perspectives on the most important retention priorities

These research findings were used to develop key recommendations aimed at helping increase employee retention within rural food processing SMEs.

- I. **Improve understanding of compensation and wage levels for food processing in rural Manitoba to support competitive compensation**
- II. **Improve understanding of Professional Development definitions and opportunities for food processing**
- III. **Improve understanding of how to support the creation of cultural tolerance and accommodation in the workplace for rural food processing SMEs**

Introduction to Employee Retention

Once businesses create jobs and hire employees, what factors influence the employees to remain in that job and working for that business? Do immigrant employees stay in jobs for different reasons than non-immigrant employees? What strategies are Manitoba's rural food processing SMEs using to keep or retain their employees? These are some of the key questions that the Retention & Food Processing in Rural Manitoba research project tried to answer.

This research explored employee retention amongst small and medium enterprises within rural Manitoba, specifically in food processing, Manitoba's largest manufacturing sector. Provincially, food processing represents 250 businesses, accounting for 23,600 jobs or 4% of Manitoba's total employment. Labour income from the food processing industry in Manitoba is estimated at \$816 million or 3.5% of the province's total labour income. This research project aims to help support rural SME food processors by beginning to explore employee retention within those businesses, an important factor for business and sector success.

Employee retention is critical for small and medium enterprises as they strive to maintain their productivity and survive. Efforts and activities to create a better workplace and happier employees, increase employee satisfaction and productivity and improves their desire to remain in that job (FTH Skills Council & MLA, 2006). Retention strategies are actions, activities or policies that business owners and management use to reduce the number of employees leaving or turning over in a business (Hong et al., 2012). The purpose of these strategies is to address specific issues which make employees unhappy and result in them leaving to find work elsewhere. Effective retention strategies help create happy, productive and stable workforces, increasing business profits and reducing the costs and impacts of employee turnover (Howatt).

Hiring and training new employees is time consuming and costly and reducing employee turnover is an important factor in business success (Yukon Government, 2010). According to the American Management Association, replacing an employee costs a minimum of 30% of their annual salary and for high demand skills, the cost can reach 150% of their annual salary (Branman, 2000). With these turnover costs occurring every time an employee leaves, the savings of retaining an employee long term is substantial. Being proactive with employee retention strategies can reduce these costs of employee turnover, and is important as our workforce continues to age and shrink (Monash University, 2008).

Many factors affect employee retention and can vary from business to business and employee to employee (FTH Skills Council & MLA, 2006). These factors typically fall into three areas: compensation, valuing employees, and room for growth within the organization (Howatt). The research team wanted to explore which retention strategies are being used by small and medium enterprises in food processing and to determine

the perception of their importance in retention. RDI also wanted to better understand the range of retention strategies used by these SMEs.

In addition, RDI wanted to explore any differences in retention strategies being used between long-term Canadian resident employees and new immigrant employees. Rural Manitoba is receiving large numbers of new immigrants and are a driving factor in community growth (Ashton & Kelly, 2012) for several rural regions. Once the immigrants have arrived, employment is one of the top 3 reasons for immigrants to stay in 1 place (Esses 2009) and RDI is interested in exploring if there are different retention strategies that suit immigrants better than long-term employees.

METHODS

The methods section provides an overview of the research design, describing the number of businesses in the research sample, how the businesses were selected, the data collection process and the analysis framework.

Determining sample

The research team worked with Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) and staff at the Food Development Centre to identify businesses that met three criteria :

- Geography: each participating SME will be located in Manitoba's economic development central region (corresponds with the province's Central Regional Health Authority)
- Size: since the definition of SMEs can vary, our definition of SME will consist of each participating SME having between 1 and 100 employees (full time)
- Function: each participating SME will be a primary or secondary food processor; food producers and distributors will not be included

Based on a list that was considered complete with all secondary food processing businesses with 1 to 100 employees in the central region, there were 56 businesses to select from. ¹

Recruiting the sample of businesses

Prescreening efforts with the 56 businesses identified 13 businesses with immigrant employees and 4 of these businesses agreed to participate in employer interviews. Immigrant employees at the eligible businesses were recruited by requesting a recommendation and contact information for an immigrant employee from the employer. The research team then followed up with the immigrant employee to determine their interest in participating. Seven other businesses from the list of 56 that

¹ This list of 56 businesses was synthesized by MAFRI from several publicly available sources: Canadian Grain Commission Licensed Facilities, Federally Registered Meat Establishments, Manitoba Abattoirs, MAFRI Food Products Directory and MFPA Full Member Product Listing.

were willing to participate were recruited. Seven long-term employees were recruited with the same process as the immigrant employees, with the participating employers providing a recommendation and contact information for a specific employee and then the research team following up with the employees.

Data collection

Interview guides for employers and employees were drafted with 8 questions focusing on retention strategies being utilized within the business. Contextual information regarding employee turnover rates and length of employment for longest serving employee and immigrant employees was also collected. These interviews were typically 10-15 minutes in length and were audio recorded with permission of the participants. Nine interviews were conducted over the telephone with one business requesting an in person interview for both the participating employer and employee at that business.

Eleven business employers in total participated in semi-structured interviews and 9 employees from those businesses also participated. Of the participating employees, 4 were immigrant employees and 5 were long-term employees.

The researcher provided a list of nine retention strategies to the 20 participants and asked them to identify which strategies are present in their business. The retention strategies provided to businesses were adapted from the Australian Meat Industry's retention model (FTH Skills Council & MLA, 2006). The specific retention strategies and the descriptions used for participants are provided below:

- **Provide competitive pay and benefits** – this retention strategy focused on the presence of competitive salaries, wages and benefits
- **Give employees clear tasks and responsibility** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees have clear role descriptions and if expectations were clearly established for tasks
- **Offer professional development opportunities** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees were provided with opportunities for learning and development. Certification, tuition reimbursement, and education-based time allowance were all provided as examples of provisions for professional development
- **Open door policy** – this retention strategy focused on the feedback opportunities for employees, identifying if there was regular feedback for employees and if they also felt there was an accessible channel for them to provide feedback
- **Cultural diversity training** – this retention strategy focused on the provision of formal training for cultural diversity in the workplace
- **Promoting company values and mission** – this retention strategy focused on if employers created a clear linkage between employee roles and the purpose and values of the company
- **Recognizing employee skills** – this retention strategy focused on whether employee's excellence in their role or if their skills not related specifically to that

role were recognized. Participants were asked if this recognition resulted in knowledge sharing/promotion/role expansion.

- **Flex time/part time** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees were able to work flexible hours or part time hours.
- **Career planning** – this retention strategy focused on whether employers worked with employees to identify future goals and roles that they would like to work towards and identified the necessary steps to achieve those career plans

Analysis Framework

Three analytical steps were taken to answer the project’s research questions:

1. For each SME, employers’ responses were compared with employee’s responses to determine presence and importance of strategy.
2. When differences occurred between employer and employee responses, contextual responses were used to identify possible reasons for these differences
3. A list of common strategies identified as ‘most important’ was created for both employers and employees. The differences between employers and employees were explained using contextual responses.

RETENTION RESULTS

This section examines the presence and importance of retention strategies from both the employer and employee perspectives in participating businesses, central region SME food processors with 1 to 100 employees. The next section reviews professional development, which stood out due to differences between employers and employees and cultural training, which stood out due to its lack of presence amongst participants.

Table 2 and Figure 1 identify which strategies are present based on the employers' and employees' perspectives. Participants were also asked to identify other retention strategies present in their business. Table 1 and Figure 1 also illustrate there was general agreement between the two groups about which strategies were evident in the business.

RETENTION STRATEGY/ACTIVITIES	Identified by Employer (n=11)	Identified by Employees (n=9)
Provide competitive pay and benefits	9 out of 11	8 out of 9
Give employees clear tasks and responsibility	11 out of 11	9 out of 9
Offer professional development opportunities:	9 out of 11	5 out of 9
Open door policy; regular feedback – for management and employees, exit interviews	11 out of 11	9 out of 9
Implement cultural diversity training; support cultural events	1 out of 11	0 out of 9
Promote company values and mission, create connections between roles and achieving company goals	10 out of 11	7 out of 9
Recognize employee skills, mentoring arrangements, skill/knowledge sharing	10 out of 11	9 out of 9
Flex-time, part time opportunities	9 out of 11	6 out of 9
Career planning – set goals, define ideal roles	5 out of 11	5 out of 9
Other	5 out of 11	3 out of 9

Table 2: Presence of Retention Strategies

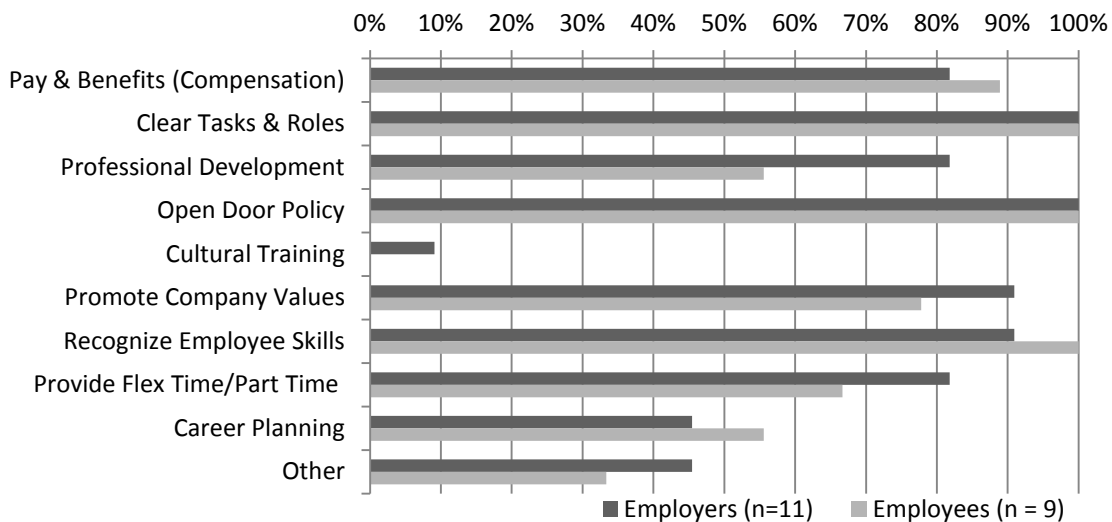


Figure 1 Employer and Employee Retention Strategy Comparison

Other Retention Strategies

Nine additional strategies were identified by 5 employers and 3 employees. The 9 strategies identified provide examples of retention strategies related to employee recognition or compensation.

Recognition

- Provide donuts and other fun stuff regularly
- Provide a canteen at cost for employees – no longer doing this but was successful and very appreciated when it was implemented
- Posting monthly production levels/achievements
- Attendance Draws – prize draws based on employee attendance
- Celebrate birthdays and have staff parties

Compensation

- Incentive programs for performance
- Provide housing for foreign workers
- Provide transportation (minimal fee) for employees that need it

All of these additional strategies were in use within a participating business and represent other approaches to help create a positive workplace and retain employees.

Most Important Retention Strategies

After reviewing 9 retention strategies, participants were asked to identify the most important strategy related to employee retention. The majority of participants identified compensation either in the form of pay or benefits as the most important retention strategy for all employees. Seven employers and six employees selected compensation as the most important retention strategy, twice as many as any other retention strategy. Both employers and employees referenced compensation consistently as a critical factor in job satisfaction and employee retention. The type of compensation discussed was most often wages with 8 employers and 6 employees referencing the importance of competitive wages. Guaranteed hours were a key aspect to compensation for 3 employees while 2 employers also mentioned additional pay in the form of bonuses or overtime as a key type of compensation as well. Compensation in the form of benefits were not referred to as critical and 1 employer even mentioned they had removed their health benefits because they were not being used by employees.

While compensation was the clear consensus as the most important strategy, several participants identified that while it was essential, it was not the only factor that was vital for increasing employee retention.

‘Provide housing for some foreign workers on an ongoing basis, housing is expensive so if you can provide that its a big benefit, good for retention’
Employer

‘Attendance draws for BBQs, TVs and things, every two weeks – motivational thing for regular attendance’
Employee

‘Celebrate all the birthdays for employees – gives them an extra boost’
Employer

‘Post production levels every month, the plant workers really appreciate it’
Employee

‘compensation, hours specifically – [in the future] if I can’t work full time I will look for another job’
Employee

Employers and employees each identified 4 strategies that were critical. The rankings of these critical strategies can be seen in Figure 2.²

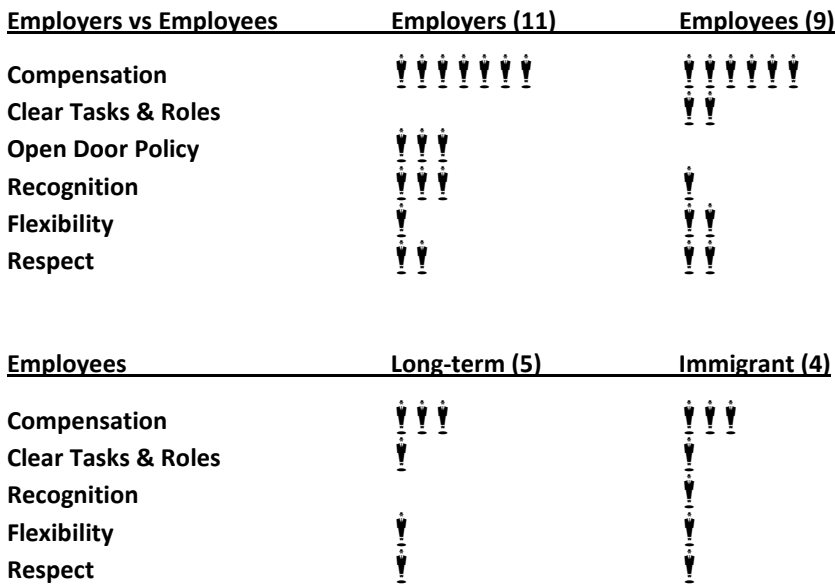


Figure 2: Most important retention strategies as identified by employer and employee

Open door policies and recognition were the next most important retention strategies from the employer’s perspective while only one employee identified recognition as most important. Two employees but no employers identified clear roles and tasks one of the next most important strategies. The importance of clear roles was also more emphasized by employees when discussing the clear roles retention strategy. In these discussions, many of the employees, 6 in total, referenced specific needs for clear expectations on a daily basis from workers to ensure that roles are being performed correctly and targets being met. While 5 employers provided similar reasons on the importance of clear roles, 4 employers did not discuss it in more detail while 2 also stressed the need for flexibility amongst employees so that they can address different needs within the business. Clear roles appears to be of more importance to employees while the competing emphasis from employers may also have contributed to why no employers identified clear roles as the most important retention strategy.

Besides compensation, there were commonalities between employer and employee perspectives on what other strategies were important. One employer and two employees identified flexibility as the most important retention strategy. Additionally, a strategy that was not discussed or

‘Recognizing employee skills – competitive pay packages – people like being part of this team and enjoying the ride that we are on’
Employer

‘make sure they know they are getting better wages than they could probably anywhere else for the same kind of work’
Employer

² Several participants identified multiple strategies as most important for employee retention resulting in 29 responses for this question from 20 participants.

identified as an alternative strategy was respect. Respect was mentioned by 4 participants in total as the most important strategy, 2 employers and 2 employees, identifying respect as a key element in employee retention, especially considering it was not an option that had been reviewed or brought up previous to this question.

Perhaps the most important result from this question was lack of difference between immigrant and non-immigrant employees. As Figure 2 illustrates, when asked to rank the most important retention strategies both immigrant employees and long term employees provided almost the exact same ranking. One employer and two employees from the participating businesses even stated that the retention strategies for immigrant employees should be the same as those for non-immigrant employees.

Professional Development

Professional Development retention strategies focus on the provision of education and training opportunities for employees within the business. These opportunities can take the form of certification, tuition reimbursement or paid time for courses. Professional Development was the retention strategy with the biggest difference between employers and employees. While 9 of the 11 employers identified professional development as a retention strategy being implemented in their business, only 5 out of 9 of employees identified the presence of professional development as a retention strategy. The findings reveal that professional development is different for management versus line workers.

Two distinct groups of employees within businesses emerged when discussing professional development. Both employers and employees grouped workers into management, professional and key staff on one-hand and process line employees on the other. A majority of participants identified these groups with 7 out of 11 employers and 4 out of 9 employees distinguishing between these groups of at some point during the interview. The distinction between management roles and line roles were most apparent in relation to the professional development retention strategy. When referring specifically to professional development opportunities, 5 out of 11 employers and 3 out of 9 employees identified that different employees had different in training opportunities available and these distinctions were between management and professional staff as compared to the line staff.

The definition of what is professional development is also an important factor in distinguishing between professional development opportunities

'[Professional development] for some employees – management staff'
Employer

'Yeah but the only one that has really gone on any courses is [*management*] – in shop training is all we can do'
Employee

'Send employees for certification course in food handling, other than that, no'
Employer

'Sent butchers to Alberta for meat cutting, sent [*manager*] to management courses, very important – courses were very beneficial'
Employer

for management vs. line roles. In this research project the opportunities for line staff were usually focused around necessary equipment or food handling training while the management staff were able to receive additional or advanced training such as marketing and human resource management. Employers and employees viewed these two types of training differently with 6 out of 11 employers citing both training opportunities as professional development, while only 2 employees referred to food safety or equipment certification as a professional development opportunity. Two other employees distinctly stated that no professional development was available and that the only training they participated in was role specific equipment and food handling training or on-the job training.

Cultural Training

Cultural training was described to participants by the researcher as training that helped employees and employers learn to integrate workers from different cultures. Only 1 participant identified this as a retention strategy with 10 out of 11 employers and 9 out of 9 employees indicated that this training was not something implemented in their business.

Two possible reasons emerged from the research regarding this low presence of cultural training. The first reason identified is that businesses are too small to require or be suitable for a formal training approach. Only 1 participant had participated in cultural diversity training while 8 employers said they had no need for cultural training or that the business was too small, with not enough employees, to conduct this type of training.

The second possible reason for the low values on this retention strategy is that many employers and employees also indicated cultural tolerance and accommodation was an important part of the workplace environment already, despite having no cultural training. Five employers and six employees referred to an established atmosphere of cultural tolerance within the workplace with 1 employer and 3 employees indicating that there is accommodation regarding time off for culturally specific holidays.

Formal cultural diversity training does not appear to be a retention strategy employed by rural food processing businesses in central Manitoba due in part to the fact that the participating businesses were too small to suit the formalized training approach. However, despite the absence of formal training, both employers and employees are cognizant of the importance of cultural diversity and numerous businesses promote environments of tolerance and accommodation for different cultures.

‘We do food safety training, people like to have the opportunity to get certification’
Employer

‘Not very much [professional development opportunities], reason is basically looking for general labourers – will do fork lift training or propane filling’
Employee

‘No official training but environment of respect – ... have posters regarding bullying, openly promoting a safe and comfortable environment, respect is key focus’
Employer

‘Everybody respects each other and try to understand each other’s culture’
Employee

‘Very very small business – we have people from different cultures working side by side without doing any training, we are neighbours anyways’
Employer

Discussion

The findings have identified several important outcomes from the research. The key outcomes that have emerged are:

- The lack of difference between immigrants and long term employees
- Compensation is the most important retention strategy
- Professional Development is different for management vs line employees in rural food processing SMEs
- Rethinking cultural training for rural food processing SMEs

One of the key objectives of this research project was to identify any difference in retention strategies between immigrant and non-immigrant employees. The results indicate that retention strategies for immigrant employees are the same as retention strategies for all employees. For the rural food processing businesses with 1-100 employees that participated in our research, retaining immigrant employees requires the same approach as retaining non-immigrant employees: providing sufficient compensation, clear roles with some flexibility along with an atmosphere of respect and recognition.

Compensation is the most important retention strategy from all perspectives. Employers and employees both ranked compensation as a clear number one in terms of importance receiving twice the number of mentions as any other strategy. While participants were clear to note that it's not the only retention strategy that matters, it is the strategy that has the biggest impact on retention. If food processing SMEs in rural Manitoba are not providing competitive wages and the appropriate hours, this research made it clear that they will have difficulty in retaining employees. Businesses in food processing need to be aware of what appropriate compensation is for employees within their sector and within the province.

While this research did not reveal a clear reason for the difference in perceptions of professional development, it did reveal that professional development is different for management versus line workers. The research revealed that there is a difference in availability of professional development opportunities, based on role and the perception of what is professional development vs what is required training for performing is also perceived differently by role. Both employers and employees identified the difference between management and line employee roles as well as the difference in professional development opportunities for these two groups. Management employees were afforded more training as well as opportunities that expanded their current role or duties. Line employees on the other hand, were offered less training and the training tended to be related to skills needed to do their current role, rather than opportunities to expand their skill set beyond their role.

Formal cultural training was identified as a retention strategy that does not fit with the participating businesses either due to the size of the business or due to a perceived lack of need from the employers' perspective. In addition, businesses also indicated that they are aware of the importance of cultural tolerance and accommodation in the workplace and many businesses have worked to create such an environment. With the participating rural food processing businesses with 1 to 100 employees not taking formal cultural training, it is important to identify what other types of supports would help rural food processing SMEs that want to increase cultural tolerance and accommodation within the workplace or to help address any questions or concerns that these businesses have.

Potential Recommendations











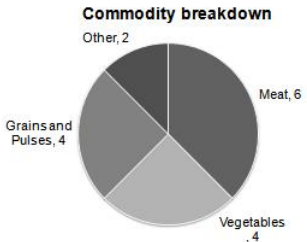


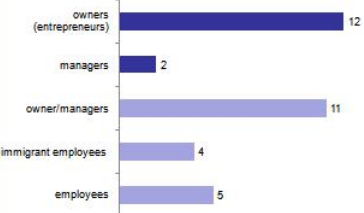

The findings of this exploratory study suggest several further topics in understanding how to improve retention strategies and increase employee retention in rural food-processing SMEs.

- 1. Improve understanding of compensation and wage levels for food processing in rural Manitoba to support competitive compensation** – compensation was identified as the most important employee retention strategy by a substantial margin with competitive wages being the most referenced form of compensation. Ensuring that wages within the food processing sector are competitive with other local industries and other geographic regions are important for supporting food processing employee retention efforts. It is vital to understand the wage range of food processing jobs within the sector wages in comparison to other sectors. Geographical variations within the province should also be examined to equip food processing SMEs with the necessary information to provide competitive wages for retaining employees in food processing and in rural communities.
- 2. Improve understanding of Professional Development definitions and opportunities for food processing** – there was disconnect between employers and employees in this research project regarding the availability of professional development. To help realize the potential of professional development opportunities for retention, it is important to better understand the differences in professional development between different groups of employees; management employees and line employees. It also important to develop definitions of professional development with employers and employees to ensure that both sides understand what professional development means to each other.
- 3. Improve understanding of how to support the creation of cultural tolerance and accommodation in the workplace for rural food processing SMEs** – most businesses indicated that they were too small for formal cultural training or that they did not need it. Five employers and six employees also indicated that their business/workplace promoted an environment of tolerance and accommodation already. To increase of cultural tolerance and accommodation and to support those businesses who are already creating such an environment, it is important to better understand what resources and knowledge are needed and appropriate for the rural food processing SMEs with 1-100 employees.

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Appendix 1

Research Purpose	Research Methods
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify factors that influence job creation amongst rural food processors To better understand retention strategies being used by rural food processors 	 <p>Research Sample</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small and Medium Enterprises <100 employees Central region of Manitoba Participating businesses are primary or secondary food processors – producers and distributors not included 
Research Sample	Location of Research Sample
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 56 primary or secondary food processors identified by MAFRI in the central region Prescreened businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 27 had created jobs within the past 2 years – 13 employed immigrant employees 	 <p>16 businesses were engaged in total</p>  
Research Sample	Data Collection
 <p>16 businesses were engaged in total</p> <p>Commodity breakdown</p>  	 <p>34 interviews were conducted</p>  <p>Job Creation Employee Retention</p> 

Employee Retention Research Analysis



1. Employers' responses were compared with employee's responses to determine presence and importance of strategy.
2. When differences occurred between employer and employee responses, contextual responses were used to identify possible reasons for these differences
3. A list of common strategies identified as 'most important' was created for both employers and employees. The differences between employers and employees were explained using contextual responses.



Retention Strategies



- **Provide competitive pay and benefits** – this retention strategy focused on the presence of competitive salaries, wages and benefits
- **Give employees clear tasks and responsibility** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees have clear role descriptions and if expectations were clearly established for tasks
- **Offer professional development opportunities** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees were provided with opportunities for learning and development. Certification, tuition reimbursement, and education-based time allowance were all provided as examples of provisions for professional development
- **Open door policy** – this retention strategy focused on the feedback opportunities for employees, identifying if there was regular feedback for employees and if they also felt there was an accessible channel for them to provide feedback
- **Cultural diversity training** – this retention strategy focused on the provision of formal training for cultural diversity in the workplace



Retention Strategies



- **Promoting company values and mission** – this retention strategy focused on if employers created a clear linkage between employee roles and the purpose and values of the company
- **Recognizing employee skills** – this retention strategy focused on whether employee's excellence in their role or if their skills not related specifically to that role were recognized. Participants were asked if this recognition resulted in knowledge sharing/promotion/role expansion.
- **Flex time/part time** – this retention strategy focused on whether employees were able to work flexible hours or part time hours.
- **Career planning** – this retention strategy focused on whether employers worked with employees to identify future goals and roles that they would like to work towards and identified the necessary steps to achieve those career plans
- **Other** – this category was included to capture other retention strategies being used in participating businesses



Presence of Retention Strategies



RETENTION STRATEGY/ACTIVITIES	Identified by Employer (n=1)	Identified by Employees (n=6)
Provide competitive pay and benefits	██████████ 82%	██████████ 83%
Give employees clear tasks and responsibility	██████████ 100%	██████████ 100%
Offer professional development opportunities	██████████ 82%	██████████ 58%
Open door policy ...	██████████ 100%	██████████ 100%
Implement cultural diversity training ...	██████████ 0%	██████████ 0%
Promote company values and mission ...	██████████ 91%	██████████ 78%
Recognize employee skills ...	██████████ 91%	██████████ 100%
Flex-time, part time opportunities	██████████ 82%	██████████ 67%
Career planning ...	██████████ 45%	██████████ 58%
Other	██████████ 45%	██████████ 33%



Other Retention Strategies



- **Recognition-related**
 - Provide donuts and other fun stuff regularly
 - Provide a canteen at cost for employees – no longer doing this but was successful and very appreciated when it was implemented
 - Posting monthly production levels/achievements Attendance Draws – prize draws based on employee attendance
 - Celebrate birthdays and have staff parties
- **Compensation-related**
 - Incentive programs for performance
 - Provide housing for foreign workers
 - Provide transportation (minimal fee) for employees that need it

Post production levels every month, the plant workers really appreciate it' Employee

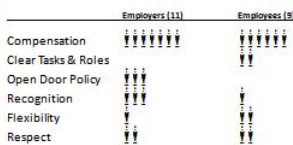
Provide housing for some foreign workers on an ongoing basis, housing is expensive so if you can provide that its a big benefit, good for retention' Employer



Key Findings - Most Important Retention Strategies



- Similar responses between employers and employees
- Compensation was substantially more important for both employers and employees



'compensation, hours specifically – [in the future] if I can't work full time I will look for another job' Employee

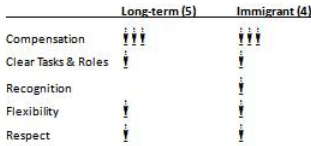
'make sure they know they are getting better wages than they could probably anywhere else for the same kind of work' Employer



Key Findings - Immigrant vs Non-immigrant employee similarities



- Immigrant and non-immigrant employees had similar perspectives of retention strategies and their importance
- Three participants (1 employer and 2 immigrant employees) stated that retention strategies should be the same for all employees



Key Findings - Professional Development



- Difference in perceptions about professional development strategies – due to 2 possible factors
1. Distinction between management/professional vs line roles
 2. Different perceptions of professional development for line roles

"Professional development" for some employees – management staff
Employer

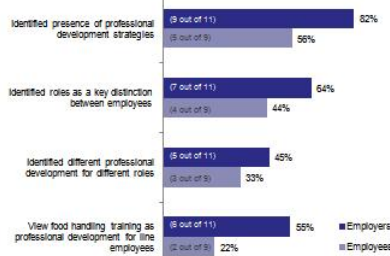
"Yeah but the only one that has really gone on any courses is [management] – in shop training is all we can do"
Employee



Key Findings - Professional Development



Perceptions about Professional Development



Presence of Retention Strategies



RETENTION STRATEGY/ACTIVITIES	Identified by Employer (n=1)	Identified by Employees (n=6)
Provide competitive pay and benefits	100%	83%
Give employees clear tasks and responsibility	100%	100%
Offer professional development opportunities	82%	50%
Open door policy...	100%	100%
Implement cultural diversity training...	0%	0%
Promote company values and mission ...	91%	78%
Recognize employee skills ...	91%	100%
Flex-time, part time opportunities	82%	67%
Career planning ...	45%	50%
Other	45%	33%



Other Retention Strategies



- Recognition-related
 - Provide donuts and other fun stuff regularly
 - Provide a canteen at cost for employees – no longer doing this but was successful and very appreciated when it was implemented
 - Posting monthly production levels/achievements Attendance Draws – prize draws based on employee attendance
 - Celebrate birthdays and have staff parties

"Post production levels every month, the plant workers really appreciate it"
Employee

- Compensation-related
 - Incentive programs for performance
 - Provide housing for foreign workers
 - Provide transportation (minimal fee) for employees that need it

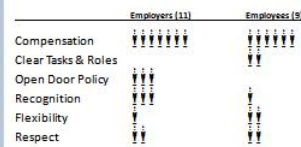
"Provide housing for some foreign workers on an ongoing basis, housing is expensive so if you can provide that its a big benefit, good for retention"
Employer



Key Findings - Most Important Retention Strategies



- Similar responses between employers and employees
- Compensation was substantially more important for both employers and employees



"compensation, hours specifically – [in the future] if I can't work full time I will look for another job"
Employee



"make sure they know they are getting better wages than they could probably anywhere else for the same kind of work"
Employer

Key Findings - Immigrant vs Non-immigrant employee similarities



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	Long-term (5)	Immigrant (4)
Compensation	↓↓↓	↓↓↓
Clear Tasks & Roles	↓	↓
Recognition	↓	↓
Flexibility	↓	↓
Respect	↓	↓



Key Findings - Professional Development



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"Professional development for some employees – management staff"
Employer

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Key Findings - Professional Development



Perceptions about Professional Development

