

On the Bright Side: Rural Employer Pathway for hiring Temporary Foreign Workers

By: Anisa Zehtab-Martin
& Jill Bucklaschuk

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Migration Context



- Number of temporary foreign workers (TFWs) doubled in 4 years
- 45% TFWs arrive in communities outside of Winnipeg
- TFWs considered a source of permanent migration
- Rural regions face unique challenges in retaining newcomers



(Moss, Bucklaschuk, and Annis 2010; Allan 2010; Manitoba Labour and Immigration 2008)

Why a Pathways Document?



- 2007-2009: Foundational projects
- RDI's TFW Dialogue Group
 - Federal & Provincial Government
 - Community
 - Industry
 - Academics
- Welcoming Communities project
- Uncertainty regarding TFW hiring process



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Purpose of Pathway Document



Rural Employers' Information Pathway for Hiring Temporary Foreign Workers in Manitoba

September 2010



Developers
Anisa Zehtab-Martin
Jill Bucklaschuk
Wm. (Bill) Ashton

- To provide an overview and assist with navigating information
- Targeted towards small enterprises in rural Manitoba

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Points of caution:

- Process is not linear
- This is ONE of many resources
- Not a legal document

Contents of Pathway



- Illustrates multiple complex steps required to hire TFWs
 - 7 key steps are outlined
 - 1 optional action (TFW to permanent resident)
- Steps demonstrate the following:
 - Why and how
 - Required results
 - Agencies and stakeholders involved
 - Helpful process-oriented tips



Employer & Stakeholder Discussions 2010



- To gain feedback on pathways and understand small rural employers' experiences
- Collaboration with EDOs, community members, and rural employers
- Employer discussions in 4 western Manitoban communities



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"I wish I would have had such a resource when I started this process."

Rural Employer

Voices of Rural Employers



- Struggling to address labour shortages
 - Preference to hire eligible Canadians
 - Costly to hire foreign workers
 - Time-consuming
 - Frustrating experience

“The thing that nobody seems to get is [hiring a foreign worker] is not your first choice- it’s not an easy process, it’s expensive, and...we need to give them every support that we can...”

Rural Employer



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Voices of Rural Employers



- Challenges negotiating bureaucracy and processes
 - Recruiting sight-unseen
 - Language difficulties
 - Cultural differences

“Once you get through the paperwork you’re basically hiring people on the fact that you think they can cook and it’s very hard...you can check references until you’re blue in the face...”

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Voices of Rural Employers



- Positive experiences with foreign employees
 - Great work ethic
 - Positive at their job
 - Good impression on other staff

“The TFWs are positive and eager – they cross train into other departments. It only makes our staff better – they try and do better...they’re here specifically to work so they’re not happy unless they’ve done their job properly.”

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Voices of Rural Employers



- Small enterprises and rural living
 - TFWs embraced by other employees and community
 - Rural living is not for everyone
 - Difficult filling labour shortage in rural communities

“The town has made an effort to help these guys out, they have reached out. The first TFWs we had to do everything for them, banking, furniture, housing, but the town has been so helpful to help them.”

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Discussion



- Rural and small-town contexts are unique
- Targeted research and public policy for rural regions is needed
- TFWs are becoming permanent residents, requiring welcoming and settlement strategies
- Feedback from various involved stakeholders makes for richer reflections



Acknowledgments



Rural Employers

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Manitoba Labour and Immigration

Service Canada

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural
Initiatives



Building Welcoming Communities project funded by the
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Further Information



- RDI's Welcoming Communities Project:
<http://www2.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/welcomingcommunity.asp>

Anisa Zehtab-Martin – zehtaba@brandonu.ca

Jill Bucklaschuk - bucklaschukj@brandonu.ca



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