



BC Fruit Works

OKANAGAN AGRICULTURE:

Worker's Guide to Tree Fruit & Wine Grapes

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OKANAGAN TREE FRUIT & WINE GRAPE SEASONS

Welcome!

The Okanagan Valley is home to a thriving fruit and wine grape industry. Whether you're here for a season or looking to build a career, this guide will help you get started. Inside, you'll find the basics on what to expect, how to prepare, and tips to make the most of your experience.

Keep in mind: every farm is different. Your hours, pay, transportation, accommodation, and daily tasks may vary depending on the grower and type of work. As you settle into your job, you'll learn more about the crop you're working with and the roles you might take on.

Use this guide to get familiar with what's ahead—and don't be afraid to ask your employer questions along the way!

Crop	Bloom Period	Harvest Period
Apricots	Early–Late April	Mid July – Mid August
Cherries	Mid April – Late May	Late June – Late August
Peaches	Late April – Early May	Late July – Early September
Pears/Plums	Mid April – Mid May	Mid August – Late September
Apples	May	Mid August – Late November
Grapes	May - July (vine mgmt)	Late August - Early November



Did You Know?

Apples have the longest harvest window and cherries bloom the longest!

WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE JOB

Work Conditions

- Outdoor work in all types of weather
- Long hours, repetitive tasks, and physical effort
- Requires good fitness: bending, lifting, and standing

Hours & Pay

- Hours vary by crop and weather
- Payment may be hourly, by contract, or piece rate
- All jobs must follow BC Employment Standards (minimum wage, breaks, and overtime)
- Employers must adhere to the **British Columbia's Employment Standards** for wages, breaks, and overtime.

More information: [BC Employment Standards Branch](#)



Health & Safety Basics

- **Stay Hydrated** – Drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- **Use Proper Lifting Techniques** – Lift with your legs, not your back.
- **Take Breaks** – Rest when needed to avoid exhaustion.
- **Watch for Heat Exhaustion** – Know the signs (dizziness, headache, nausea).
- **Follow Safety Guidelines** – Use equipment properly and listen to supervisor instructions

More information: [AgSafe](#) | [WorkSafeBC](#)



PACKING LIST

Date: _____

☐ Breathable, weather-appropriate clothing

☐ Hat

☐ Sunglasses

☐ Water

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ Sturdy, closed-toe footwear

☐ Work gloves

☐ Sunscreen

☐ Snacks

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

☐ _____

NOTES:

GETTING SETTLED: HOUSING, TRANSPORT, AND YOU

Some farms provide on-site housing, while others may assist with finding nearby accommodations. **Always confirm your accommodations with your employer before arriving!**

Options may include:

- Farm worker housing (dormitory-style or cabins).
- Campgrounds or motels in rural areas.
- Rentals in nearby towns (Penticton, Kelowna, Oliver, etc.).



Transportation

- You are responsible to arrange transportation to and from work
- Many farms are in rural areas with limited public transit.
- Some employers provide transportation from designated pick-up points.

Public Transit information: [Vernon](#) | [Kelowna](#) | [South Okanagan-Similkameen](#)

Your Rights:

- Fair wages and legal working hours.
- Safe working conditions and access to protective gear.
- Breaks and rest periods as required by BC labour laws.

Your Responsibilities:

- Arrive on time and be ready to work.
- Follow instructions and safety rules.
- Respect coworkers, supervisors, and farm property.

If you have concerns about workplace conditions, you can contact WorkSafeBC, or the BC Employment Standards Branch for support.



MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE

- **Be Punctual & Reliable** – Employers value dependable workers.
- **Ask Questions** – Learn from experienced workers and supervisors.
- **Network & Connect** – Many workers return seasonally; building relationships can help secure future jobs.
- **Enjoy the Okanagan!** – Explore local wineries, lakes, and hiking trails during your time off.

Beyond the orchards and vineyards, the Okanagan and Similkameen valleys are full of incredible places to explore during your time off. From lakes and hiking trails to farmers' markets and festivals, there's no shortage of things to see and do. Whether you're relaxing on a beach, tasting local fruit wines, or adventuring through the mountains—this region is yours to discover.

Regional Travel & Visitor Info

- [Visit South Okanagan](#)
- [HelloBC – Okanagan Valley](#)
- [Destination Osoyoos](#)
- [Tourism Kelowna](#)
- [Summerland Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Penticton Tourism](#)

Hiking & Outdoors

- [AllTrails – Okanagan Trails](#)
- [BC Parks – Okanagan Region](#)

Events & Activities

- [Festivals Kelowna](#)
- [District Wine Village](#)
- [Visit Oliver](#)
- [Similkameen Valley Events](#)

Farm Experiences & Markets

- [BC Farmers' Market Trail – Interior](#)
- [U-Pick Farms in the Kelowna](#)

