

## RIGHTRISK NEWS

### Ag Help Wanted

Farmers, ranchers and their families provide most of the labor for their operations. However, additional labor may be needed to accomplish certain tasks such as to hoe weeds from a field of vegetables, harvest flower stems, or move cattle from one pasture to another.

For some farm business owners, there may be some (or even great) discomfort associated with having employees. The complexities of employment law, determining appropriate compensation, and dealing with people from a culture with which they are unfamiliar may cause reluctance to dig into the field of labor management. Yet, good human resource management is vital to the success of farms and ranches needing hired labor. Opportunities may be lost where attention to labor management ends by keeping the “Ag Help Wanted” sign clean and handy.



The methods people use to manage labor cover an expanse of human activity — deciding how many people to hire, showing a daughter or son how to drive a tractor, setting wage rates, recruiting employees, writing layoff and recall policies, filling out forms at hiring, explaining pick and prune techniques, bringing water and portable toilets to the field, checking on pack quality, adjusting for family emergencies, choosing a replacement foreman, trying to cool hostilities, administering first aid, documenting performance strengths and weaknesses, running a meeting, and bargaining with an insurance agent. The duties are seemingly endless.

Farmers and ranchers currently managing employees and considering hiring extra help are justified in their human resource management questions. They should continue to study ways to ease their burdens, make employees more cost effective, and to stay current with labor laws.

One good resource for assistance in managing agricultural labor is a book and accompanying web site titled *Ag Help Wanted: Guidelines for Managing Agricultural Labor* ([AgHelpWanted.org](http://AgHelpWanted.org)). It is a useful guide for owners and managers at every level of agricultural and horticultural operation. It provides ideas, practical guidance, and assistance with:

- Planning the division and coordination of work in agricultural production,
- Recruiting and selecting employees for agricultural jobs,
- Supervising, training, and tapping the motivation of employees to perform well,
- Correcting employees and taking disciplinary action if necessary,
- Communicating effectively with employees and others.

The book and accompanying web site have numerous examples of how to—and not to—manage agricultural labor. The web site also offers video vignettes to illustrate different management styles. Labor is a critical component for many farm and ranch operations. Owners can improve their efficiency, reduce safety issues, and increase profits by better managing their employees.

For more information or to order a copy of *Ag Help Wanted*, see: [AgHelpWanted.org](http://AgHelpWanted.org)



#### DATES TO REMEMBER

##### ARC/PLC Enrollment

- June 17–September 30, 2015

##### Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program

- Begins July 1

##### Spring crop acreage reporting deadline

- July 15, 2015

##### Spring premium billing deadline date

- August 15, 2015

##### Fall crops sales closing date

- September 30, 2015

For more information see:

<http://www.rma.usda.gov>

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>



## LIVESTOCK RISK PROTECTION LAMB (LRP-LAMB) AVAILABLE

Sales of Livestock Risk Protection-Lamb (LRP-Lamb) resumed on Monday, May 4, 2015. The product first became available for sale beginning September 17, 2007, but recently sales of the product had been suspended since February of 2014.

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) Board of Directors approved a number of changes to the program with the latest resumption of sales, including: 1. A new price prediction model and modifications to how the actual ending values are calculated; 2. A revised and more detailed definition of “insured lambs”; 3. Language was added to prevent assignment of indemnities to businesses buying, selling, marketing, or packing lambs; 4. The 20-week endorsement was removed, setting the options back to the original set at 13-week, 26-week and 39-week endorsements, and; 5. Finally, changes were made to the daily and annual sales limit for the product.

Producers interested in purchasing LRP-Lamb must do so through an Approved Insurance Provider (AIP). A list of crop insurance agents authorized by AIPs to write livestock insurance is available on the RMA website ([www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov)).

## AGRICULTURAL JOBS

The working environment must be a place where people want to work, in order to attract and retain good employees. Although most farm jobs involve some routine tasks and unpleasant conditions (heat, dust, etc.), deliberate effort can create an environment where employees can see that they are likely to be respected, well-treated, and appreciated. Farm jobs can embody variety, a sense of control, and opportunity for growth, which tend to hold the interest and motivate people who are capable of performing this type of work.

### Six Attributes of Jobs that Tap Motivation

Jobs are more satisfying if they allow employees greater scope, give them a sense of continuity and completeness, and encourage them to stretch their minds and sharpen their skills in accomplishing the tasks up to the expected standard.

Attributes of such jobs usually include:

- Doing a whole job from beginning to end,
- Regular contact with other employees, suppliers, and customers,
- Duties or tasks that use a variety of skills,
- Freedom to act independently, with choices about how to do the work,
- Feedback from results, with standards built in against which success can be measured soon, and
- Opportunity for growth.



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is right for you and your operation?*

