



Ministry of Labour
Levels 5 & 6, Tower C, International Waterfront Centre,
#1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
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Email: labour-communications@gov.tt Website: labour.gov.tt

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Media Release

Ministry of Labour facilitates the employment of 194 Seasonal Farm Workers in Canada

For the period January to March 2022, one hundred and ninety- four (194) farm workers have returned to a number of farms in Ontario and Alberta, Canada, to pursue seasonal agricultural work.

The opportunities afforded to these workers are noteworthy in light of the fact that the Farm Programme, like many government programmes, was adversely affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020.

Minister of Labour, the Honourable Stephen Mc Clashie M.P., lauded this Programme stating that *“the Ministry is very pleased to be able to continue facilitating the process of sending seasonal workers to Canada.”* He said *“it is part of our programme of expansion and we are looking to significantly increase the number of Trinidad and Tobago nationals who can access the Farm Programme. The MOL is working hand in hand with the Canadian agencies in making this a reality. Within a few months, you will see even more people accessing this programme and it is our intention to expand significantly over the next 2 to 3 years.”*

Mr. Eric Poliah, Chief Manpower Officer of the Manpower Division, Ministry of Labour, noted that *“Trinidad and Tobago nationals have been travelling to take up employment via the Commonwealth Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers’ Programme (CCSAWP) more commonly known as the Farm Programme since 1967.”* He said over the years, these employment opportunities have made it possible for ‘Trinbagonians’ to support themselves and their families, educate their children and build their homes. Mr. Poliah added that the Farm Programme continues to be a mutually beneficial partnership between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Canada and despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Ministry of Labour ‘s Farm Programme Unit remains committed to preparing nationals and facilitating their continuous employment.

One of the seasonal workers, Mr. Steven Williams, who assumed beekeeping duties on Yaremcio Honey Farm in Alberta for the fourth consecutive time since his enrolment in 2019 said *“there are ups and downs and leaving your family is the hardest part, but I enjoy what I do a lot.”* He added that through the Farm Programme, he has been exposed to possibilities that he never expected such as pursuing a career in beekeeping; a field that he had no prior knowledge of and aspires to apply his skills in Trinidad and Tobago someday.



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His advice for those interested in enrolling in the Farm Programme is that *“it’s serious commitment and hard work”*. Mr. Williams is one of many Trinbagonian farm workers who remains a dedicated worker with a positive attitude.

Another farm worker, Frances Ganess, who was placed on Schuyler’s Farm to engage in apple picking, has been employed seasonally over the last eight years. She touted her love for the Programme as it enables her to support her ailing daughter and grandchildren and provides funding for the small business she opened for her daughter. When asked about her work experience she noted, *“it is up to you to make it work, I’m always on time and I do my work, and due to that the farmer requested for me to return.”* She commended the Farm Programme Unit sharing that the staff are very supportive and inform you of what to expect and what not to do, in her own words she said *“be early and stay out of trouble.”*

The Ministry of Labour through its Farm Programme Unit remains steadfast in its commitment and drive to provide job opportunities for citizens who wish to participate in the Seasonal Work Programme in Canada, with a view to improving the quality of their lives.

For further information on the Farm Programme please call or visit

Farm Programme Unit, Duke Place, Level 1, 50-54 Duke Street, Port of Spain

T: 299-0300 Option 2 or mol.farmprogramme@gov.tt.





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A group of the Farm Workers at the Piarco International Airport on their way to depart for work on Farms in Canada facilitated by the Farm Programme Unit, Ministry of Labour.



Mr. Steven Williams, arrives at the Pearson International Airport, Canada and is happy to return to work in Canada.



Ms. Frances Ganness and fellow Farm Workers make their way to depart to the farmhouses in Canada.



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