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AFAM ITAB

**Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management**

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In this newsletter:

- [Farmers2Founders Agrifood Sector Innovation Programs](#)
 - [REMINDER: Stakeholder survey Jobs and Skills Australia: 2024 Skills Priority List](#)
 - [Jobs and Skills Councils Project Updates:](#)
 - AgTrade Apprenticeship Project
 - AHC Improvements Project
 - Tree Felling Project
 - [NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships](#)
-

Welcome to the first AFAM newsletter of 2024. We hope you had a safe and relaxing break over the holiday season. We wish you all the best for the new year and look forward to connecting with you on the skills and training issues that matter to your industries.

Best wishes,
Jess

Farmers2Founders Agrifood Sector Innovation Programs

[Farmers2Founders](#) help producers collaborate with agrifood tech developers and innovators to fast-track the development, commercialisation and uptake of solutions in the agriculture, food, fibre, fisheries and aquaculture industries. The programs offered provide entrepreneurs and stakeholders across the agrifood value chain with the capabilities, resources, network and connections necessary for success.

The key focus areas for [Regional Innovation NSW](#) include:

- **Technology-enabled primary producers** – boosting access to technologies that lift productivity and growth for regional primary producers.
- **High-quality food products** – maximising the potential of NSW's agricultural production by growing opportunities to drive value add in the food technology sector.
- **Recycling and waste management** – Growing the circular economy in regional NSW, leveraging the availability of lower cost land and a rapidly changing global waste management system in food and beverage product development.

TEKLAB NSW Program

The [TEKLAB program](#) is an agrifood tech accelerator pathway that supports entrepreneurs and startups from early-stage ideas and validation, through to growing and scaling their ventures. Participants validate concepts rigorously, ensuring real-world viability before transitioning to the building phase. With strategic support, mentorship and networking, the program facilitates successful launches and growth, resulting in impactful and sustainable businesses.

This free program is funded by the NSW government's Accelerating Regional Innovation Fund.

[Register for an information session](#) available on **1 February 2024**. Applications for the Hatch #1 program **close 4 February 2024**.



REMINDER: Stakeholder Survey - Jobs and Skills Australia: 2024 Skills Priority List

PRIORITY LIST

To better understand the skills profile in Australia, the Jobs and Skills Australia [2024 Skills Priority List \(SPL\) stakeholder survey](#) is now **open until 5pm (AEDT) Friday 23 February 2024**.

The on-the-ground knowledge and experience you can provide as part of this survey will give Jobs and Skills Australia insights into the recruitment challenges and occupations that might be in shortage across the Australian labour market. The SPL informs analysis and advice on potential policy responses to shortages in the Australian labour market which may affect your industry and we encourage your input to help make sure the 2024 SPL is based on comprehensive evidence.

You are also able to provide additional evidence and information such as member surveys that you have run, relevant industry reports commissioned, and other data you may have to further paint an accurate picture.

Read about Jobs and Skills Australia's [SPL Methodology](#) and [take the survey](#).

Jobs and Skills Councils Project Updates:

Ag Trade Apprenticeships

Skills Insight is undertaking an Ag Trade Apprenticeship project to research the dynamics of a trade apprenticeship in agriculture to help attract new entrants and promote career pathways.

Skills Insight is travelling around the country visiting stakeholders. They have also conducted a series of face-to-face and online consultations and gathered feedback through an online survey.

For more information, [visit the project webpage](#).

AHC Improvements Project

Qualifications and skill sets across agriculture, horticulture, conservation and ecosystem management (AHC) are being updated to include units that have been improved as part of recent projects. The units have been revised to bring them in line with changes in technology, systems and regulations, as well as updated skills in biosecurity, environmental sustainability, quality assurance and work health and safety. The final draft skill sets and qualifications are currently undergoing proofreading, anti-discrimination assessment and quality checks.

For more information, [visit the project webpage](#).

Tree Felling Project

A project is underway to review three forest and wood products units which describe the skills for felling trees with a chainsaw at a basic, intermediate and advanced level. These units are used in a range of environments in which manual tree felling skills are required, including in arboriculture and agricultural settings.

In consultation with subject matter experts, the units have been revised to reduce the barrier to training related to access of trees, while still supporting the safety and competency of learners.

For more information, [visit the project webpage](#).



NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships

The following grants, opportunities and scholarships are available to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links for more information.

[Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative](#): support for existing Aboriginal owned and operated businesses to grow and diversify their business.

[Barranggirra](#): to provide end to end support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners through culturally appropriate mentoring to ensure successful retention and completion of training and improved post-training employment outcomes.

[Free Training for Veterans](#): to broaden their career opportunities and help transition to civilian life after service, veterans and their partners will have access to free training.

[Medium Business Support Grant](#): available to business and non-profit organisations with more than 20 and less than 200 full-time equivalent employees who were directly impacted by storms and floods from August to September 2022. **Closes 11.59pm 29 March 2024.**

[OCHRE Opportunity Hubs](#): aim to provide First Nations young people with the confidence and knowledge to follow a supported pathway between school and further education and/or employment through partnerships with schools, coordination of local opportunities, mentoring, support and more.

[On Farm Connectivity Program](#): to enable primary producers in agriculture, forestry and/or fisheries to take advantage of digital agribusiness solutions to boost productivity and improve safety. **Applications close 30 June 2024 or when funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first.**

[Resources to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee](#): a series of videos and resources are available.

Other Grants and opportunities:

[Free Support to Help Create Mentally Healthy Workplaces](#): SafeWork NSW has a range of programs, tools and resources available to help on the journey to create mentally healthy workplaces.

Please feel welcome share this newsletter with anyone you think might be interested.

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AFAM NSW ITAB
jcleary@skillsinsight.com.au
PO Box 329
Edgecliff, NSW 2027
Australia

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