



Horticulture Profile

Employment Nelson-Tasman

Introduction

Horticulture is the second largest employer in the Nelson/Tasman Region and the pip-fruit, or apple industry provides most of the local seasonal jobs.

Grape growing and viticulture is expanding quickly. Some local vineyards and wineries are doing well by producing goods for the more specialist organic market.

Berry fruit production is also growing and expected to double over the next five years.

The olive industry has recently been introduced to the Nelson Region and looks to be very promising in the future.

Employment in the Industry

- ◆ Pip-fruit is the largest employer and provides jobs for around 4500 people during the apple harvest which is between February and May.
- ◆ Many people take advantage of the range of seasonal work Nelson and Tasman has to offer, and by linking the different kinds of seasonal work together gain work all year round. See attached seasonal calendar or visit www.ncc.govt.nz for full seasonal calendar.
- ◆ Viticulture offers seasonal work, plus a range of career options from growing grapes to wine making.
- ◆ Horticulture and especially seasonal work is very dependent on weather and ever changing climatic conditions.

What Employers Are Looking For

- ◆ Being reliable and hard working are the most important qualities for horticulture work as most skills are learned on the job and can be enhanced through training.
- ◆ Work on orchards or farms is mostly very practical quite physical so it helps to be fit and strong.
- ◆ A good work ethic is essential and employers are keen to take on staff who can show they are keen and reliable or have some previous experience.

Current Skill Shortages

- ◆ The seasonal demand for apple pickers is high and labour shortages are a concern to orchardists every year.
- ◆ As viticulture expands there could in the future be a shortage of skilled grape pruners.
- ◆ Fruit pack houses are in need of more quality control staff.
- ◆ Vineyards are short of skilled staff.

HORTICULTURE Employment Categories

Job Title	No's Employ	Job Description	Training and Providers
Orchardists self employed and managers	2,000	Run an orchard where fruit is grown and harvested	Degree or Diploma in Horticulture and/or industry knowledge and experience
Horticultural Supervisor wages vary greatly		Oversees staff and manages orchard operations	Diploma or Degree in Horticulture or practical experience
Horticultural Consultant Many self employed and wages vary greatly		Advise growers on horticultural management	Agriculture or Horticulture Degree
Fruit Picker Mostly contract rates	Approx. 5,000	Harvesting seasonal fruit (3-4 months)	On the job training
Fruit Packer \$18,700-\$20,800pa	200-300	Packing fruit for export	On the job training
Fruit Grader \$19,800-\$22,800pa		Checking fruit for defects before being packed	On the job training

Quality assurance \$20,800-\$27,000pa		Check that packed fruit consistently meets quality standards	Some previous experience plus on the job training
Seasonal orchard maintenance \$18,700-\$20,800pa or contract rates		Off season orchard work includes pruning and planting trees or vines, fruit thinning and vine tying. Viticulture employs people in bud rubbing/leaf plucking	On the job training
Nursery Workers \$16,600+ pa		Grow young plants, flowers, trees and shrubs for sale or for use in parks and gardens	Preferably sixth form cert, a Certificate in Horticulture or practical experience Horticulture Apprenticeships may be available
Growing cereals, grains, fruit and vegetables \$16,600+ pa	113	Working in the field where produce is grown	Knowledge of growing techniques, previous experience or a Certificate in Horticulture
Processing fruit and vegetables \$16,600+ pa	90	Working in factories where produce is processed, packed and distributed	On the job training
Fruit and Vegetable Wholesaler Many self employed and wages vary greatly	110	Washing, packing and selling fruit and vegetables	On the job training
Seasonal Fork Lift Driver \$20,800-\$26,000pa		Operates a forklift to move and stack pallets	Fork lift drivers license is required
Recreational Park and Garden Keeper \$23,100-\$33,900pa	85	Public park and garden maintenance	Experience or horticultural qualifications
Viticulture Winery staff \$18,700-\$29,100pa Viticulturist \$30,000-\$60,000pa	80 approx	A variety of work from casual seasonal employment to more specialised vineyard care	For less specialised roles training can be gained on the job. More technical work requires specialised viticulture training
Winemaker Cellar hand \$20,800-\$31,200pa Assist winemaker \$35-\$50,000pa Winemaker \$45-\$120,000pa	70 (20 vineyards) + seasonal contract staff	The production of wine from grapes and other fruit	NCA Level II qualification to enter further training. A degree, diploma or certificate in winemaking

Training Pathways to Employment

- ◆ Much of the skills and training needed for work in the horticulture industry can be learnt on the job. Experience is valued and can lead to long term careers.
- ◆ A **forklift licence** is very useful for work in fruit pack houses, as is being computer literate and having some occupational health and safety knowledge. Training information can be gained from **Distribution Industry Training Bureau**, PO Box 12 086 Wellington.
- ◆ Quality assurance training or previous experience is useful for quality control work in fruit pack houses.
- ◆ Grape pruning is a skill that can be learned on the job with supervision or through a training course. Other areas of viticulture such as grape growing or wine making are specialised skills that require formal training. **NMIT** offers a **Certificate in Vineyard Practice**.
- ◆ Some employers offer horticultural apprenticeships, **NMIT** offers a **National Certificate in Horticulture**.

Major Employers

- ◆ Large fruit pack houses and fruit processors, including Compass Fruit, Saxton Fruit and ENZA
- ◆ Local orchardists, vineyards and supply groups
- ◆ Tree nurseries