

Agriculture visa to secure labour force for farmers

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The Nationals have delivered an agriculture visa to secure the labour force needed by Australian farmers both now and into the future.

The Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, David Littleproud said the announcement of a new seasonal agriculture worker visa will come as huge relief to the agriculture industry that has been crying out for a secure workforce.

“As part of the give and take of negotiations with the UK over the FTA, UK backpackers will no longer be required to fulfil a period of time working in the agriculture sector,” Minister Littleproud said.

“As a result, the Nationals demanded and secured this new agriculture visa to fill the gap that would create and more.

“This visa will be extended to all ten ASEAN countries in view of our close and longstanding economic ties with the region.

“The new seasonal agricultural worker visa would mirror the existing Seasonal Worker Programme and will add to the pool of workers available to work on Australian farms.

“Pacific worker programs have and will continue to play a critical role in our agriculture sector and the new visa arrangement will build on the success of these arrangements.

“Like the Seasonal Worker Programme, the new visa arrangement will have protections to ensure workers are protected, not subject to exploitation and that the visa is not misused.

“Pay and conditions, health, and work and safety will also be in line with similar requirements and protections under the Seasonal Worker Programme.

“Because of the Nationals hard work, Australian farmers will have the labour they need to do what they do best – growing premium food and fibre and exporting it to the world.”

“The new visa will also set up the industry for the future and will address a key brake for many of agriculture industries – the availability of labour.”

The Australian Government will work to have the new visa in place before the end of the year.

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