



# A Human Resource Strategy and Training Options for the British Columbia Viticulture Industry



September, 2012

Prepared for the British Columbia Viticulture Human Resources Committee  
by Kerry Jothen, Human Capital Strategies

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank members of the British Columbia Viticulture Human Resources Committee for their time and input provided to me on this project during Committee meetings, a focus group session, and telephone interviews.

I would also like to thank other industry representatives and stakeholders whom attended the focus group session and/or participated in telephone interview.

Finally, I thank Carolyn MacLaren, Chair of the Committee, for her capable advice, direction and support throughout the duration of this project.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Committee and industry on a very interesting and important project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Kerry Jothen  
Chief Executive Officer  
Human Capital Strategies



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Labour Market Development Agreement.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most important facts stressed by British Columbia viticulture sector representatives throughout this project is great wine depends on great grapes, which in turn are dependent on excellence in grape growing and in business and workforce practices.

The BC grape growing and wine sector has expanded and matured over the past twenty years from small beginnings to 864 growers and vineyards in five regions across the province. During that time, the owners, operators and workforce have built up experience and careers. Over the next twenty years, the labour force in BC and Canada is projected to be in transition as the baby-boomers retire with fewer numbers of young workers to take their place.

This sector is working to keep pace both nationally and internationally with new technologies in growing and production methods that will ensure product quality continues to improve and that enhanced regulatory requirements are met. In order to maximize growth potential, BC grape and wine producers need to meet challenges in production and marketing, environmental stewardship, public safety, and human resources<sup>1</sup>. As a result, the viticulture workforce is facing increased skill and knowledge demands.

In order to keep pace nationally and internationally, the sector will need to address the following and other workforce issues:

- Inability to attract and find qualified, trained employees;
- Too few career pathways or development opportunities;
- Lack of awareness of the sector's jobs and careers;
- Inability to retain employees (high turnover rate);
- Competition for employees from other sectors and regions; and,
- Absence of practical grape and wine sector-specific training.

To this end, it is imperative that the sector develops and executes an effective human resource strategy to ensure the skilled workforce it requires for long-term sustainability. Therefore, the BC Viticulture Human Resources Steering Committee (the "Committee") was formed by industry leaders to develop and implement a comprehensive BC Viticulture Sector Human Resource Strategy, focusing on employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and training, including options for a new enhanced viticulture training program. This was facilitated by HortEducationBC in successfully applying for Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Program funding from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to establish and support the Committee's work.

The Committee hired Kerry Jochen of Human Capital Strategies to help develop the Strategy. A key part of this project is to reach out to the broader grape growing and wine employer, workforce and stakeholder communities to obtain their input this summer.

### PROJECT PURPOSE/SCOPE

This project has two fundamental deliverables:

1. To research and develop an executable BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy (HRS); and,

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<sup>1</sup> Note that "human resource(s)" is used throughout this report to refer to: 1) members of the workforce (in viticulture or other sectors; and 2) strategies, programs, actions, initiatives that involve attracting, recruiting, retaining, education and training workers, whether they are "employees", contract staff, owners or managers.





2. To research and review options for a Viticulture Technician (VT) training program model and make recommendations on a preferred one.

The HRS involves the development of a comprehensive report (this document) identifying the following:

- Attraction, recruitment, retention and training issues and recommended strategies;
- Details on strategies and actions (e.g. who executes, timelines, cost, risks, etc.);
- HR Best practices;
- HR tools and tactics for viticulture employers;
- Strategies for targeting mature workers, immigrants, First Nations, and other labour force segments; and,
- Addressing regional variances.

The VT Training Options deliverable involves the following:

- Identifying a set of desired characteristics or features of a provincial VT standardized training program;
- Comparing options for a VT training program including institution-based, apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship models, and reviewing models in other jurisdictions;
- Identifying a short-list of possible training models, indicating the advantages, disadvantages and other implications of each; and,
- Recommending a preferred VT training option and next steps/due diligence to further investigate and develop it (subject to Committee agreement).

## FINDINGS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The findings of this project are a synthesis of two main types of research:

1. Secondary research of numerous pieces of literature and data sources, including three recent BC-specific and wine industry-specific reports:
  - HortEducationBC. *BC Wine Industry Outreach and Consultation Final Report*. March 2011.
  - Andy Hira and Alexis Bwenge. *The Wine Industry in British Columbia: A Closed Wine But Ready for Harvest*. Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC. March 2011.
  - Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc. *Final Report: BC Viticulture Industry Labour Market Information Research Report*. Prepared for the BC Viticulture Human Resources Steering Committee. June 2012.
  - Several reports and articles that are viticulture or wine-specific and others which are more generic regarding effective human resource and training strategies, programs and practices.
2. Primary research (new information), specifically the focus group, Committee teleconference call, Committee in-person meeting, and several key informant interviews; as well as on-going input from the Committee Chair and industry members of the Committee.

The intent of this section is to synthesize the previous findings and findings from this project into a small number of key themes, not to repeat findings from the earlier research.

The main body of this report outlines in details the following findings:

- Overview of the BC viticulture labour market;
- Human resource challenges (excluding training);
- Education and training challenges;
- Secondary research on attraction, recruitment and retention;
- Secondary research on education and training;
- Considerations for a BC Viticulture HR Strategy; and,





- Considerations for a BC Viticulture Training Model.

As well as what little information exists on HR practices in viticulture in other jurisdictions, the “proxies” for finding more information were as follows:

- Other types of farming, particularly fruit trees and other crops;
- Small/micro business HR practices
- HR practices in seasonal industries and companies;
- General HR best practices;
- Other training programs/models that may be relevant to viticulture; and,
- Government programs that may provide resources, tools, funding for viticulture HR and training strategies.

After analyzing and providing several HR best practices in and outside of the viticulture sector, this report stresses that HR “best practices” need to be considered with the following factors in mind:

- The situational context – transferring what is learned or effective in one industry or jurisdiction to HR practices in BC viticulture companies involves different contexts, industry structures, legal and regulatory frameworks, politics, and public policies. Another factor is the relative scalability of comparison industries.
- While there are distinct differences between “recruitment” and “retention” practices, the two HR activities are inextricably linked. Effective recruitment (attraction > screening > selection) is also an important retention strategy; and learning from retention practices and turnover helps a company strengthen its recruitment and hiring processes. A sector should not spend too much time making too fine a distinction between the two as they often involve similar principles and factors.
- A sector HR strategy needs to differentiate what practices can take place or be facilitated at the sectoral level and what needs to (can only) happen at the company level.
- Small businesses need easy access to proven-effective practical and easy to use HR tools, resources and information. It is not as simple as identifying best practices and just passing the information onto companies to use without any adaptation and aids for implementing.
- Part of HR best practices is about effective communication across a sector – “information is power.” A first step is to communicate and demonstrate the value proposition of good HR practice in vineyards; how effective recruitment and retention is an integral part of sustainable and profitable wine grape growing. Then sector organizations need to work with others to make available best practice tools. The more widespread the value proposition is among sector employers and role-model employers and champions and the degree to which they are seen to use and benefit from specific HR strategies, the more likely smaller viticulture employers and managers will want to use such tools.
- Another consideration is with what HR strategies will the BC viticulture get the “biggest bang”? The Committee will want to start gradually with a small number of priority actions, establish traction, and build on this momentum.

In the Training Options considerations, this report provides the following tools:

- Identification of a list of “variables” for comparing training options;
- Criteria for selecting a VT training model;
- Implications of apprenticeship versus non-apprenticeship models;
- Other (non-apprenticeship) training models;
- An exhaustive list of training options with advantages and disadvantages of each; and,
- An evaluation of training options based on the criteria provided.



**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Human Resource Strategy Recommendations**

Several recommendations are provided for a BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy and the Committee may wish to consider them “options” to choose from for implementation. It is not suggested that all recommendations must be implemented, which is why they have been prioritized.

In the main body of this report, for each strategy the following table will provide the following details:

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	• Low, moderate, high
Immediacy	• Immediate (within 6 months); short-term (within 7-12 months); medium-term (greater than 1 year and up to 2 years; long-term (more than 2 years and up to 5 years)
Best entity to execute	
Timeline	• Starting January 2013 (Q1 of HRS = January-March 2013)
Estimated cost	
Risk if not executed	
Employer engagement	
Partnership opportunities	

Among the following 18 recommendations for a BC Viticulture Human Resources Strategy, the following priorities are identified as the highest ones for the Committee to consider for implementation during the first 12 months of the HR Strategy:

- An Industry Leadership Entity
- A Dedicated Staff Position with the Leadership Entity
- Branding and Awareness-Building Activities
- A Viticulture HR Website
- A HRS Communications Strategy, including:
  - Job-Seeker Market Research
  - Branding
  - Social Media Tools
  - Print Collateral
- Attraction Activities
- A Targeted Recruitment Strategy (based on market research)
- Tactics to Address Seasonality Challenges
- Benefit Packages for Employees of Small/Medium Vineyards
- Integration of the HR Strategy with the Training Option

The suggested priority recommendations are provided below. Tables for each and other recommendations are provided in the main body of this report.

Industry Leadership Entity

The Committee should consider asking one or more industry organizations to lead the implementation of the Human Resource Strategy and Training Options recommendations. Given its mandate and its work on the BC Sustainable Winegrowing Program, the BC Wine Grape Council would seem the most appropriate entity.

A critical success factor for the successful implementation of a sector HRS is having a capable agreed upon (recognized) industry body to be the legal entity of record. The Committee could continue to function but would be



an advisory arm of the agreed upon industry entity. Without this, the HRS implementation could easily founder and the responsibility and accountability would be unclear.

An important part of creating an industry leadership body is to include with it a half- or full-time staff position dedicated to implementing and monitoring this HR Strategy and training model.

### Branding, Awareness and Attraction

The Committee and/or new leadership body should at its earliest opportunity start to develop sector/career branding, awareness and attraction activities. This includes the following specific recommendations:

#### Viticulture Website

This could be a new stand-alone website or it could be a new page(s) added to an existing website. If the latter, the new content should have distinct branding and be separate from the rest of the website. The website would start modestly with basic information about the industry and jobs. Over time, it could include the HRS activities, training program information, a job matching capacity, information on viticulture careers, showing pathways, and success stories (text and video clips).

#### Communications Strategy

As part of the Committee's plans, a comprehensive, realistic and costed communications strategy should be developed as soon as possible. It could include the following elements:

##### *Job-Seeker Market Research*

As was pointed out in meetings, the viticulture sector needs to undertake more focused research to find out how young people and other potential viticulture employees see the industry and what would motivate them to work in it.

##### *Branding*

Develop "brand" for the viticulture (and possibly broader wine) sector to communicate a positive image of the industry and its growth and potential, and of its careers and employment and training opportunities. This would include a consistent look for HRS and Training activities, and consistent messaging to be used with the HRS and by individual companies. This would include how the viticulture sector and careers include some positives that other sectors do not have.

##### *Social Media*

While seen by some as medium with which to reach only young people, social media is becoming more important for connecting with mature workers, career changers, mature students, workers in and outside of viticulture, and even retirees. The communications strategy must include a clear social media strategy with specific tools and should be based on the earlier recommended research.

##### *Print Collateral*

The sector can start small with a simple brochure that can be used at career fairs, in other venues (like schools) and elsewhere. While "virtual" media is very important, many people still like to take away something physical from a career fair. The brochure can also be used in direct mail campaigns if the sector targets certain groups to reach including out of province. The brochure could be updated annually (so print runs should not be too high) to add emerging information on HRS activities and on the training program.





### Attraction

Attraction of people to one's sector and careers is not a stand-alone activity; it is also part of a sector's recruitment strategy. A sector has to first inform and make people aware of what it offers, then get their attention and attract them to be interested in the sector; and then actually recruit people from key target segments.

A lot of the above recommendations will support attraction and recruitment activities, however, the sector needs an intentional attraction strategy to bring the above resources to life and make the best use of them.

### Targeted Recruitment

Based on job-seeker market research recommended above, it is important that the viticulture sector has a clear sense of which potential employee segments would be the best ones to focus on in attraction and recruitment strategies. This should shape the recruitment strategies of the sector as a whole and of individual companies. Such targeted recruitment may be implemented via sector associations, a new or existing contract organization, and individual businesses.

### Seasonality

Seasonality is a fundamental part of wine grape growing and a challenge for recruiting and retaining workers. Based on best practices in other sectors described earlier in this report, there are some concrete tools and practices that the viticulture sector or groups of companies could pursue to address seasonal employment challenges. These could include the following:

- Sharing employees with wineries
- Sharing employees with other (complementary) seasonal businesses
- Utilize multi-tasking and cross-training to keep employees working longer
- Targeting potential job-seekers that was part-time and/or seasonal work

The associations could provide examples of how companies have addressed seasonality; they could provide "how to" steps in print or web-based formats.

Also, because of the potential impact of change in Employment Insurance on workers in part-time or seasonal jobs, the viticulture sectors should keep a watching brief on federal government implementation of EI changes in September of this year. According to limited media reports, the impacts of early implementation of changes may appear different from what was promised when they were introduced.

### Benefits

Benefits can be an important incentive for certain segments of the viticulture workforce, however small companies find it difficult to afford benefit premiums. The earlier referenced Okanagan Purchasing Group may be an answer, or associations and small businesses in the sector should see if there are other benefits companies that could help. Some degree of benefits is definitely an added feature in a business' recruitment and retention approaches.

### Integration with Training Option

While throughout this project and report, we have distinguished distinctly between a Human Resource Strategy and Training Options. However, there are many interrelationships between the two. In fact, training should be a key part of any HR strategy. Therefore, once decisions are made on the Committee's training direction, there will be a need to a) integrate the training strategy into the HRS; and b) ensure the attraction, recruitment and retention pieces are updated to reflect this connection.







Other less immediate or less impactful HR strategies recommended in this report include a multimedia presentation, increasing sector recruiting capacity, enhancing recruitment of immigrants and foreign workers, an engagement and retention toolkit, wage strategies, regional-specific initiatives, and an accommodation/housing strategy.

A draft BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy is included with this report in Appendix 5.

### Training Options Recommendations

Having considered the scope and terms of reference of this project, its assumptions, what we know from the Committee and from the research in this project and that of others (e.g. RKA), and other considerations, we know that the BC viticulture sector needs a human resource strategy and some kind of formal, standardized provincial training program for VTs and perhaps others. The status quo is not viable, and there is much industry agreement on the desired features of such a training program.

Human Capital Strategies reviewed four training model options against criteria and other considerations (Option 1 was status quo and Option 6 was a hybrid of other options):

2. Develop an enhanced **non-ITA institution-based certificate program** delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (*occupational credential*)
3. Develop a **new ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program** with a technical component delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (*occupational credential*)
4. Develop and build an **ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program laddered with an existing program** (e.g. Landscape Horticulture) (assuming significant content overlap) (*occupational credential*)
5. Develop a **(non-ITA) workplace-based non-apprenticeship program with a technical component delivered by an industry body or post-secondary institution**; developed by industry against an industry standard (*educational, occupational or industry credential*)

After reviewing the variables for a VT training program and rating the relative merits of four training model options, Human Capital Strategies recommends that the Committee seriously consider pursuing Option 5, and follow a staged approach regarding introduced a new VT training program as part of its BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy:

#### A Staged, Iterative Approach in Moving Towards VT Training Program Implementation

Next Steps	Description	Timelines
1. Preparation stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and submit a proposal to the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) to implement the recommendations of this report, in particular:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To develop an HR Strategy Implementation Plan</li> <li>○ To start to implement the HR Strategy</li> <li>○ To develop a Training Program Development and Implementation Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	December 2012-January 31, 2013  HR Strategy implementation (January 2013 and ongoing)
2. Due diligence stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further investigation of key questions by the Committee before it makes a definitive decision:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Confirm there will be a critical mass of students</li> <li>○ Confirm the program will be VT only and not include training and certification for others (e.g. winery occupations)</li> <li>○ Canvas small, medium and large growers, contractors and wineries on non-apprenticeship preferences and buy-in</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Make a decision on a specific training model to pursue and develop a “go forward” action plan for doing so</li> </ul>	January-March 2013  HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferred model should reflect most, if not all the features of VT training desired by the sector</li> </ul>	
3. Enhancement stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action various enhancements to build the Option 5 training model, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating an Industry Standards Committee</li> <li>○ Expand marketing of program to a broader learner profile, including social media tools</li> <li>○ Expand other promotion and awareness activities</li> <li>○ Attract strong, qualified instructors from industry</li> <li>○ Effect more direct industry engagement and participation in the program</li> <li>○ Improve the practicum (increase duration, timing, relevance and linkage to classroom)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It should be noted that there will not be time to include all desired features of VT training program in the new program in the shorter term</li> <li>• Usual OC intakes are January and October – it will be important to try to make improvements before any further intakes if possible. This will not be a problem for October 2013 but is too long to wait for change</li> </ul>	<p>April-August 2013</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>
4. Proof of concept stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use action plan to obtain necessary approval(s) for new preferred VT training program</li> <li>• Plan program delivery</li> <li>• Pilot the preferred training model</li> <li>• Evaluate the pilot delivery</li> </ul>	<p>Start to deliver on a pilot basis by fall 2013</p> <p>Evaluate program upon completion of pilot</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>
5. Permanent program stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make necessary VT training program changes</li> <li>• Implement the permanent program</li> </ul>	<p>Start to make changes upon completion of the evaluation</p> <p>Start to deliver permanent program in fall or winter 2014</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>

These recommendations start with a recommendation for an appropriate wine grape grower industry body to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training for funding under the LMP Program. Most of the HR Strategy elements and training development steps would be eligible for funding under the LMP criteria.

There is no upper limit for LMP funding request. It would be important to action this request as soon as possible so it does not get caught up in any possible pre-election freeze in new contracts.





## BC VITICULTURE HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

Appendix 5 of this report includes a draft BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy that is based on the findings and recommendations of the report.

## NEXT STEPS

The next steps regarding this project are proposed as follows:

1. Committee members receive and review this final report by November 19, 2012 (Chair or HCS will make the final changes). The Chair will distribute to the Committee, associations and key stakeholders.
2. If the Executive Summary provided in the report is not suitable, Chair will adapt it for use in distributing the report, posting it on websites, and for accompanying any media release (early December).
3. The BC Wine Grape Council – with input from the Chair and rest of the Committee – will submit an LMP funding request by no later than mid-December.
4. The Committee will schedule a meeting for mid-January to discuss the Ministry's response to the LMP request and how to move forward.
5. The Committee should refine and desktop the HR Strategy in Appendix 5 and append it to the LMP proposal, and later use it as part of a launch event in early 2013.





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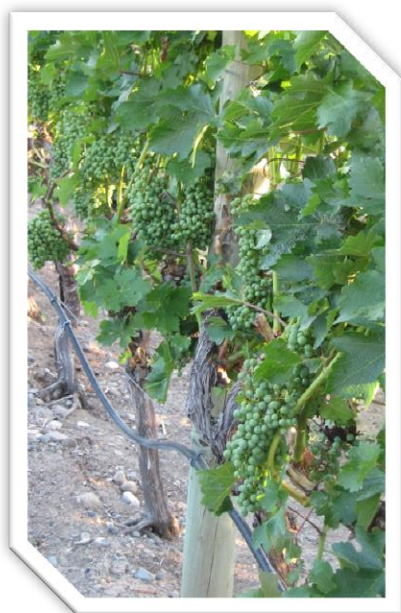
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## 1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

“British Columbia wines have garnered international recognition for their outstanding quality over the last 20 years as a result of the VQA program. Today, British Columbia has in excess of 10,000 acres of grapes planted in the province and more than 200 wineries, with room to expand both in acres and wineries in new areas.” (BC Jobs and Investment Board. *British Columbia Jobs and Investment Board Interim Report*, September 2012, p. 6).

“B.C. wines are enjoyed around the world and consistently rank among the best in international competitions. In 2011 alone they won more than 1,000 awards and, with a growing reputation for excellence, they are coveted by buyers in a long list of jurisdictions...” (BC Ministry of Agriculture. *B.C. Agrifoods: A Strategy for Growth*. 2012, p. 22).



One of the most important facts stressed by British Columbia viticulture sector representatives throughout this project is great wine depends on great grapes, which in turn are dependent on excellence in grape growing and in business and workforce practices.

The BC grape growing and wine sector has expanded and matured over the past twenty years from small beginnings to 864 growers and vineyards in five regions across the province. During that time, the owners, operators and workforce have built up experience and careers. Over the next twenty years, the labour force in BC and Canada is projected to be in transition as the baby-boomers retire with fewer numbers of young workers to take their place.

This sector is working to keep pace both nationally and internationally with new technologies in growing and production methods that will ensure product quality continues to improve and that enhanced regulatory requirements are met. In order to maximize growth potential, BC grape and wine producers need to meet challenges in production and marketing, environmental stewardship, public safety, and human resources<sup>2</sup>. As a result, the viticulture workforce is facing increased skill and knowledge demands.

In order to keep pace nationally and internationally, the sector will need to address the following and other workforce issues:

<sup>2</sup> Note that “human resource(s)” is used throughout this report to refer to: 1) members of the workforce (in viticulture or other sectors; and 2) strategies, programs, actions, initiatives that involve attracting, recruiting, retaining, education and training workers, whether they are “employees”, contract staff, owners or managers.





- Inability to attract and find qualified, trained employees;
- Too few career pathways or development opportunities;
- Lack of awareness of the sector’s jobs and careers;
- Inability to retain employees (high turnover rate);
- Competition for employees from other sectors and regions; and,
- Absence of practical grape and wine sector-specific training.

To this end, it is imperative that the sector develops and executes an effective human resource strategy to ensure the skilled workforce it requires for long-term sustainability. Therefore, the BC Viticulture Human Resources Steering Committee (the “Committee”) was formed by industry leaders to develop and implement a comprehensive BC Viticulture Sector Human Resource Strategy, focusing on employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and training, including options for a new enhanced viticulture training program.

The formation of the Committee was facilitated by HortEducationBC in successfully applying for Labour Market Partnership (LMP) Program funding from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to establish and support the Committee’s work.

The Committee hired Kerry Jochen of Human Capital Strategies to help develop the Strategy. A key part of this project is to reach out to the broader grape growing and wine employer, workforce and stakeholder communities to obtain their input this summer.

**BC Viticulture Human Resources Committee**

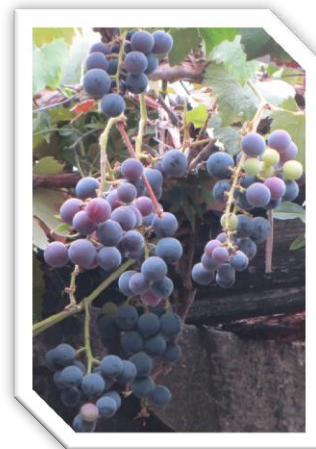
- Pat Bowen – Pacific Agri-Foods Research Centre
- Lynn and John Bremmer – Mount Kobau Wine Services, Dry Creek Vineyard
- Jim Campbell – Ministry of Agriculture
- John Haller – Okanagan College
- Robert (Bob) Heiss – Gray Monk Estates and BC Wine Grape Council
- James Hopper –Mission Hills Family Estate
- Andy Johnston – Averill Creek Vineyards
- Anne Kadwell – HortEducationBC
- Carolyn MacLaren – Chair
- Tim Martiniuk – Stoneboat Vineyards/BC Grape Growers
- Niamh Murphy – Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
- Sandra Oldfield – Tinhorn Creek Vineyards
- Troy Osborne – Constellation Brands
- Elaine Triggs – Arise Vineyards



## 2. CONTEXT

The BC grape growing sector has grown significantly in the last several years and matured into a sector of 864 growers and vineyards – and 210 licensed grape wineries – across five regions of the province, with most concentrated in the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys.

The sector competes nationally and internationally and is applying new technologies in growing and production methods to ensure product quality and adherence to regulatory requirements. Pressures or challenges facing the sector include production, marketing, environmental stewardship, public safety and human resources. All of these challenges and the new technologies have direct implications for the sector's rising workforce skills and knowledge requirements.



Ensuring a highly skilled, adaptable workforce through a strategic approach to address human resource needs has become one of the key factors in the BC viticulture sector's long-term sustainability.

Other important factors to consider include the following:

- The sector has a preponderance of small businesses, many with little HR capacity or experience;
- A past reliance on foreign-trained workers;
- Little directly related viticulture-specific training in BC;
- Sector interest in a new training model but a lack of clarity on what it should be;
- The central importance of the Viticulture Technician occupation;
- A total workforce estimated at 20,500 – small but seven times the size of shipbuilding and repair and more than twice the size of oil and gas; and larger than mining;
- 2,400 workers performing Viticulture Technician-related work in BC – a critical mass for training and HR practices.<sup>3</sup>

The BC viticulture sector is well positioned for future growth and increased competitiveness, however, the sector concludes that this will be jeopardized without addressing human resource needs.

Therefore, on behalf of the BC viticulture sector, the Committee, through HortEducationBC obtained funding from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to develop and implement a comprehensive human resources strategy, mapped against a framework to understand, attract, recruit, train, retain and sustain a viable employee population for this

<sup>3</sup> There may be 2,400 people in BC vineyards that do some degree of "Viticulture Technician" work (as defined in the RKA report) but it may range from people who do 10% of the VT scope of work to those that do 100% of it.





important sector. The initial phase is focused on labour market information research and the development of a broad HR strategy. Subsequent phases will focus on the delivery of key aspects of the human resources strategy including the development career awareness materials to promote career and training opportunities, as well as further work toward the development of a standardized training program for Viticulture Technicians.

As Committee terms of reference states:

“Unlike other more established agriculture, resource and industrial sectors in BC, the wine and grape sector has never undertaken a project to focus on human resources issues. Therefore this is an important and significant undertaking with an opportunity to address human resource issues proactively rather than waiting to ‘catch up’ as many other sectors have had to. The age of the sector and its significant growth and development, which show no signs of abating based on year over year production and revenue data, make the timing to address these issues even more critical.

### **Strategic Challenges**

In summary, the key strategic HR-related challenges facing the BC viticulture sector are:

- A relatively small industry with a preponderance of small (micro) businesses and owner-operators make it challenging to develop critical mass and economies of scale to make HR and training strategies viable;
- Competing with other sectors and jurisdictions for the “hearts and minds” of young people;
- Developing the capacity to link with job-seekers and to recruit skilled workers from within BC, across Canada and from other countries;
- The lack of a clear, articulated viticulture career path;
- The working conditions and seasonality in viticulture workplaces which makes it difficult to retain experienced employees;
- The lack of flexible, reliable and standardized industry-driven training for skilled viticulture positions; and,
- Ensuring HR and training strategies keep up with changing technological, quality assurance, environmental, safety and regulatory requirements of the viticulture sector.





### 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROCESS

#### 3.1 Terms of Reference



This project has two fundamental deliverables:

1. To research and develop an executable BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy (HRS); and,
2. To research and review options for a Viticulture Technician (VT) training program model and make recommendations on a preferred one.

The HRS involves the development of a comprehensive report (this document) identifying the following:

- Attraction, recruitment, retention and training issues and recommended strategies;
- Details on strategies and actions (e.g. who executes, timelines, cost, risks, etc.);
- HR Best practices;
- HR tools and tactics for viticulture employers;
- Strategies for targeting mature workers, immigrants, First Nations, and other labour force segments; and,
- Addressing regional variances.

The VT Training Options deliverable involves the following:

- Identifying a set of desired characteristics or features of a provincial VT standardized training program;
- Comparing options for a VT training program including institution-based, apprenticeship and non-apprenticeship models, and reviewing models in other jurisdictions;
- Identifying a short-list of possible training models, indicating the advantages, disadvantages and other implications of each; and,
- Recommending a preferred VT training option and next steps/due diligence to further investigate and develop it (subject to Committee agreement).

Later sections of this report are organized according to these two inter-related deliverables. While the HRS is equally if not more important than the VT training deliverable, the training option issue is central to the BC viticulture sector for the following reasons/benefits:

- Industry recognition (certification);
- Promoting viticulture careers and pathways;
- Recruiting viticulture workers;



- Use standards for job descriptions and selection of candidates (fully defined skillset);
- Career development activities; and,
- Other needed HR actions.

### 3.2 Scope and Assumptions

The business activity scope for this project is viticulture, more specifically the cultivation of wine grapes. This involves wine grape growers/vineyards, viticulture and labour contractors, wineries and service companies and specialists that serve wine grape growers. While viticulture does not include winemaking per se, the two growing/cultivation of wine grapes and winemaking are closely connected and symbiotic. In fact, Committee members and other viticulture sector representatives call for more integration and overlap among the two for good business and good workforce practices – and for great wine!

The geographic scope is British Columbia, including its five designated viticulture regions: Okanagan Valley; Similkameen Valley; Fraser Valley; Vancouver Island; and the Gulf Islands. The majority of viticulture representatives involved in the research for this project are from the largest region, the Okanagan Valley. However, this project has tried to consider the implications for HR and training of all wine growing regions in the province.

The occupational scope for this project is the work of the VT, defined in the Roslyn Kunin & Associates, Inc. (RKA) report, as:

“...a person who constructs and maintains vineyard operations including planting, grafting, pruning, irrigating, and harvesting of grapes. The person must have knowledge of grape varieties, soil conditions, pesticides, herbicides, and basic plant biology. A Viticulture Technician must have the ability to operate farm equipment, and to build and maintain trellises and canopies. The position is responsible for records management, supervision of farm labourers, and working under the direction of the Vineyard Manager” (p. 31).

This has been described as the “middle” level of vineyard work, between the Vineyard Manager and Labourers.

While this involves “VT” work, there are degrees of overlap between the VT occupation and other wine grape growing and winemaking occupations. Many of the vineyards contacted in this project do not use the term “technician.” Further – depending on the type of business (vineyard only, winery only, size of vineyard or winery) – the work of a VT may overlap with a Vineyard Manager, a Viticulturalist, a Vineyard Lead Hand, and specialists in larger operations who may only operate machinery or handle spraying or other tasks such as irrigation.

Generally, from the work of RKA, the Committee and other industry representatives, VT training involves the following content areas:



- Maintain a Safe Work Environment
- Use Tools and Equipment
- Comply with Environmental Regulations
- Identify Grape Varieties and Characteristics
- Plant Science As It Applies To Viticulture
- Plant Health and Pest Management
- Soil Management Processes
- Horticultural Skills
- Plant Management
- Construction and Management of Irrigation and Drainage Systems
- Staff Supervision
- Records Management
- Computer Use

The VT scope also has implications for training options discussed later in this report. For instance, one assumption on which the training option recommendations are based is that the sector is not interested in a baccalaureate program for training VTs. However, any new VT training program might ladder into other longer (e.g. degree) programs.

### 3.3 Process

The scope of the approach used in researching the HRS and VT training options for this project is outlined in Chart 1. Since there is very little information on human resource practices in the viticulture sector in BC (except from the recent RKA research) and other jurisdictions, this research relies on indirect and related information. There is relatively much more information on viticulture-related education and training programs, but for human resource practices, this project has involved looking at such practices in other (similar and not-so-similar) sectors and in companies with similar characteristics as vineyards and wineries.

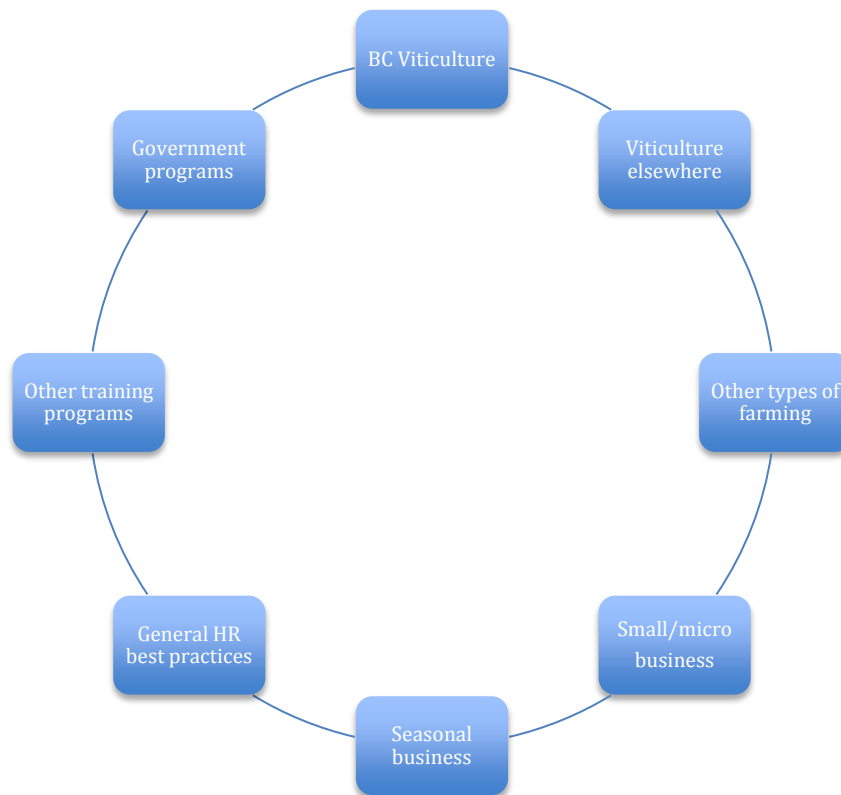
The main exception regarding BC viticulture-specific HR and training practice information is the body of primary research completed for the Committee by Roslyn Kunin & Associates from surveys and interviews of viticulture employers, employees and other stakeholders.

As well as what little information exists on HR practices in viticulture in other jurisdictions, the “proxies” for finding more information were as follows:

- Other types of farming, particularly fruit trees and other crops;
- Small/micro business HR practices
- HR practices in seasonal industries and companies;
- General HR best practices;
- Other training programs/models that may be relevant to viticulture; and,
- Government programs that may provide resources, tools, funding for viticulture HR and training strategies.



**Chart 1: Framework for Researching Viticulture Human Resource and Training Practices**



Human Capital Strategies undertook the following activities to research and develop the two project deliverables:

- Briefing teleconference calls with the Committee Chair;
- Review of literature/data provided by Committee (particularly the Roslyn Kunin & Associates labour market report) and other key informant contacts;
- Extensive internet search for literature/data;
- A July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 focus group of viticulture employers;
- An August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 teleconference with Committee members;
- An August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012 face-to-face meeting with Committee members in Penticton;
- Thirteen telephone interviews with key industry informants including small growers and viticulture technicians/managers – these were selected from a list of possible interview candidates suggested by Committee members;
- Analysis of secondary research information collected and of group meetings and individual interviews conducted during this project; and,
- Administrative and miscellaneous activities (e.g. talking to training providers and other industries and industry representatives in other jurisdictions).

The focus group and meetings and telephone interviews were hampered by the hectic July/August vineyard/winery and holiday periods. It was challenging to obtain more telephone





interviews despite follow up after initial contact. Also, because of this, it was difficult to obtain input from more than a few growers from outside the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys.

The questions used for the focus group and other meetings and interviews follow:

### **Focus Group and Committee Teleconference Questions**

Opener: Why did you come here to discuss human resource (HR) issues today? What motivated you to take the time to attend this focus group session?

1. What do you think are the most attractive features of your sector from the perspective of potential employees and those who influence them (e.g. parents, media, friends, educators)? What are the least attractive features?
2. What is the top one or two obstacles or challenges to viticulture employers being able to attract the qualified, skilled employees you need? Please indicate what are the top obstacles.
3. What are the careers and career pathways in your sector? To what extent are people in and outside of the sector aware of these?
4. What are the key reasons for losing workers in your sector? Please be specific. What retention practices or strategies work?
5. To what extent do you think it is important for a Viticulture Technician training (and certification) program to be developed? Why? How should it be delivered?
6. What strategies, resources, tools, supports, etc. would help your company address its workforce issues? Please be specific. Who should be responsible for providing these (governments, sector associations, training institutions, others)?
7. What human resource best practices are you aware of (in any sector) and why do you think they are effective?
8. What would be one piece of advice you have for the Committee and me on the development of a BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy?
9. Do you have any other/final comments?

### **Key Informant Interview Questions**

1. What do you think are the most attractive features of your sector from the perspective of potential employees and those who influence them (e.g. parents, media, friends, educators)? What are the least attractive features?
2. What are the careers and career pathways in your sector? To what extent are people in and outside of the sector aware of these?
3. What are the key reasons for losing workers in your sector? Please be specific. What retention practices or strategies work?
4. To what extent do you think it is important for a Viticulture Technician training (and certification) program to be developed? Why? How should it be delivered?
5. What strategies, resources, tools, supports, etc. would help your company address its workforce issues? Please be specific. Who should be responsible for providing these (governments, sector associations, training institutions, others)?



6. What human resource best practices are you aware of (in any sector) and why do you think they are effective?
7. What would be one piece of advice you have for the Committee and me on the development of a BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy?
8. Do you have any other/final comments?

Viticulture key informants interviewed were as follow:

- Pat Bowen, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre
- Kerry Bugg, First Estate Winery
- Richard (Dick) Cleave, Vineyard Assessor
- Gary Dean, Vinifera Custom Viticulture Ltd.
- Nathan Goltz, Vineyard Manager
- Robert (Bob) Heiss, Gray Monk Estate Winery and BC Wine Grape Council
- James Hopper, Mission Hill Family Estate
- Andy Johnston, Averrill Creek Vineyards
- Jordan Leboe, Gray Monk Estate Winery
- Harry McWatters, Vintage Consulting
- Sandra Oldfield, Tinhorn Creek Vineyards
- Severine Pinte-Kosaka, Enotecca
- Morton Serbon, Blasted Church

After the analysis of primary and secondary research information, the process was for Human Capital Strategies to draft a report consistent with the project terms of reference, deliverables and scope. This draft will be shared for presentation to and discussion with Committee members at its November 1, 2012 meeting in Penticton, after which it will be finalized within a week.

## 4. FINDINGS: WHAT WE KNOW

The findings of this project are a synthesis of two main types of research:

1. Secondary research of numerous pieces of literature and data sources, including three recent BC-specific and wine industry-specific reports:
  - HortEducationBC. *BC Wine Industry Outreach and Consultation Final Report*. March 2011.
  - Andy Hira and Alexis Bwenge. *The Wine Industry in British Columbia: A Closed Wine But Ready for Harvest*. Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC. March 2011.



- Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc. *Final Report: BC Viticulture Industry Labour Market Information Research Report*. Prepared for the BC Viticulture Human Resources Steering Committee. June 2012.
  - Several reports and articles that are viticulture or wine-specific and others which are more generic regarding effective human resource and training strategies, programs and practices.
2. Primary research (new information), specifically the focus group, Committee teleconference call, Committee in-person meeting, and several key informant interviews; as well as on-going input from the Committee Chair and industry members of the Committee.

The intent of this section is to synthesize the previous findings and findings from this project into a small number of key themes, not to repeat findings from the earlier research.

## 4.1 Overview of the BC Viticulture Labour Market

In a survey conducted for HortEducationBC and published last spring, over 75 BC grape growers, winemakers and industry stakeholders ranked the following issues as the top human resource issues challenging this sector:

1. Inability to find qualified, trained employees;
2. Inability to attract employees;
3. Too few career pathways or development opportunities in sector;
4. Unable to retain employees/high turnover;
5. Competition for employees from other sectors;
6. Lack of general awareness of jobs and careers in this sector;
7. Absence of wine and grape sector-specific training;
8. Other (please explain):
  - Cost to work is high (clothing and equipment is expensive), cost of living is going up, wages are not;
  - Transient labour, low wages necessary to keep costs low and remain competitive;
  - Low wages.

In a report released around the same time, Dr. Ali Hira of Simon Fraser University, identified a “lack of training opportunities” as one of nine “vulnerabilities” facing the industry. This lack is of concern since the Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc. (RKA) and HortEducationBC studies show significant levels of growers and wineries that expect their VT levels to grow in the next five years.

Earlier this spring, RKA conducted a survey of grape growing and winery owners/managers, a survey of mid-level viticulture workers, and interviews of vineyard and winery owners/managers and training providers and industry associations. This represents the most recent and comprehensive body of labour market research on the BC viticulture sector. Without repeating the details of the RKA Report, some of the highlights of the viticulture workforce include the following:



- Almost 50% of workforce is 35 to 55 years old; 78% is between 35 to 65 and over;
- Almost 30% of the workers are contemplating retirement in next 5 – 10 years (15% in the next 5 years);
- While 64 % employees have training; 46% believe their education and training is “barely adequate” or “not adequate”;
- Fifty-eight percent of owners/operators rank workers as “adequate”, 25% rank workers “poor”; 7% rank workers “excellent”
- Viticulture Technicians have worked an average 6.9 years for their current employer; the average employed person in BC has been 8.1 years in their current job; in the BC agriculture sector, the figure is 8.5 years;
- Viticulture employers/owners anticipate growth in the number of viticulture staff during the next 5 years – 22% indicated their VT workforce will grow and 77% indicated it will remain about the same;
- Employees want relevant, local training, with 87% of supervisors and technicians preferring on-the-job training and 27% wanting classroom training; over 50% of these indicated they would be interested in a certified training program for VTs;
- Supervisors and VTs ranked pay reduction (during training) and availability of training as the two most significant barriers to training;
- Industry changes including quality demands, new technology, increasing mechanization, and safety levels and the factors driving growth identified by owners/operators as “very important” are:
  - Increasing quality (67%);
  - Increased sales (64%);
  - Recognition of BC wine (64%);
  - Sufficient supply of qualified people (47%) (plus 30% indicated “somewhat important”);
  - More acreage planted for grapes (37%);
  - More wineries (37%).

The above facts combined with demographics, the size of the VT workforce and training preferences mean the BC viticulture sector must plan to address the demographic shift of fewer young people coming into the sector and more people aging/retiring – it needs to train those coming into the sector and retain those who are now or will be in viticulture jobs. This has implications not only for training and retention but also for attraction and recruiting through promotion of a VT career path (where it is not currently perceived).

Before talking about specific human resource and training challenges uncovered in the secondary and primary research, it is important – because of its implications for HR and training strategies – to reflect on the estimated numbers of VTs and other viticulture workers in BC as presented by RKA. Critical mass and economies of scale will strongly affect the viability of various HR and training strategy options.

According to RKA:

- Half of all owner/operator respondents indicated that they hire VTs, with their average number being five per vineyard;





- Nineteen percent of respondents indicated they contract VTs;
- As indicated above, 22% expect their VT workforce to grow an average of 54% over the next five years;
- Based on these numbers, the VT workforce is expected to grow by 12% over five years or about 2.4% per year – a relatively high growth rate.

As per RKA's calculation in Appendix 1 of this report, it estimates a current complement of 2,400 VTs in BC; and a current total vineyard workforce of 20,500 in the 864 vineyards across BC. These numbers are very significant, however, from the primary research done for this project, Human Capital Strategies is not confident that the actual VT and vineyard workforce numbers are this high. It is unclear what were the assumptions in extrapolating from the company respondent sample to the total universe of growers and vineyards. The large majority of growers are very small and it is doubtful they would each have an average of 2.54 VTs.

Note that the average vineyard would not have 2.54 VTs; they may have that number of people on average that do various pieces of VT work. Therefore, there may be 2,400 people in BC vineyards that do some degree of VT work (as defined in the RKA report) but it may range from people who do 10% of the VT scope of work to those that do 100% of it. Nevertheless, many of these workers may be candidates to have their prior learning and experience recognized through a new VT training and certification process.

## 4.2 Human Resource (excluding Training) Challenges

Trends affecting VT human resources identified in the RKA research include the following:

- Increasing safety regulations;
- More technical work required (e.g. computerized records, irrigation, etc.);
- Growing need for good people skills;
- Increased mechanization of vineyard work;
- Increased level of quality demanded by employers;
- Multiple tasking, more diverse, more responsibility;
- Increasing importance/spread of organic methods;
- Working on the quality of grape and yield;
- Ever-changing chemicals used;
- Higher expectations from the marketplace; and,
- A lack of standardized pay-scale or level of knowledge across the sector.

RKA identified the following recruitment retention challenges and trends:

- Viticulture workers are recruited by a combination of traditional methods including word of mouth, job advertising, receiving resumes, promotion from within, and through the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP);
- Wages and working conditions and management quality are the most important retention/turnover factors;



- Low wages make it difficult to retain workers – especially skilled ones – rote, physical nature and outside work (in hot/windy/rainy weather) make viticulture work unattractive to many workers;
- Those who have been more successful in retaining workers have attempted to pay above average wages, provided accommodation and/or transportation, and allowed flexible work schedules.

## Themes from Primary Research

From meetings and interviews involving 33 BC viticulture sector key informants for this project, the following themes were identified as the most important human resource (excluding education and training) challenges and needs:

### Overall

- Viticulture participants were highly engaged and keenly interested in viticulture training and other HR strategies;
- There was strong support for a new, improved training program – the *right* model is both necessary and viable;
- There was also strong support for marketing and promoting viticulture careers and a career path;
- The sector must consider other (not only youth) potential employees – older workers, retirees, existing employees, women, etc.;
- Work is needed to address various HR priority needs, including:
  - Benefits;
  - Career promotion (social media);
  - Sharing (foreign?) workers;
  - Seasonal strategies;
  - Accommodation;
  - Ideas from other agriculture/farming and other sectors;
  - Student/worker exchanges.

### Attraction

- The need to promote awareness of and attraction to the viticulture industry and its positive aspects for people that are drawn to the lifestyle, the outdoor work, the part-year nature of most of its jobs, the problem-solving and technical nature of the work, etc. – match the promotion of the sector’s features with what motivates certain job-seekers, and answer, “What’s in it for me?”;
- The need to identify and promote the career path for VTs in viticulture; promote and brand VT as a “career of choice” for some people;
- The need to focus on various potential talent pools – not only youth – such as women, older workers, young mothers with children, etc.;
- The need to promote non-traditional employment options for VTs, such as self-employment, consulting/contract work, etc.;



- Especially in the context of critical mass for training, the need to promote awareness of VT work to small, independent growers, employees in wineries, employees in related industries (tourism, hospitality, retail, etc.);
- As part of promoting a positive image of the sector, the need to promote the VT career in high schools;
- The need to exploit the use of current social media to reach various audiences; and,
- The need to conduct market research of various potential VT talent pools to find out what motivates them job/career-wise and what would interest them about viticulture and how to reach them.

### Recruitment

- The need to strategically target (market segmentation) certain workforce groups;
- The need to partner with other growers in recruitment;
- The need for small growers to consider sharing one or more VTs;
- The need to consider recruiting in other parts of BC and Canada;
- The need to consider recruiting from other farming and fruit sectors;
- The need to help individual vineyards with branding themselves as “employers of choice”;
- The need to consider hiring a consultant to help vineyards to recruit and to match employers and job-seekers;
- The need to continue to push for improvements and more flexibility in the SAWP and the Federal Skilled Worker Program (the latter for skilled workers including VTs); and,
- The need to show opportunities for advancement and compensation incentives within viticulture companies when recruiting.

### Retention

- The need to maximize the annual duration of employment for VTs through multi-tasking and deploying them in non-vineyard work in the winter;
- The need to understand the nature, extent and cause of VT and other turnover;
- The need to help small vineyards in developing practical retention tactics, including considering the development of a Vineyard employer retention toolkit;
- The need to consider wage (e.g. tiered structure, overtime, etc.) and benefit incentives for retention purposes, including small growers joining a larger benefit pool; and,
- The need to improve respect, recognition and rewards and management skills in vineyard operations.

### Other

- The need to improve the viticulture sector’s image in terms of workforce practices and working conditions – whilst being careful not to set expectations that cannot be met – as the most important factor in the quality of winemaking and winery profits;
- The need to consider maximizing critical mass of recruitment and training and integration of business by treating VT/viticulture as part of a supply chain (e.g. vineyard > winery > culinary > accommodation);



- The need to recognize excellent growers, VTs and other staff through awards and events;
- The need to engage the Indo-Canadian grower community as part of HR and training strategies;
- The need to consider the unique barriers and needs of small growers and vineyards in regions outside of the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys; regarding the latter, while the basics will be the same for VT work, VTs will need to be able to develop and apply local knowledge;
- The need to establish and maintain partnerships on HR and training strategies among growers, wineries, industry associations, and stakeholders outside of the sector (e.g. government agencies, researchers, post-secondary institutions); including partnerships between larger wineries and vineyards and smaller ones;
- The need for better coordination among vineyards and others in developing and executing HR and training strategies;
- The need for better, sustained information-sharing among vineyards and others on what works and resources for HR and training practices;
- The need to be more aware of and to effectively use government programs for HR and training strategies; and,
- The need to consider an existing or new entity to coordinate and support HR and training activities among viticulture employers;

### 4.3 Education and Training Challenges

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*Critical mass* – “The minimum required to start or maintain a venture”  
([www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com));

*Economies of scale* – “Reduction in cost per unit resulting from increased production, realized through operational efficiencies”  
([www.investopedia.com/terms/e/economiesofscale.asp](http://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/economiesofscale.asp)).

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This section focuses on VT education and training and not other occupations or skillsets in or outside of viticulture work. The training challenges here are based upon the work of RKA – to a lesser extent the HortEducationBC work – and of course the secondary and primary research for this project. Input from Committee members was also very important in identifying the challenges. While Dr. Hira identifies training as a “vulnerability” for the sector, his report does not focus on VT training per se, and its scope is broader than viticulture or vineyards.

While conducted a year earlier than the recent RKA work, HortEducationBC’s survey and interviews of grape growers found the following:

- There was a “high level of interest in the development of relevant, cost-effective and college level training programs for the sector”, including 81% of viticulture respondents and 46% of winery operations/management;
- Ninety-two percent of respondents “supported the development of an apprenticeship training program for winery and viticulture/viniculture technicians”;



- “There was a clear gap in the area of viticulture/viniculture training as well as an estimated future demand for skilled employees in this area”;
- Those interviewed in the HortEducationBC study showed “a high level of interest in a viticulture/viniculture technician level apprenticeship similar to programs available at Niagara College in Ontario, Australia, New Zealand...”

In addition to providing a labour market scan of the BC viticulture sector and reviewing related education and training programs in and outside of BC, the RKA research confirmed some of the concerns regarding the existing situation regarding training for VTs:

- There is no standardized content/standard;
- There is a lack of awareness of existing training;
- There is a lack of a full understanding of the benefits of a standardized training program among viticulture employers and workers;
- There is a relatively low number of potential students and graduates; and,
- There is a need for a recognized occupation and standardized training program

In surveying the industry, RKA concluded that, “there is no clear consensus amongst the industry respondents on the need [for a] formal Viticulture Technician qualification and training program.” While RKA found that the larger vineyards and wineries support the Viticulture Technician occupational definition and understand the need for the occupation, it observed that “many of the largest companies already have similar training in-house.” Further, smaller grape growers use contractors and most contractors have some form of in-house training.

Despite this, RKA concluded:

“...there is a significant portion of the sector in BC that feels strongly about developing and utilizing a BC-based viticulture training program that focuses on the current and upcoming needs of the industry’s employers. In particular, it is the medium and large grape growing and winemaking operations rather than the small vineyards that have a vision of the future of the BC industry that requires strong foundational skills, the ability to learn and adapt on the job, and to meet the needs of the ever increasing issues of quality.”

RKA went on to draft an Occupational Analysis Chart – a detailed list of competencies that a VT should possess – with input from the Committee and that was informed by Vincor’s (now Constellation Brands’) in-house training model.

In the three group meetings and 13 interviews conducted for this project, almost all (with the exception of a couple of people) individuals supported the need for some kind of formal training program for VTs or the equivalent (i.e. a few people did not like the term “technician” but agreed with the RKA definition in terms of the type of work). They also agreed on “what’s broken”, what is wrong with the status quo and existing training options:



- The need for a stronger base of theory and science – many industry people commented on how the existing Okanagan College (OC) program is barely more than an “orientation” to the sector;
- The need for a longer duration of formal instruction;
- A weak practical component;
- The practical component is not linked to standards and the classroom training;
- The lack of occupational/industry certification;
- Inadequate promotion and awareness of the program;
- The need for greater flexibility in how the program is structured – most support a modularized structure, whether there are small “chunks” of training that can be done in different order, some not done at all if one can prove proficiency, and that can be completed in a few hours or few days each;
- The need for multiple entry and exit points so that individuals can enter and leave at different stages of the training depending on their past experience and training and their need;
- The lack of formal industry oversight through an industry advisory or standards committee;
- Graduates are not as useful as they should be when they complete the program and arrive on the jobsite;
- No formal mechanism for recognition (assessment) of prior learning or experience; and,
- The program does not have the status of a full-time, regular College program (i.e. delivered through Continuing Studies).

In addition to hearing about the above from the majority of groups and individuals engaged during this project, some other key points are noted below.

Viticulture sector representatives agree that a broader definition of the potential learner profile should be adopted when conceiving a preferred training model. This relates to two reasons: 1) the need to ensure a critical mass of learners to sustain a program; and 2) these groups correspond to who may be interested in entering/staying in the industry and will need to be recruited and need such training. Potential students in a VT training program could be the following:

- Existing vineyard employees;
- Existing winery employees;
- Employees from other sectors;
- Unemployed persons (youth, young adults, older workers, etc.);
- Owner growers;
- Contractors and contractor employees;
- People from other provinces/states; and,
- General interest learners (consumers).

Other important points made by those consulted include the following:

- There needs to be on-going refresher training for VTs and others in viticulture;



- The industry should consider partnerships between growers and large vineyards and wineries to provide practicum experience for students as part of a new training program;
- Formal (institutional) training should occur during the four slowest months for vineyards and part-time and online training could occur less frequently in other parts of the cycle;
- There is precedent for college and other training models to deliver a program every two years if modest numbers warrant it;
- Some larger vineyards deliver their own in-house VT training and have developed a career path that has shown to pay off in terms of better quality control and higher productivity – this needs to be promoted;
- Instructor quality is important – some observed that this has been spotty in the existing OC program;
- Larger companies need to step up and contribute to the success of a new training program by offering practicum experience, sending employees to training, providing training aids (equipment, materials), etc.;
- The new training model needs to be evidence-based by learning from programs elsewhere;
- The approval processes and timelines for colleges, the Industry Training Authority and other agencies need to be clarified;
- Due to modest numbers and/or in order to ensure success and sustainability, the sector may need to consider building on existing programs (e.g. Landscape Horticulture);
- Various types of training costs and who will pay (e.g. employers, employees, unemployed, training providers, governments, other) need to be clarified.

The next two sections summarize the most pertinent information and findings of human resource and training literature relevant to this project.

#### **4.4 Secondary Research – Attraction, Recruitment and Retention**

Human Capital Strategies undertook extensive searches for literature/information on viticulture human resource practices around the world in major wine regions. It uncovered relatively little direct viticulture HR information (outside of training programs), but it is summarized below along with more indirect sources of information on HR practices:

- Viticulture-Specific Human Resource Practices;
- General (Non-Viticulture) Human Resource Practices;
- Human Resource Practices in Seasonal Industries/Companies; and,
- Small Business Human Resource Practices.

An important point to make here is that in addition to there being a challenge of finding “best” or “effective” or “good” HR practices relevant to the viticulture sector, it is even more challenging to be able to verify that such practices are “best” or “effective.” Often there is no evidence provided showing the results of the practice and how they are superior to other practices or doing nothing at all. Usually the best kind of information about such practices is found in case studies of a sector, region or company – but these are few and far between in terms of practices or sectors relevant to the BC viticulture sector.





## Viticulture-Specific Human Resource Practices

As indicated earlier, there is a dearth of literature on viticulture-specific human resource practices around the world. There is more literature on agriculture or farming in general.

### Handbooks/Toolkits

Closest to home, the BC Wine Grape Council commissioned Insight Environmental Consulting to develop a *BC Sustainable Winegrowing Program (BCSWP): Sustainable Practices for BC Vineyards*. For this project, Version 1.0, March 2010 was reviewed, but there is a newer June 2011 version. The BCSWP consists of three self-assessments and reference guides on sustainable practices for vineyards, wineries, and winery hospitality services. The program was launched in July 2011.

Chapter 7 of this resource is entitled “Employees, Neighbours and Community”, and includes ten pages on human resources:

1. Staffing and Recruiting
2. Employee Orientation
3. Employee Handbook
4. Internal Communications
5. Employee Relations
6. Education and Training
7. Health and Safety
8. Succession Planning
9. Documentation and Record Keeping

The self-assessment checklist includes 39 human resource questions or criteria for self-assessment. The guide includes 1 or 2 pages of tips on each HR area. The self-assessment includes the option of online registration and completion of the checklists. In its first year, the resource was communicated and distributed through workshops and presentations, a press release, news articles, emails and meetings with industry groups.

The HR part of this guidebook appears to be a good start in the first year of the publication with a high level of specificity of self-assessment questions/criteria.

Two good examples of viticulture-specific HR information in the U.S. are:

- *Lodi Winegrower’s Workbook (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, developed by the Lodi Winegrape Commission in 2008. This includes a useful 28-page chapter on “Human Resources Management.”
- *Vinewise: Washington Guide to Sustainable Viticulture*. This is a 13-page checklist on human resource practices developed by the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers, and is part of a 16-topic online resource.

Both of these resources have checklists and self evaluation and action planning tools and are quite current. Both resources include insightful, practical suggestions, particularly for small and medium-sized vineyards that do not have HR departments or specialists. For example:





“In small vineyards and wineries, it may not make sense to track statistics of number of employees leaving, because the numbers may be very small. However, it is still important to analyze why they are leaving and to document the reason in the employee file. If two or more employees leave within a year for similar reasons, then appropriate actions should be taken to remedy the situation” (*Lodi Winegrower’s Workbook*, p. 278).

“Checklist: Building Your Internal Conflict Toolbox:

- Am I paying attention to the information needs of my employees?
- Do employees understand job expectations and job performance goals?
- Have I worked to establish clear lines of communication throughout all levels of employment, from supervisor to seasonal workers?
- Have I worked closely with front line supervisors to ensure they have the skills, training, vision and knowledge of labor laws?
- Are my employees following labor laws and do I have someone who stays current with new regulations?”

(*Vinewise: Washington Guide to Sustainable Viticulture*, p. 10)

The Lodi website ([www.lodiwine.com](http://www.lodiwine.com)) indicates that the workbook addresses 160 different issues and identifies effective practices important for sustainable winegrowing.

Obviously, these are U.S. publications and some of the content (e.g. legal requirements, regulation, etc.) are different for BC/Canada.

In reviewing these resources, they appear to be useful tools that may provide ideas for a BC-specific viticulture or vineyard and winery HR handbook.

While not viticulture-specific, there are broader agricultural HR resources in Canada. For example, Farm Management Canada has published *Managing People on Your Farm*. It contains 16 chapters on various HR-related topics ([www.fmc-gac.com/publications/managing-people-your-farm](http://www.fmc-gac.com/publications/managing-people-your-farm)). There may be various types of information and tools in this publication that apply to viticulture operations.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs’ website has an online resource entitled “Creating and Implementing a Human Resource Management Plan” ([www.omafra.gov.on.ca](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca)). It provides ‘how to’ information on various HR topics and include templates, links to other websites and references.

While not yet available, the Province of BC has committed to developing a “Human Resource Handbook with tools and information to assist farmers to effectively recruit, manage and maintain the workforces they need.”<sup>4</sup> This may be useful to wine grape growers or could be adapted to their HR needs.

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<sup>4</sup> BC Ministry of Agriculture. *BC Agrifoods: A Strategy for Growth*. Government of BC. 2012, p. 26.



## Best Practices

On HR best practices relevant to BC viticulture, two recent articles were uncovered. One was on Jost Vineyards in Nova Scotia, published in the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council's *Farm Profiles: Practices in Recruitment and Retention in Primary Agriculture* ([www.cahrc-ccrha.ca](http://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca)).

While Jost Vineyards is a sizeable, established operation with 59 acres and 20 full-time and 30 part-time workers, many of its recruitment and retention tactics could apply to smaller vineyards:

- Owners/managers taking courses in business management and human resources;
- Ensuring the business is executing best practices in human resource planning and development;
- Engaging the help of staff to develop job descriptions to ensure they are fair and accurate;
- Developing an employee policy manual;
- Developing a health and safety manual;
- Developing performance appraisal forms and a clear process;
- Using a variety of recruitment strategies (e.g. advertising through local newspapers, word of mouth, government websites);
- Recruiting workers from other sectors who are looking for a career change or upon retirement;
- Employing students from college viticulture/winery training programs;
- Looking for workers with good interpersonal skills and whom can contribute to a positive working environment;
- Ensuring workers motivated to do so have opportunities to take on more responsibilities;
- Recognizing the importance of a positive working environment;
- Being very flexible with work hours, vacation time and personal time;
- Providing lodging for students who come to work in the vineyard;
- Providing formal on-the-job training to new employees, including a thorough orientation process;
- Supporting employees to attend workshops, conferences, and taking various courses to increase their knowledge and skills;
- Using a bonus system for employees of one year or more, possibly as part of a profit-sharing program;
- Giving seasonal workers a bonus at the end of the season; and,
- Providing an employee health plan and retirement savings plan to which the company contributes a percentage of wages based on the employee's years of service.

One real-life effective practice demonstrated in companies in the Okanagan Valley including some vineyard/winery operations is use of group benefit programs. The Okanagan Purchasing Group (OPG) provides "enhanced coverage for life insurance, long term disability, health and dental insurance at an affordable cost" (<http://okanaganpurchasinggroup.com/>). This is important for small vineyards who cannot afford benefit plans. The OPG has developed an Employee Health Benefit Plan available to businesses who are not part of the Group.



*Winebusiness.com* occasionally publishes some good articles on HR practices and training. For example, in its April 2007 Wine Business Monthly, it writes about “Attracting and Retaining the Best Talent in the Wine Business.” It identifies three common factors among companies that are able to attract the best talent: 1) people branding strategy; 2) people sourcing innovation; and 3) people integration.

#### *People Branding Strategy*

- “Companies must pay specific attention to their reputation, or “brand” as an employer...it is the company’s commitment to employees that has the most value in attracting and retaining top talent.
- The ability to satisfy the needs of employees is just as important as marketing and customer service. Competing in the labor market requires an understanding of what employees want, and then delivering it, knowing that the cream of the crop will likely be courted by several potential companies.
- ...think about the way you present your image to potential employees. The best employees gravitate toward companies that are innovative and enable a quality of work life. Employers need to be willing to experiment with new approaches: life/work balance; ability to telecommute, work flexible hours, get on-the-job training and work towards advancement opportunities.
- Those who feel valued and appreciated develop a strong loyalty to the organization and are less likely to be wooed away.”

#### *People Sourcing Innovation*

- “The brightest talent can adapt to any industry. The tight labor market has fueled the need for a much more innovative approach by which companies look for prospective employees. Some of the most successful stories of recruiting emerge from companies...who have dared to look outside the wine industry for employees.
- Wine industry employers have sought talent from such unexpected sectors as packaged goods, consumer products, broad-based manufacturing, technology, hospitality and luxury products. These industries hold promise for an expanded pool of candidates with highly transferable skills.
- ...individuals from outside the industry help to energize the existing workforce. These individuals challenge the status quo and offer diverse, often non-traditional, thinking...they help to incorporate best practices that have proven successful in other disciplines.”

#### *People Integration*

- “Too often, successful recruiting strategies are derailed by how a candidate is treated during his or her first few days on the job.
- Proper integration is the first step in retaining the key talent that organizations compete for. The most important thing is to make sure a new employee feels welcome, valued and integral to the success of your organization.
- From training, to introductions to key co-workers and management, to explaining policies and procedures or just suggesting where to get the best lunch, these experiences must be professional, consistent and well orchestrated.”



This same article identifies the following self-assessment criteria for how wine businesses treat their potential and existing employees:

1. Brand image and reputation;
2. Meaningful work and a positive environment;
3. Respect, both personal and professional;
4. Appreciation;
5. Empowerment;
6. Education, training and sharing of information;
7. Flexibility; and,
8. Diversity, cultural and otherwise.

Other resources and articles were more dated (2001 or older) or not viticulture-specific (more broadly focusing on agriculture).

One particularly interesting article published in the *Workforce* magazine involved an interview with the vineyard manager at Beringer Vineyards in Napa Valley (<http://www.workforce.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120716/NEWS02/120719959&template=printarticle>). When Beringer applied for sustainability certification, vineyard manager Drew Johnson indicated most of the questions were for HR...”on how we treat employees and another chapter on community relations. They wanted to know about pay and benefits and even about how we lead our grape pickers in stretching and calisthenics before they start to work.”

The article states that companies across the U.S. are learning that sustainability is not just about the environment – it is a concept that is a holistic view “of how the company treats the earth and its inhabitants – particularly employees, stakeholders and customers.”

In a 2011 survey by the Society for Human Resource Management, the top five outcomes from sustainability identified by respondents were: improved employee morale; more efficient business processes; a stronger public image; increased employee loyalty; and brand recognition.

In the same article on Beringer, Steve Lederer with the County of Napa quotes a winemaker who “claimed that since he introduced sustainable HR practices, which included better health care and perks like an employees’ community garden, the taste of the wine had improved.” He concludes, “Happy people make good wine.”

## Relevant Agricultural Literature

### Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council

There are two recent Canadian labour market information publications that provide minimal information on recruitment and retention – one on primary agriculture and one on small farms:

- *Labour Market Information: Focus on Small Farms in Canada, 2011*. Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC). 2011.
- *Labour Market Information on Recruitment and Retention in Primary Agriculture*. Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC). 2009.



The small farm survey of 2011 focused mainly on HR issues and labour market trends, but it included some interesting responses:

- The recruitment methods with highest success rates among small farms were the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (79%), word of mouth (73%) and the internet (65%); the lowest success rates were for newspaper ads (27%) and employment centres (30%).
- The most commonly cited retention among small farms was “positive work environment (almost 50%), followed by flexible working hours (36%) and competitive wages (31%).
- Survey respondents and attendees at an LMI Forum – Focus on Small Farms, the need for more coordination between farm operators and those seeking employment was identified.
- Recommendations from this report included: promoting agricultural work and careers beyond the farm community; increasing the understanding of programs and services; and exploring partnership opportunities (e.g. partner with a job search agency or existing online search engine).

In this small farm survey report, CAHRC was encouraged to (p. 78):

- “Create an employer toolkit (fact sheets, materials, templates, etc.) to package the human resource information specific to agriculture. Example: templates of job descriptions, fact sheets etc.
- Create online resources and links to existing Best Practice information.
- Increase awareness of traditionally under-employed groups and provide ideas on recruitment and retention (older workers, youth, persons with disabilities, immigrants, Aboriginal peoples, and women are classically referred to as ‘under-employed.’)
- Share information with agricultural associations and industry leaders through conferences and trade shows to increase awareness of the importance of human resource management and available resources.”

The 2009 LMI report on recruitment and retention in primary agriculture is more dated and has less information on HR practices, and of course is not specific to wine grape farming. However, there were some interesting statistics in this report. For example:

- BC agricultural employers had the highest rate of experiencing difficulties in hiring employees, at 67% compared with 58% across the country;
- BC employers had the highest seasonal vacancy rate at 40% compared to 17% for all provinces;
- In terms of recruiting methods, 93% of the respondents used word-of-mouth and 84% relied on family and/or friends;
- The most popular steps used to attract and retain employees by agricultural employers were:
  - Increased wages – 92%;
  - On-site training – 84%
  - Flexible work hours – 69%;
  - Provided benefits – 66%;





- Provided other benefits (overtime and stat pay).

This 2009 study concluded there are three major human resource issues facing the Canadian agricultural sector:

1. There is limited accurate statistical data on the size and characteristics of Canada's agricultural workforce.
2. There are considerable current and future demands.
3. There is a need for programs and policies that would better meet the sector's human resource needs.

Results of the study's employer survey, key informant interviews and farm profiles indicated that there is a need to enhance human resources practices in the sector. It presented a series of recommendations.

Its first recommendation was the need to "Improve Labour Market Information for the Sector." This is being covered off by the BC viticulture sector through the work of the Committee that resulted in the RKA report.

Another recommendation was to "Take Action to Increase the Supply of Workers in Agriculture." This included sharing information on vacancy rates to support policies to increase the number of workers in the sector, and to influence immigration and temporary foreign worker policies and programs. For example, re immigration, the report suggested, "Modification of immigration criteria to enable individuals with the desire to work in the agricultural sector could enhance long term supply of skilled workers to the sector."

The 2009 report also called for examining the "Feasibility of Implementing Changes to Employment Insurance/Social Assistance Regulations" to allow for great flexibility and farm employees not being penalized for taking short-term employment in this sector.

Four other recommendations in the CAHRC report are provided below in more detail because of their relevance to the BC viticulture sector.

### CAHRC Recommendations

#### *Market the Sector to Students*

- "Students are our future workforce. As such, they need to realize the wide range of opportunities for employment in agriculture for both skilled and unskilled jobs. The benefits of working in agriculture need to be strongly communicated. Today's students use different media that may require innovative methods of attracting them to agricultural jobs. Efforts need to be directed to promoting the benefits of working in agriculture as a career that can lead to self-employment, working in the outdoors and working with new and innovative technologies. There is significant competition from other sectors to attract students; however, this does not preclude marketing to this population.



- Teachers, parents and career counsellors can have a significant impact on the future goals of students.
- By developing a promotional campaign targeted at student groups, more youth may be encouraged to look to agriculture for their future employment.”

#### *Improve the Sector’s Image*

- “Generally, jobs in agriculture are not seen as being highly valued and respected in the eyes of the general public. A strategic initiative focused on the improvement of the overall image of the agriculture sector should be developed to encourage recruitment. Information from stakeholder consultations, the employer survey, and CAHRC’s LMI Forum revealed that recruitment could be greatly improved through positive promotion of the sector. Sector image may have significant relevance when vying for employees in competing sectors.
- Improvement of the sector’s image could include the development of promotional materials such as TV commercials, flyers, pamphlets, posters, etc. As more and more consumers focus on their food source, this is an opportunity to promote the importance of the industry and the values of being involved in Canada’s agriculture industry.”
- This CAHRC report also emphasized the need to increase farms’ human resource management capacity to address recruitment and retention needs.

#### *Explore the Feasibility of Developing Human Resource Management Training for the Sector*

- “Changes in agricultural production have led to a need for a labour force skilled in new technologies.
- The demand for more workers in primary agriculture demonstrates the value of establishing human resource related plans and practices.
- Few agricultural employers have training in human resources and only 25% of employers surveyed state that they have a human resource plan. As human resource skills are critical for both hiring and retaining employees, training programs should be developed specifically for employers and employees in the sector to address this gap. Agricultural employers must be made aware of the value of human resource professionals and their role in assisting with retention and recruitment.”

#### *Develop Additional HR Tools to Support the Sector*

Examples of tools recommended in the 2009 study included the following:

- A factsheet illustrating how employers can recruit foreign workers to come to Canada to work in the agricultural sector;
- Materials that highlight potential employment opportunities or career paths by region and sector; and





- National sector-wide initiatives that would support recruitment and retention, such as a national benefit program for employers and workers.

### Other Related Agricultural Practices

A few other agricultural related programs were identified at the focus group for this project.

The Government of Quebec – and more recently of Ontario – has implemented “agricultural management clubs.” In Quebec, these consist of 20-30 farm operators and an agrologist. A club’s mandate is to address one or more of three challenges: technical production issues; business management issues; and agro-environmental issues. Currently thousands of farmers are involved in these clubs in Quebec (<http://www.fgcaq.com>). These are usually incorporated entities with a board of directors and members; costs are shared between the club and government. Members contribute to a financial pool that can be drawn from to address various issues. Could this program be adapted to viticulture groups?

The French Ministry of Agriculture has an education arm, EducAgri, that “operates over 800 training and educational facilities preparing the next generation of farmers, tradespeople and technicians, professionals, and researchers to serve agriculture and food businesses and enterprises both in France, and abroad.”<sup>5</sup>

Viticulture is one of the disciplines from which students in EducAgri facilities can choose. Internships are an integral part of these schools’ programs. These are work placements with “real world farmers, agribusiness operators, food and beverage processors and distributors, and other agribusiness enterprises.” Placements are 6-12 weeks in duration. Since 1998, EducAgri have place 850 students in internships in Quebec; it is now interested in expanding its reach beyond Quebec to English-speaking provinces.

### **General (Non-Viticulture) Human Resource Practices**

There is no shortage of web-based and other information on general (not industry-specific) human resource practices, including best practices. The body of literature on this topic is plentiful across all OECD jurisdictions. The challenge is synthesizing the literature into key themes and best practices that would be most relevant to the BC viticulture sector.

There are a number of generic HR toolkits online, some directed at certain sectors and/or small and medium-sized enterprises. For example: <http://www.smetoolkit.org/smetoolkit/en/>; or <http://qubehrm.com/blog/best-practices>.

Three documents below provide a good general summary of HR best practices.

### High-Performance Work Practices for Human Resource Management Functions

An Irish scan of HR development in tourism completed an extensive review of international

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<sup>5</sup> EducAgri. *Agricultural Internships*. Handout. Undated.





literature and identified the following “high-performance” practices associated with each human resource function or activity area.<sup>6</sup>

### *1. Resourcing and staffing*

- 1.1 Hire for attitude and train for skills
- 1.2 Involve staff in hiring decisions (particularly at team/unit level)
- 1.3 Ensure flexibility in work design to meet available staff hours
- 1.4 Use flexibility as a tool

### *2. Training and Development*

- 2.1 Promote accessible on-site learning
- 2.2 Support skills development (through funding and time off for course attendance)
- 2.3 Provide e-learning supports with course content tailored to business needs
- 2.4 Promote team-based learning that is connected to specific business processes
- 2.5 Provide staff with the motivation to practice what they have learned

### *3. Compensation/Remuneration*

- 3.1 Recognize and compensate high performance
- 3.2 Design and implement a transparent system where pay and monetary rewards track profitability.
- 3.3 Emphasize the importance of skills by rewarding those that develop their skills further
- 3.4 Introduce bonus and profit sharing arrangements

### *4. Benefits*

- 4.1 Maximize flexibility in work practices and allow time off for family commitments
- 4.2 Establish clear practices on pension, annual leave, and other supports
- 4.3 Build a supportive culture at the workplace – promote team meetings and briefing sessions

### *5. Employee Services*

- 5.1 Actively foster a working environment where fun is a regular experience
- 5.2 Empower staff in the workplace
- 5.3 Encourage and support social programs
- 5.4 Provide other developmental supports (language/literacy training)

### *6. Industrial Relations & Employee Relations*

- 6.1 Ensure that employees understand their role in meeting business targets
- 6.2 Ensure that employees have the skills to do so
- 6.3 Lead and guide employees so that they are motivated to use their skills to the full
- 6.4 Conduct regular performance reviews and use the outcomes to adjust work standards and targets
- 6.5 Encourage staff to participate in decision-making at the level of the work-unit
- 6.6 Build a congenial and egalitarian corporate culture
- 6.7 Ensure that all managers/supervisors are visible and accessible

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<sup>6</sup> Fáilte Ireland. *Competing Through People: A Human Resource Development Strategy for Irish Tourism, 2005-2010.*



6.8 Provide a supportive framework where employees may present a grievance

*7. Personnel Administration & Records*

7.1 Make sure that all HR practices and policies explicitly support strategic and business targets – and that they are readily seen and understood by staff to do so

7.2 Push day-to-day HR responsibility down to front-line managers

*8. Health Safety & Welfare*

8.1 Implement comprehensive safety training programs

8.2 Provide information and support on stress management, sickness and addiction problems

8.3 Promote a work-life balance culture, and facilitate staff in taking time when it is necessary to do so

*9. Organization Management*

9.1 Impress upon staff the reality that, in the tourism sector, there is no separate or remote “organization” – rather, there must be an effective coalition of high-performing work teams

Human Resource Good Practice Principles

In its *BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy* released earlier this year, go2 – The resource for people in Tourism – identified the following eight principles for good practice in HR management based on a review of Canadian and international literature.<sup>7</sup>

Flexibility	Preparedness on the part of the enterprise to match their demands on staff time as far as possible with the available supply of time from workers, and to recognize the work-life balance that must be managed in contemporary society.
Participation	Preparedness to encourage staff to be involved in local decision-making and to exercise some influence of their working day.
Performance Management	Regular systems of performance review to ensure that individual and team performance is delivering the service standard and business results expected of it.
Recognition	Attribution of credit to high-achievers within the peer group, and the celebration of the achievements of high-performing individuals and teams.
Reward	Payments (both monetary and non-monetary) that are linked to performance, and that are clearly understood by staff to track the profitability of the enterprise.
Communication	Routine dialogue with staff, in the openness and accessibility of management, and in regular feedback loops and follow-through actions.
Learning and Development	Ready access to on-site learning opportunities, support for learning progression through attendance at off-site courses, and a continuous emphasis on on-site team development.

<sup>7</sup> Source: go2 – The Resource for People in Tourism. *The British Columbia Tourism Labour Market Strategy (2012-2016): Technical Report & Research Backgrounder*. March 27, 2012.



Empowerment	Active support and guidance of staff so as to enable them to participate in the workplace in the manner described above.
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### Employee Engagement

Since employee retention and turnover are important topics for the BC viticulture sector, it is instructive to consider the literature on these issues – generally it is all about employee engagement. There are other reasons such as compensation, quality of/interest in the work, and ineffective management practices.

According to a plethora of research on this, “engaged” employees tend to share many of the following traits:

- Pride in employer;
- Satisfaction with employer;
- Job satisfaction;
- Opportunity to perform well at challenging work;
- Recognition and positive feedback for one’s contribution;
- Personal support from one’s supervisor;
- Effort above and beyond the minimum;
- Understanding the link between one’s job and the company’s mission;
- Prospects for future growth with one’s employer; and,
- Intention to stay with one’s employer.<sup>8</sup>

A very recently released *2012 Global Workforce Study* of 32,000 full-time workers by Towers Watson identifies five top drivers of “sustainable engagement”.<sup>9</sup> Sustainable engagement describes the intensity of employees’ connection to their organization.

Priority Areas of Focus	Behaviors and Actions that matter to employee
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is effective at growing the business</li> <li>• Shows sincere interest in employees’ well-being</li> <li>• Behaves consistently with the organization’s core values</li> <li>• Earns employees’ trust and confidence</li> </ul>
Stress, balance and workload	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manageable stress levels at work</li> <li>• A healthy balance between work and personal life</li> <li>• Enough employees in the group to do the job right</li> <li>• Flexible work arrangements</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Jennifer Leahy. *4 Reasons for High Employer Turnover*. [http://www.insperity.com/blog/4-reasons-for-high-employee-turnover/?goback=.gde\\_2555613\\_member\\_143057060](http://www.insperity.com/blog/4-reasons-for-high-employee-turnover/?goback=.gde_2555613_member_143057060).

<sup>9</sup> Towers Watson. *2012 Global Workforce Study: Engagement at Risk – Driving Strong Performance in a Volatile Global Environment*. 2012.



Priority Areas of Focus	Behaviors and Actions that matter to employee
Goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees understand:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The organization’s business goals</li> <li>○ Steps they need to take to reach those goals</li> <li>○ How their job contributes to achieving goals</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assign tasks suited to employees’ skills</li> <li>• Act in ways consistent with their words</li> <li>• Coach employees to improve performance</li> <li>• Treat employees with respect</li> </ul>
Organization’s image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly regarded by the general public</li> <li>• Displays honesty and integrity in business activities</li> </ul>

### Multi-Generational Workforce

There is an increasing amount of literature on how to hire and engage both ends of the age continuum: the “millennials” (born between 1977-1997) and older workers. In fact, employers need to be mindful of a *multi*-generational workforce.

A *Forbes* story talks about a “new normal” and research that shows millennials expect to have 15-20 jobs in their working lives.<sup>10</sup> Typically employers try to avoid “job-hoppers”, however what is important are the factors behind millennials’ job changing. They want to work in positive cultures, in interesting jobs, and with finding happiness and fulfillment in their work lives. The *Forbes* article offers three tips for engaging millennial employees (they also apply broadly as principles for engaging other employees):

- **Offer workplace flexibility** – Flexible hours and, when possible, teleworking are more important to some younger workers than compensation;
- **Listen to your employees** – Gen Y workers “crave the chance to contribute creatively to the company and have their ideas heard” says the *Forbes* article.
- **Communicate the company’s mission and values** – Increasingly, younger workers want to work in an organization whose values match their own. One survey found that 58% of respondents said they would take a 15% pay reduction in order to work for an organization “with values like mine.” (*Forbes* reference to Net Impact Survey).

On the other end of the age continuum, evidence shows that older workers and retirees are increasingly taking on part-time employment, seasonal work and term roles.<sup>11</sup> Older workers often: accept lower pay in return for less demanding jobs; have become to be appreciated for their dedication, work ethic and reliability; have well-rounded knowledge; and can provide

<sup>10</sup> Jeanne Meister. “Job Hopping is the ‘New Normal’ for Millennials: Three Ways to Prevent a Human Resource Nightmare.” *Forbes*. August 14, 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Trumbull. “Retirement? Not if these companies can help it.” *Christian Science Monitor*. September 5, 2012. <http://www.msn.com/id48912907/ns/business-christian-science-monitor/#.UGCACWBSjph>



companies with answers to their mentoring needs and need for people to take on short-term projects.

A key tool for attracting and retaining older workers is a flexible work schedule (e.g. adjusting start times, compressed workweeks, telecommuting, job-sharing, etc.) and often simple things like parking spaces close to the work area.

Finally, go2, for example, identifies five crucial pieces of advice for inspiring and engaging employees<sup>12</sup>:

1. **“Build positive working relationships:** Listen to your employees, be transparent and available, and earn their trust. Help them recognize how their work directly contributes towards the organization’s success.
2. **Ensure opportunities are available for further training and internal development:** Encourage employees to continue to feel challenged. Create an awareness of viable career opportunities within the organization, and provide the necessary tools. Make available leadership training that provides your managers with the skills to effectively and decisively guide, support and enable their employees.
3. **Provide a greater level of autonomy:** ...try to resist micromanaging, or imposing a litany of rules and regulations, policies and procedures that may otherwise impede your employees’ ability to do their jobs and fully utilize their skills.
4. **Celebrate and recognize key successes and accomplishments:** Truly engaged employees are not just in it for the money. Making the employees feel genuinely valued for their contributions and successes will not only help boost productivity and morale, but will also yield higher overall satisfaction...It could be as simple as saying “Thank You,” or implementing a structured employee recognition program...
5. **Communicate consistently, communicate often:** Communicate clear expectations and offer regular and ongoing feedback. Provide a forum through which employees are able to communicate and share their ideas with others. Ensure all employees are made clearly aware of the organization’s strategies, goals and objectives from the very beginning.”

Another factor for all employers to consider is that a growing number of job-seekers are searching for jobs via social media. *Workforce Management* referred to a very recent study by Jobvite in the U.S.: 52% of job-seekers used Facebook to help find a job in 2012, up from 48% in 2011; 38% of job-seekers used LinkedIn, up from 30%; and 34% used Twitter.<sup>13</sup>

### Examples of Sector HR Strategies

Many of these generic HR principles or good practices may seem like common-sense to some employers and managers, but in fact, many of them are the very actions that get overlooked, forgotten or done poorly. While some of these practices are utilized by viticulture and other

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<sup>12</sup> Go2. Engage Your Employees. Reap the Rewards.

<http://www.go2hr.ca/ForbrEmployers/ManagingStaff/MotivatingEmployees/EngageYourEmployeesReaptheRewards>.

<sup>13</sup> *Workforce Management*. “Facebook the Preferred Social Media Choice for Job-Seekers. October 8, 2012.

<http://www.workforce.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20121008/NEWS01/121009963&template=printarticle>.





employers, they are not uniformly or consistently adopted across most small and medium-sized businesses.

Another source of information on HR practices are HR strategies in other BC sectors. For example, recent strategies have been developed and implemented by mining, screen-based media, tourism and trucking sectors in BC, as well as national ones in culture, forestry, retail, etc. Mining and tourism and hospitality have the most advanced/mature HR strategies in BC.

While mining, forestry and trucking sector jobs and working conditions may have little in common with those in viticulture, tourism/hospitality and retail share with the viticulture sector challenges such as lower wage jobs, shortage of affordable housing, high turnover rates, low awareness of career paths, etc.

### Tourism and Hospitality

go2 – BC’s tourism sector council – released its *BC Tourism Labour Market Strategy* earlier this year. The Strategy’s “strategic priorities and activities” relevant to viticulture include the following:

- Create awareness about tourism jobs and careers
  - Develop a segmented marketing approach that captures the range of job/career opportunities and targets a diverse talent pool
  - Use appropriate tools and mediums to reach youth with themes such as “Year or a Career” and “First Job”
  - Provide access to job and career information for target markets and their influencers
- Promote the use of progressive HR practices by tourism employers
  - Demonstrate and communicate the business case (return on investment) related to effective retention practices
  - Identify and communicate best practices related to human resource management for a range of business types, sizes and locations throughout BC
  - Recognize and showcase employers who utilize effective human resource practices
- Identify and address unique labour market challenges faced by seasonal and/or rural tourism operations
  - Foster partnerships with summer and winter employers to explore the exchange of seasonal and/or part-time workers
- Improve and expand collaboration among industry, government and other stakeholders on the implementation of the Strategy
  - Engage tourism associations, regions, private and public secondary and post-secondary education institutions, training providers, government agencies, unions and others to participate in and/or lead aspects of the Strategy



## Retail

In 2006, the Alberta Government and Retail Council of Canada (RCC) released “A Sub-Strategy for Alberta’s Retail Industry” as part of that province’s *Building and Educating Tomorrow’s Workforce*. Within the themes of Inform, Attract, Develop, and Retain, this strategy focuses heavily on branding and career awareness and attraction. Here are a few examples (excluding “Develop” because training is a separate topic for the Committee and in this project):

- Inform Actions
  - Identify target groups
  - Develop a branding strategy including key messages about benefits of retail jobs for the different target groups
  - Identify effective distribution channels for communicating message about career opportunities and benefits of employment in the Retail industry to identified target groups
  - Increase the promotion of Retail as a career choice to high school students
  - Increase the sharing of effective labour force practices information among employers
- Attract Actions
  - Partner with other industry sectors’ recruitment campaigns for attracting workers to Alberta
  - Lobby the federal government to make changes in the EI program
- Retain Actions
  - Work with community agencies to provide improved supports for workers in the retail industry, including Aboriginal people, new immigrants and workers with low incomes
  - Develop and distribute information to retailers about effective employer practices to reduce employee turnover
  - Work with municipalities and the provincial government on affordable housing in the province/communities

While this Retail strategy is somewhat dated, the Alberta government published two years ago a *Progress Update 2006-2010: Alberta Industry Workforce Strategies* (Alberta Employment, October 2010). This publication provides examples of “innovation and commitment to build the labour force” and profiles “the spirit of collaboration, partnership and cooperation, illustrating the importance of working together to build Alberta’s labour force” (p. 1). Retail examples include the following:

- RCC developed the Job Rocket ([www.jobrocket.ca](http://www.jobrocket.ca)), “a one-stop web portal for jobs in the retail sector. Here candidates can bank a resume online, apply directly to advertised jobs, view career maps, and discover the various education options available for a career in retail. The site is designed to appeal to youth through fun graphics and easy-to-read interactive content.”
- “RCC’s *Alberta Retail Marketing Strategy* promotes retail as a career to six target groups – youth, mature workers, Aboriginal people, immigrants, people with disabilities, and



women returning to the workforce)...A strategic goal of the marketing initiative is to expand the image of the industry from a place to get a temporary front-line job to an industry with diverse lifelong career opportunities.”

- “RCC is partnering with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society to develop a *Retail Readiness Program* for new immigrants in the Calgary area. The program will include retail-specific training as well as cultural and language components.”

## Human Resource Practices in Seasonal Industries/Companies

An important part of the literature search for this project – because of the relevance to the viticulture sector – are examples of industries and companies successfully dealing with the challenges of the seasonality of their businesses. This is an obvious challenge for attracting, recruiting, training and retaining workers for viticulture in BC and elsewhere. While there are only common-sense anecdotal examples of how wine grape growers address the seasonal nature of vineyard jobs, one can learn from other sectors and organizations (e.g. retail, hospitality, other agricultural sectors, fishing, resorts, arts and culture, etc.).

Some of the key strategies for seasonal viticulture work heard around the Committee table are multi-tasking and cross-training (including both the vineyard and winery and even culinary sides of the business), sharing employees across companies, and financial incentives.

In reviewing the literature on successful HR practices for seasonal businesses, many of the principles are important for all types of businesses, while some are unique to being useful for employers that find it difficult to offer year-round employment. The following is a synthesis of key HR practices from various pieces of literature<sup>14</sup>:

- **Tapping into employees as a key information source** – Consider exit interviews at the end of the season asking why some staff are keen to return, as well as those not returning. Also, ensure managers and team leaders are involved in the hiring process.
- **Keeping in contact with employees during the off-season** – Keep in touch with people you want to return in subsequent seasons – even a simple phone call or postcard.
- **Using a formal onboarding program** – Get things off to a good start from day one – make new employees aware of positives, expectations, policies, safety procedures, company products and history, etc.; establish a “buddy” system for the first few weeks/months. Identify potential problems and lack of fit early – what are the warning signs?
- **Providing training opportunities** – Training can ensure employees have the information and practice required; it can be a motivator – particularly cross-training to enable staff to take on different roles and be part of a “team.”
- **Cast a wide net in recruiting seasonal staff** – Focus and tap into more than your traditional labour market (e.g. students and youth) – consider older workers or seniors/retirees, mothers wanting part-time work, reciprocal arrangements with other companies with opposite seasonal peaks. Ask for referrals from employees, including their

<sup>14</sup> For example: Jim Tierney. “Tips for Seasonal Staffing.” *Multichannelmerchant.com*. September 2011, pp. 40-41; Leandra Harris. “10 Tips to Hire, Retain Seasonal Workers.” *Canadian HR Reporter*. October 24, 2011, pp. 16, 18; Heather Kennedy. “Six Tips to Help Retain Skilled Seasonal Workers.” *RestaurantCentral.ca*.





friends and family, and consider referral bonuses. Recognize that some people thrive in seasonal positions because of the variety of work, flexible schedule and it fits their personal/family life. Also, maintain relationships with employment agencies

- **Being flexible, accommodating** – Try to offer flexible hours that provide enough work and stable, regular hours but that does not lock employer into paying for when they do not need the employee
- **Being an employer of choice** – Surpass the appeals of your competitors, even in small ways; use your product marketing experience to brand yourself as an employer of choice; encourage and support work-family balance.
- **Providing monetary and non-monetary incentives** – Keep wages above minimum; provide financial incentives for performance/productivity, bonuses to those that complete the season and/or return, etc. Use employee rewards and a recognition program involving modest monetary incentives and various small yet important internal motivators.
- **Planning and preparing for seasonal staffing** – Do test runs with new seasonal staff before peak season arrives; bring team together to get ready before new seasonal staff arrive, review goals and key dates and identify potential challenges; begin recruiting early so there is time to train and orient staff before the season begins; think about future needs (e.g. part-time “stars” can that can be converted into full-time positions). Plan on a certain attrition – a certain amount of turnover is inevitable and even healthy/natural – and plan accordingly.

An anecdotal example of partnering with other sectors is one brought up by a winery/vineyard employer on the Committee who had been approached by a major retail outlet about exchanging/sharing employees as their schedules are complementary.

### Small Business Human Resource Practices

Another reality of the BC Viticulture sector is it is dominated by very small businesses, micro-businesses (e.g. five or less employees), and owner-operators of vineyards. Therefore, part of the research for this report included looking at the unique needs of such businesses (regardless of sector). To some extent, best practices in small businesses are not necessarily much different from those in larger companies.

Some of the literature focused on the comparative advantages a smaller business may have regarding people matters. For instance, small businesses tend to be flatter, less hierarchical and may afford employees more opportunities for meaningful participation in decision-making. As one publication says, “Play to your small business strengths”<sup>15</sup>:

- The opportunity to have a broader array of job responsibilities;
- A more direct link between performance and rewards and recognition – no “filtering” or bias of intermediary manager(s);
- More direct input into and participation in management decision-making;

<sup>15</sup> Scotiabank. *Hiring on a budget? Play up your strengths.* [www.getgrowingforbusiness.scotiabank.com/blog/hiring-budget-play-your-strengths?](http://www.getgrowingforbusiness.scotiabank.com/blog/hiring-budget-play-your-strengths?)



- Greater and more direct access to the owner/executive;
- More informal mentorship opportunities;
- A more direct relationship (correlation) between good HR practices and small business bottom lines.

With few if any layers between the small business owner and employees, the capacity, skills and style of the owner are a critical success factor in HR effectiveness – as many have said, “Employees don’t quit jobs and organizations, they quit the boss.”

While not viticulture-specific, Farm Management Canada recently published an online article on “Well Training Employees are the Key to Small Business Success” ([www.fmc-gac.com/content/well-trained-employees-are-key-small-business-success](http://www.fmc-gac.com/content/well-trained-employees-are-key-small-business-success)). While its focus is on training, it also gives some useful tips on onboarding or orientation: “The first several days on the job are crucial in the success of new employees. This point is illustrated by the fact that 60% of all employees who quit do so in the first ten days.”

There are also several SME HR tool kits and other resources, some free and some not. For example, Small Business BC highlights, *Startup Human Resources Kit – Easy to Use HR Tools for Small Businesses* (Miles Employment Group). QubeHRM at [www.qubehrm.com](http://www.qubehrm.com) provides many free, short, practical HR tips that can be adapted by small businesses.

Small and micro-businesses also can benefit from industry associations and groups that can bring companies together to create critical mass for developing HR resources and tools.

## 4.5 Secondary Research – Education and Training

In addition to programs reviewed by RKA, Human Capital Strategies identified and reviewed additional ones from various jurisdictions. The most obvious programs of relevance to BC VT training needs are listed below.

### Canada

- Brock University – Certificate in Grape & Wine Technology – reserved for those who already have an undergraduate degree;
- Industry Training Authority – Landscape Horticulture Apprenticeship Program – 4 year/level apprenticeship program; 6 weeks per year in school – leads to Certificate of Qualification with Red Seal Endorsement;
- Niagara College – Winery & Viticulture Technician Diploma – 2 year program with practicum component;
- Okanagan College (Penticton) – Viticulture Certificate – 267 hours of classroom (4 courses) and 40 hours practicum; delivered via Continuing Studies.



## United States

- California State University (Fresno) – Certificate of Special Study in Enology – 2 year program, student is expected to have an undergraduate degree;
- Central Lakes College (Minnesota) – Associate Degree in Viticulture Technology – 2 year program, directed at Vineyard Managers; also has a 1 year diploma program;
- Chemetka Community College/Northwest Viticulture Center (Oregon) – Vineyard Operations Certificate – 1 year program with focus on viticulture with work experience component; industry advisory board to guide program;
- Finger Lakes Community College – Associate Degree in Viticulture and Wine Technology (New York State) – includes field trips and two extensive practica;
- Napa Valley College – Certificate Program in Viticulture and Winery Technology; and Associate Degree in Viticulture and Winery Technology (Viticulture Option);
- Santa Rosa Junior College (Sonoma County) – Two-year Associate Degree or Career Certificate Viticulture Program – includes short weekend courses, hands-on classes at a vineyard, and other field trips
- Umpqua Community College/Southern Oregon Wine Institute (Oregon) – Certificate in Viticulture and Enology – 1 year Viticulture and Enology certificate; half V & E, half wine-making; industry advisory board;
- University of California (Davis) – Certificate in Winemaking – focus on winemaking; includes online component; baccalaureate level;
- Walla Walla Community College – Associate Degree in Enology and Viticulture;
- Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center (Washington State) – includes industry-directed training programs, but has a broader focus on winemaking and culinary training;
- Washington State University – Viticulture Certificate – 18 month online course from February to August; focus on winemaking and grape growing – 3 week practicum.

## International

- Australia – Certificate III in Production Horticulture (Specializing in Viticulture); usually completed over 3-6 years by students already working in industry;
- France – BTS in Viticulture and Oenology – 2 year program including internship of 5-6 weeks in June-July between first and second years; also an apprenticeship option;
- New Zealand – National Certificate in Horticulture (Viticulture) – 3 year apprenticeship with national certificates (3 levels).

RKA did a good job of describing most of the above models. Added to the RKA list during the research for this project were a few American Associate Degree or two-year Diploma programs, the French model, and the BC Landscape Horticulture apprenticeship. Four-year degree programs were not considered relevant for purposes of this review.

Many of the above programs combine viticulture and winemaking, and almost all of them are college/institution-based with varying degrees of practicum components. Only the international ones and the BC Landscape Horticulture programs are work-based, apprenticeship-type models.



Essentially the various VT-related programs can be differentiated into two categories: 1) those that involve a post-secondary credential (e.g. certificate, diploma, associate degree); and 2) those that involve an occupational credential (e.g. apprenticeship or national standard). While all the above programs reviewed appear to be continuing to operate and be sustainable, with varying degrees of success, there was not the time in this project to find and review program evaluations or outcomes or to talk to key industry and education informants about each program. Also, it is important to consider the risk of transplanting a program that has been developed in another jurisdiction with its unique industry and cultural context and dynamics into the BC context and the uniqueness of its industry, history, etc. For example, “apprenticeships” have a different history – longer, more entrenched and more culturally accepted – in Australia, France and New Zealand. Also, the BC grape and wine industry has a different history, scale, structure and challenges from the same industry in other wine regions of the world. Given this, is the Niagara College program in Ontario a model to consider because of similarities with the BC situation (although this program includes winery training)?

On the other hand, from the review of relevant training programs, it appears the Committee is on the right track in terms of proposed training content for VTs – one sees much similarity with the content outlines of training in other jurisdictions. One also sees practical components and optimal industry engagement (e.g. employers, associations and institutes are directly involved) in many of these viticulture-related programs.

The other implication of reviewing these programs is that a number of them may provide sources of ideas, curriculum, training materials, etc. regardless of what VT training model is developed in BC. RKA identified some examples of this and a more detailed search for and analysis of such resources can be undertaken after this project.

In summary, the above viticulture-related training programs in other jurisdictions appear to have varying degrees of success and sustainability because of the following features:

- An appropriate breadth and depth of coverage of viticulture theory and knowledge;
- Some type of direct industry involvement through an advisory committee, provision of work experience, etc. and industry endorsement (via an association or major employers) of the program;
- A practical work experience component, some longer than a few weeks, some with more than one practicum and in addition to a practicum period, some field trips/site visits (e.g. Finger Lakes offers two “extensive” practica plus field trips, WSU’s includes three “hands-on weekend camps”);
- Equipment, chemical, pest management and other supplier participation in the training;
- Clear pre-requisites and graduation requirements;
- Extensive marketing, promotion and student recruitment, often in conjunction with industry;
- Many of the institutions delivering these programs had small vineyards and wineries in which to provide students with additional hands-on experience;
- Highly qualified faculty including industry-based instructors with appropriate academic credentials;



- Many of the institutions have relationships with geographically close research and/or agricultural institutes to add theoretical and research rigour to the training program;
- Almost all of the programs have provisions for transferring to other institutions and for laddering into a higher-level (e.g. degree) program after industry experience;
- A growing number of these programs utilize online learning for theory/knowledge parts of the training, affording the student and employer more flexibility in terms of completing the training and time away from work.

One thing for mentioned earlier and that the Committee may want to think about is that many of the above programs cover viticulture *and* winemaking in the same program. This not only increases the probability of a achieving critical mass of training participants but it affords the graduate/worker more career paths and provides a broader pools of graduates for vineyards and wineries and for cross-training.

## 5. CONSIDERATIONS

Before recommending an HR Strategy – including specific strategies and other details – and a VT training model, this section provides considerations, factors and implications of the findings about HR practices and training models in section 4. It will provide a conceptual “segue” to move from the findings to the recommendations.



### 5.1 HR Strategy Considerations

HR “best practices” need to be considered with the following factors in mind:

- The situational context – transferring what is learned or effective in one industry or jurisdiction to HR practices in BC viticulture companies involves different contexts, industry structures, legal and regulatory frameworks, politics, and public policies. Another factor is the relative scalability of comparison industries.
- While there are distinct differences between “recruitment” and “retention” practices, the two HR activities are inextricably linked. Effective recruitment (attraction > screening > selection) is also an important retention strategy; and learning from retention practices and turnover helps a company strengthen its recruitment and hiring processes. A sector should not spend too much time making too fine a distinction between the two as they often involve similar principles and factors.
- A sector HR strategy needs to differentiate what practices can take place or be facilitated at the sectoral level and what needs to (can only) happen at the company level.



- Small businesses need easy access to proven-effective practical and easy to use HR tools, resources and information. It is not as simple as identifying best practices and just passing the information onto companies to use without any adaptation and aids for implementing.
- Part of HR best practices is about effective communication across a sector – “information is power.” A first step is to communicate and demonstrate the value proposition of good HR practice in vineyards; how effective recruitment and retention is an integral part of sustainable and profitable wine grape growing. Then sector organizations need to work with others to make available best practice tools. The more widespread the value proposition is among sector employers and role-model employers and champions and the degree to which they are seen to use and benefit from specific HR strategies, the more likely smaller viticulture employers and managers will want to use such tools.
- Another consideration is with what HR strategies will the BC viticulture get the “biggest bang”? The Committee will want to start gradually with a small number of priority actions, establish traction, and build on this momentum.

This will be discussed more in the recommendations for HR strategies at the end of this report.

## 5.2 Training Model Considerations

Before considering the various options for a VT training model, it is important to identify a set of criteria for assessing such options.

### Criteria for Selecting a Viticulture Training Model

- Industry/employer buy-in – they will participate in the model, including hiring from and sending employees to;
- The model enables industry control or direct influence over the design and delivery of the program;
- Relative costs – the costs (e.g. development, delivery, for employers, for employees/students, other) should not be prohibitive or much higher than other options; this includes how much are variable (per student) vs. fixed costs;
- Sustainability – is the model viable? is it financially sustainable?
- Flexibility – in terms of the sequencing of content, the location of delivery, the scheduling of training; and where one enters and exits the program;
- Sufficient practical component – in terms of duration;
- Direct linkages between in-school training and on-the-job training/experience;
- Appropriate breadth and depth of theory and knowledge;
- Opportunity for one’s skills/knowledge and experience to be formally recognized to reduce the amount of training needed (prior learning assessment and recognition);
- Use of existing curriculum materials – the model can take advantage of curriculum and other resources from other programs;
- State (at least provincial) and industry-recognized credential/certification; and,
- Employer and learner eligibility for funding are not too exclusive and narrow.



**Table 1: Training Model Variables**

Training Model Variable	Description/Options/Other Comments
1. Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This has been defined during the RKA work and industry representatives appear generally in agreement. Next steps will more fully define the details and convert the content into occupational standards and other next products for a training program.</li> </ul>
2. Occupational Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viticulture Technician only? Combined with other wine occupations (e.g. wine host) or built on top of a program for another occupation (e.g. Landscape Horticulturalist)?</li> </ul>
3. Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levels or semesters?</li> <li>• Or modules?</li> <li>• Progression from one level/module to a next or variable sequencing?</li> <li>• More than one point to enter and/or exit the training?</li> <li>• Mostly institution-based? Mostly work-based? Balance of the two (e.g. co-operative education)? Other?</li> <li>• Sequencing of in-school and practical components</li> </ul>
4. Delivery methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom?</li> <li>• Laboratory or workshop?</li> <li>• On-the-job training?</li> <li>• Work experience?</li> <li>• Field experience (e.g. training vineyard or winery)</li> <li>• Field trips/site visits</li> <li>• Online learning</li> <li>• Other (e.g. self study/ correspondence)</li> </ul>
5. Delivery Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical requirements of in-school training (classroom, lab, etc.)</li> <li>• Instructional materials and learning resources</li> <li>• Equipment, tools and workplace materials</li> <li>• Instructor qualifications</li> </ul>

Training Model Variable	Description/Options/Other Comments
6. Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration of overall program (1 to 2 calendar years or school years?)</li> <li>• Duration of in-school components</li> <li>• Duration of practical components</li> <li>• Duration of each level or module</li> </ul>
7. Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breadth</li> <li>• Depth</li> <li>• Scope (beyond viticulture?)</li> <li>• Sequencing</li> </ul>
8. Practical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration of practicum</li> <li>• One or more practica?</li> <li>• When during the training?</li> <li>• When during the vineyard cycle?</li> <li>• Partnerships and logistics to arrange practicum</li> <li>• Strategy for linking practical and in-school components</li> <li>• Mix of real on-the-job, in the lab, in a simulated environment</li> <li>• Sequencing</li> </ul>
9. Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of in-school training</li> <li>• Location of practical training</li> <li>• One or more locations?</li> <li>• Travelling workshops or training (e.g. training trailer)</li> </ul>
10. Credential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of credential – institutional, occupational, both, or other?</li> <li>• Certification process/steps</li> <li>• Type of assessment (written, practical, simulation, other)</li> <li>• Challenge process or recognition of prior learning</li> </ul>



Training Model Variable	Description/Options/Other Comments
11. Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the program outline and standards</li> <li>• Development of exams and other assessment tools</li> <li>• Direct delivery costs</li> <li>• Costs to employers</li> <li>• Costs to students/apprentices</li> <li>• Administration and overhead</li> <li>• Others costs</li> </ul>
12. Funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training provider?</li> <li>• Tuition and other fees?</li> <li>• Industry contributions?</li> <li>• Client sponsors (e.g. EI, EPBC, First Nations, etc.)?</li> <li>• Government ministries, departments and agencies (e.g. ITA)?</li> <li>• In-kind contributions (particularly from industry)?</li> <li>• Other?</li> </ul>
13. Employer and learner eligibility for funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer eligibility for government tax credit or grant</li> <li>• Learner eligibility for EI support, student loans/bursaries, other client support (e.g. First Nations)</li> </ul>
14. Pre-requisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain high school grade completion?</li> <li>• Certain high school course completion?</li> <li>• Equivalencies if they do not meet the above?</li> <li>• Other pre-requisites (e.g. TOEFL, TOWES, physical ability, etc.)</li> </ul>
15. Target learner population (This was defined earlier in this report, and is an important variable in considering the design and delivery of a training program.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing vineyard employees</li> <li>• Existing winery employees</li> <li>• Employees from other sectors</li> <li>• Unemployed persons (youth, young adults, older workers, etc.)</li> <li>• Owner growers</li> <li>• Contractors and contractor employees</li> <li>• People from other provinces/states</li> <li>• General interest learners (consumers)</li> </ul>



Training Model Variable	Description/Options/Other Comments
16. Evaluation/assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written examination?</li> <li>• Portfolio of experience?</li> <li>• Competency conversation?</li> <li>• Practical assessment (direct observation, practical test or simulation)?</li> <li>• Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)?</li> <li>• Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR)?</li> </ul>
17. Ownership/control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program/curriculum owned by institution?</li> <li>• By industry group?</li> <li>• By government agency (e.g. Queen’s Printer)?</li> <li>• By another entity?</li> <li>• Co-ownership?</li> </ul>
18. Breadth of relevance to different kinds of viticulture employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the program be relevant to and engage the participation of owner-operator, small, medium and large wine grape growers, or just medium and large ones?</li> </ul>

Further, before looking at VT training model options, Table 1 lists the “variables” by which training programs may differ. This helps one consider how training models can vary and also will eventually provide a “checklist” to ensure options and a preferred model have been fully considered

## **Apprenticeship or Non-Apprenticeship?**

Throughout its young life, the Committee has heard and discussed whether or not a formal apprenticeship recognized by the ITA should be the training model of choice for BC VTs. Of course on the “non-apprenticeship” side, there is more than one option.

Simply put, as the ITA website states, “apprenticeship” in BC is:

“Apprenticeship is a form of post-secondary education that combines paid, work-based training (about 85% of training), with technical training in a classroom or shop setting (about 15% of training). Successful completion of both components, along with examinations, is required to earn a certificate or ticket, and become a certified tradesperson. The length of an apprenticeship can range from one to five years, but most require four years to complete.”

A fundamental question is, do employers in the viticulture sector want to hire people and then have them complete formal on-the-job and classroom training while they are employed as an apprentice? Or would they rather hire people from an industry-endorsed post-secondary institutional training program (whether certificate or diploma)?

Until recently, traditional apprenticeship in BC included:

- Block release delivery of technical training – 4 to 10 weeks in school each year of the apprenticeship;
- Institution-based technical training delivery;
- Informal on-the-job training under the supervision of a certified journeyman or equivalent;
- A required number of work hours to be eligible for certification;
- Written examinations at the end of each level/year of training and a written examination at the end of technical training
- Certificate of Apprenticeship/Qualification (and Red Seal endorsement) credentials are issued upon successful completion of the program and exams
- A simple “challenge” process by having enough (usually 1 ½ times required for an apprenticeship) work hours and successfully completing a written exam;
- Mostly comprehensive, generalist traditional “trades”;
- Little alternate delivery in terms of online learning or simulated training; and,
- Some trades require a Logbook to be completed to document work hours and proficiency in key competencies.





More recently through the efforts of the ITA and preferences from industries, apprenticeship trends in BC include more options:

- There are more diverse training models: the traditional single-track (1, 2, 3, 4), progressive tracks; (more than one certification like Professional Cook 1, 2 and 3); and multiple tracks (various pathways and entry and exit points);
- More specialty trades exist;
- New “occupations” are under consideration by the ITA;
- There are more alternate delivery models;
- There is more flexible scheduling of training (e.g. part-time technical training, day release) (e.g. Wall & Ceiling Installer, Cook);
- More practical assessment is being used in addition to the standard multiple choice written exam;
- Through the introduction of Industry Training Organizations (e.g. HortEducationBC), apprenticeship programs and the process are intended to be more industry-driven; and,
- There exist more defined and more onerous program development and certification standards.

While there are more options for what apprenticeship programs may look like and how they are delivered in BC, the ITA’s key concerns in approving new programs or substantive program changes are:

- The industry and occupation have a critical mass of jobs for which the formal training and certification will fill with trained people (i.e. labour market demand);
- The program can be sustained even through downturns in the industry cycle (i.e. sustainability);
- The industry is prepared to support the program by providing input on program changes every few years and supply subject matter experts for when program standards, exams and other materials need to be validated;
- A sufficient number of employers in the industry are willing to “sponsor” apprentices and live up to the terms of the apprenticeship registration if they sign with an apprentice; and,
- Sufficient numbers of apprentices will complete their apprenticeship and certification and stay working in the industry in their occupation for reasonable periods.

One existing apprenticeship that is particularly pertinent in the VT context is the Landscape Horticulturist (LH), defined in the ITA Program Profile as:

“....a person who selects, handles, utilizes trees, shrubs and ornamental plants and turf grass for the design, development and maintenance of public and private landscaping spaces. Prepares soil, plants, cultivates, prunes and irrigates to maintain plant vigor. Controls plant pests utilizing appropriate integrated pest management techniques.”

The program has four levels of technical (in-school) training of 6 weeks each, and requires 6,480 hours of work experience. There is also a two-level Horticulture Technician Foundation program of 36 weeks





in-school training – upon completion of this option a person can get credit towards the first two levels of the LH apprenticeship and towards 500 hours of work experience.

The topic areas for the first two levels of LH are:

#### *Level 1*

- Basic supervision 1
- Equipment maintenance and safety 1
- Horticultural plant science 1
- Horticultural practices 1
- Plant health and pest management 1
- Plant identification 1
- Soil management 1

#### *Level 2*

- Basic supervision 2
- Equipment maintenance and safety 2
- Horticultural plant science 2
- Horticultural practices 2
- Plant health and pest management 2
- Plant identification 2
- Soil management 2

If VT training was built on the LH base, there are a few options: 1) Levels 1 and 2 of the LH program could be modified to include more VT-related content; 2) A VT apprenticeship could complete a “bridging” component of training to cover of VT-specific content not covered in the LH program. In either case, after Levels 1 and 2 of the LH program (and the bridging training if option 2), VT apprentices could progress into VT-specific levels of training.

A key question – if the Committee is interested in building on the LH program and following an apprenticeship model – will be the degree of overlap in the technical training content of the LH levels 1 and 2 and the defined and necessary content of VT-specific training.

Other considerations regarding adopting a VT apprenticeship or ITA-approved model are as follows:

- Can and does the viticulture sector want to meet the key ITA requirements mentioned on the previous page?
- Can the sector invest the time it will take and the resources and energy required to obtain ITA approval?
- If the sector adopts a non-traditional apprenticeship model, will ITA fully fund the delivery of the training?
- Will the ITA or another government agency (e.g. Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training) fund the development of program standards, curriculum and other materials?





- How much control will the sector have in terms of how the program is delivered, sending employees to training, changes in program standards or curriculum, instructors used, etc.?

## Other (Non-Apprenticeship) Training Models

There are a number of other options for a VT training model in BC in terms of where the focus of the training is:

- Institution-based
  - Full-time or part-time certificate (one year) or diploma (two year) programs
  - Continuing Studies (full-time or CS credits)
- Workplace-based
  - Industry or professional association managed training and certification
  - Employer-sponsored training (on- and/or off-the-job) without certification
- Blended/alternating
  - Co-operative education
  - Work practicums
  - Internships

It is also important to note that formal (even national) occupational standards and industry certification can exist without apprenticeship. While the “Red Seal” is a strong national trades/apprenticeship brand, industries such as Aerospace and Tourism have developed national occupational standards and some are even recognized internationally.

## Options for a VT Training Model

In the context of this project, the range of options for a VT training program are as follows:

1. Status Quo – No changes to current industry practice: in-house training by larger employers; on-the-job training with most others; and status quo Okanagan College program (non-ITA);
2. Develop an enhanced institution-based certificate program delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (non-ITA);
3. Develop a new workplace-based apprenticeship program with a technical component delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (ITA);
4. Develop and build a new workplace-based apprenticeship program on an existing program (e.g. Landscape Horticulture) (ITA); this assumes significant content overlap;
5. Develop a workplace-based non-apprenticeship program with a technical component delivered by an industry body or post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (non-ITA); and,
6. A hybrid of the above or another model. (ITA or non-ITA).

Table 2 compares these options by briefly identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each.



**Table 2: Training Model Options – Advantages and Disadvantages**

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>1. <b>Status Quo – No changes</b> to current industry practice: in-house training by larger employers; on-the-job training with most others; and status quo Okanagan College program (<i>non-ITA</i>) (<i>educational credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No effort required</li> <li>• No additional costs incurred</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry’s viticulture training needs will not be met</li> <li>• Increased risk of vacancies and skill shortages</li> </ul>
<p>2. Develop an enhanced <b>non-ITA institution-based certificate program</b> delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (<i>occupational credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some inadequacies of existing program could be addressed (see section on weaknesses of existing model)</li> <li>• A more reliable training standard vetted by industry</li> <li>• A more attractive program to send employees to and/or to recruit (graduates) from</li> <li>• Graduates should be more job-ready upon completion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is not real change and may not be enough to engage employers to participate</li> <li>• Costs to make program enhancements</li> <li>• Time for institution(s) to obtain internal and funding approvals and to develop the enhancements</li> <li>• Some challenges may remain, such as a less than optimal practical component</li> <li>• Assumes an institution-funded business model</li> <li>• Possibly less industry control</li> </ul>
<p>3. Develop a <b>new ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program</b> with a technical component delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (<i>occupational credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITA funding if approved</li> <li>• Workplace-based focus</li> <li>• Provincially recognized credential</li> <li>• Better opportunity to brand VT if stand-alone</li> <li>• Better integration between practical and theory components</li> <li>• Apprentices earn for longer periods</li> <li>• Employers can use apprenticeship to screen applicants</li> <li>• More control over training provider standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger employers would be more likely to participate, but small ones and owner-growers would not participate.</li> <li>• Time and effort to obtain ITA approval (longer for new programs)</li> <li>• ITA may have requirements that the industry does not want to or cannot meet</li> <li>• Costs to develop the standards and learning resources</li> <li>• In-school training needs to be coordinated with vineyard seasons</li> <li>• Possibly less industry control</li> </ul>



Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>4. Develop and build an <b>ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program laddered with an existing program</b> (e.g. Landscape Horticulture) (assuming significant content overlap) (<i>occupational credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential ITA funding if approved</li> <li>• Workplace-based focus</li> <li>• Provincially recognized credential and Red Seal Endorsement (for Horticulture)</li> <li>• Better integration between practical and theory components</li> <li>• HortEducationBC assistance/support</li> <li>• More of a critical mass because of sharing some levels with Landscape Horticulture</li> <li>• Apprentices earn for longer periods</li> <li>• Employers can use apprenticeship to screen applicants</li> <li>• Students have more choices/pathways</li> <li>• More control over training provider standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not enough common content to justify connecting the viticulture training to the existing program</li> <li>• Time and effort to obtain ITA approval (shorter for modification to existing programs)</li> <li>• ITA may have requirements that the industry does not want to or cannot meet</li> <li>• Costs to develop the standards and learning resources for viticulture-specific components</li> <li>• In-school training needs to be coordinated with vineyard seasons</li> <li>• Could lose potential viticulture workers to other (horticulture) pathways</li> <li>• Possibly less industry control</li> </ul>
<p>5. Develop a <b>(non-ITA) workplace-based non-apprenticeship program with a technical component delivered by an industry body or post-secondary institution;</b> developed by industry against an industry standard (<i>educational, occupational or industry credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not require ITA approvals</li> <li>• Possible industry revenue stream</li> <li>• Workplace-based focus</li> <li>• Easier to design a non-traditional, flexible model</li> <li>• Better integration between practical and theory components</li> <li>• Trainees earn for longer periods</li> <li>• Employers can use training to screen applicants</li> <li>• Possible greater industry control and ownership</li> <li>• More control over training provider standards</li> <li>• Opportunity to leverage partnerships for delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty about funding – need to develop a business model to fund the training (higher financial risk)</li> <li>• Costs to develop the standards and learning resources</li> <li>• Uncertainty about who will deliver</li> <li>• No provincial or national (non-industry) recognition</li> </ul>
<p>6. A <b>hybrid</b> of the above or another model (<b>ITA or non-ITA</b>) (<i>educational, occupational or industry credential</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model needs to be defined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model needs to be defined</li> </ul>





**Table 3: Meeting Option Evaluation Criteria for VT Training Model Options**

Criteria	Option 2 Enhanced PSE Credential	Option 3 New ITA Apprenticesp	Option 4 Laddered on Existing ITA Apprenticesp	Option 5 New Industry Training (Non-ITA)	Comments
	Highly positive = 3; moderately = 2; low = 1; none = 0				
1. Industry/employer buy-in – they will participate in the model, including hiring from and sending employees to	2	2	2	3	Industry buy-in and participation should be most likely in Option 5
2. The model enables industry control or direct influence over the design and delivery of the program	1	2	2	3	This definitely should be strongest in Option 5, although could be possible in Options 3 and 4
3. Relative costs – the costs (e.g. development, delivery, for employers, for employees/students, other) should not be prohibitive or much higher than other options; this includes how much are variable (per student) vs. fixed costs	2	2	2	1.5	Option 5 would likely be most costly to industry; Option 2 could be the least costly
4. Sustainability – is the model viable? is it financially sustainable?	2	2	2	2	Options 5 and 3 could be least viable/sustainable in the short-term
5. Flexibility – in terms of the sequencing of content, location of delivery, the scheduling of training; and where one enters and exits the program	2	1	1	3	With full industry control, Option 5 could have most potential, but flexibility should be possible in the other options
6. Sufficient practical component – in terms of duration	1	2	2	3	Would seem most likely in Option 5, and also Options 3 and 4
7. Direct linkages between in-school training and on-the-job training/experience	1	3	3	3	Would seem most likely in all the work-based options, but still somewhat possible in Option 2
8. Appropriate breadth and depth of theory and knowledge	2	2	2	3	Equally possible in all options
9. Opportunity for one’s skills/knowledge and experience to be formally recognized to reduce the amount of training needed (prior learning assessment and recognition)	2	2	2	2	This might be less likely in Option 5 because of the added costs and time for industry to assess
10. Use of existing curriculum materials – the model can take advantage of curriculum/other resources from other programs	2	2	2	2	Equally possible for all options
11. State (at least provincial) and industry-recognized credential/certification	2	3	3	1	Least possible in Option 5 because the Province may not formally recognize
12. Employer & learner eligibility for funding are not too exclusive/narrow	2	2	2	1	Less possible in Option 5 as it may not be government-recognized
13. Breadth of employer involvement (type and size)	2	1	1	3	Apprenticeship options would be used more by large employers
14. Industry/employer time required	3	2	1	1	Most industry time likely required in Option 5, least in Option 2
15. Ease of implementation for industry	3	2	2	1	Option 5 likely most challenging; Option 2 likely least challenging
16. Effort to obtain necessary approvals	2	1	1	3	Options 3 and 4 would be the most difficult and time-consuming
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>35.5</b>	





There are examples of options 2 (educational credential), 3 (new apprenticeship and occupational credential) and 4 (laddered with existing apprenticeship and occupational credential) in the Canadian, U.S. and international VT-related training programs reviewed for this project. However, there was no example of option 5 (a non-educational led, non-ITA industry training program). The reason for this is that option 5 represents added challenges for a grape growing/wine sector to develop, resource and sustain a VT related program without significant resources from government and possibly from post-secondary institutions. While this will be a challenging option, it is still recommended as the preferred option by HCS and by the Committee.

An important assumption regarding Option 4 (laddering onto the Landscape Horticulturalist apprenticeship) assumes a significant degree of overlap/commonality between the VT content (defined in the RKA Occupational Analysis Chart) and the content of Levels 1 and 2 in the LH apprenticeship technical training. From the latest feedback from the Committee, there is not enough common content to make this a really viable or preferred option.

Table 3 above lists the criteria for assessing various VT training options presented earlier in this report; and for each of the above four model options, it rates them against these criteria: a “3” if an option is highly positive in terms of the criterion, a “2” if it is moderately positive, a “1” if it is rated low on the criterion; and a “0” if not at all. All and all, Option 5 comes out on top while the other three (2, 3 and 4) are rated around the same.

Of course – like winemaking – this is not strictly a science; evaluating various training model options includes subjectivity and is therefore both an art and science. Also, the criteria are not weighted, some may be more important to the sector than others; if one option is rated relatively high for 5 or 6 key criteria, then perhaps that would be the deciding factor.

For example, if industry ownership and buy-in are most important as well as flexibility and adequate practical training, then Option 5 may be the best one. If recognition of the program credential by government is paramount, other options may be stronger. If ease of implementation and amount of time/effort by industry are much more important, then Option 2 would appear strongest; Option 2 also may be strongest in terms of resources to mount the program. If time and effort to obtain necessary approvals is critical, Option 5 should be rated the highest and the Options 3 and 4 the lowest.

Another intangible is the sector’s and Committee’s philosophical perspective and values regarding workforce and training issues and regarding how they prefer to do business.

In the end and in summary, HCS is recommending the industry pursue Option 5, a truly industry-driven and owned training program. Option 5 appears to be riskier in the short-term but something that may be less risky and more feasible after establishing traction in a staged approach toward developing and implementing the model.



It should be noted here that while Option 4 has some advantages, a key criterion for the Committee is critical mass. According to a recent article, there are questions about the viability of Levels 3 and 4 of the Horticultural apprenticeship program.<sup>16</sup>

Another complicating factor is that it is difficult to get definitive answers from the ITA on what is possible in terms of being approved and funded. This is not a criticism, but rather the reality of complexities in the public policy area of training and the political context.

Also, another factor for the Committee to consider is whether they want an exclusively VT training program or a broader one that includes discrete VT and winery components with some common content. This could affect which option(s) are most desirable.

Finally, the Committee needs to be very confident (and be able to demonstrate) that there will be the critical mass of learners to sustain an on-going program.

Human Capital Strategies believes that Option 5 could be a viable model for the sector if the Committee and some other key champions are fully behind it, and if it is developed in an iterative way (i.e. not all at once).

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 HR Strategy Recommendations

The following recommendations are also reflected in a draft British Columbia Viticulture Human Resource Strategy (HRS) in Appendix 5 of this report. “Strategic Challenges”, “Vision”, “Values”, “Long-Term Goals” and “Implementation” sections are also included in the HRS.

Several recommendations are provided here and the Committee may wish to consider them “options” to choose from for implementation. It is not suggested that all recommendations must be implemented, which is why they have been prioritized.



These recommendations are predicated on a broad view of a Viticulture career path as reflected in Chart 2.

The core part of this career path is of course in the column labeled “Viticulture”. Closely related are winery careers and hospitality/culinary (reflected by thinner border lines). Less affiliated but

<sup>16</sup> David Schmidt. “Apprentice program at risk of cancellation.” *Country Life in BC*. August 2012, p. 25.





still related with some common skills and knowledge is other agricultural sectors and other sectors.

Also, some jobs in retail (sales, marketing), wholesale (shipping, logistics), transportation (operators, mechanics), and other services (resorts, etc.) may also be applicable to vineyard and/or winery positions.

While the “core” of the viticulture career path should be the viticulture careers, in order to build critical mass and capitalize on mobility and transferable skills, the promoted career path needs to reflect a bigger-picture view.

**Chart 2  
The Viticulture Career Path**

Careers in Related Agriculture Sectors	VITICULTURE CAREERS	Winery Careers
Tree Fruit Horticulture Ground Crops Others	<b>Owner/Operator</b> <b>Consultant</b> <b>Viticulturist</b> <b>Vineyard Manager</b> <b>Viticulture Technician</b> <b>Lead Hand/Crew Supervisor</b> <b>Specialist (tractors, chemicals, irrigation)</b> <b>Grower Representative</b> <b>Grower Liaison</b> <b>Pickers/Labourers</b> <b>Administrative</b>	Winemaker Winery Manager Store Manager Sommelier Sales Representative Wine Buyer Wine Educator Laboratory Technicians Caterer Culinary Staff Store Clerk Cellarhand Winery Production Labourers Administrative Staff
<b>Careers in Other Sectors</b>		<b>Hospitality/Culinary</b>
<b>Retail</b>	<b>Other Sectors</b>	
Store Manager Store Clerk Sales Representative	Resort Staff Wholesale Sales Transportation Service Sectors	Maitre d' Chef Cook Server





Human Capital Strategies recommends that the Committee consider adopting the following HR strategies as part of its BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy.

For each strategy that follows, the table below will provide the following details related to relative priority and implementation considerations.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	• Low, moderate, high
Immediacy	• Immediate (within 6 months); short-term (within 7-12 months); medium-term (greater than 1 year and up to 2 years; long-term (more than 2 years and up to 5 years)
Best entity to execute	
Timeline	• Starting January 2013 (Q1 of HRS = January-March 2013)
Estimated cost	
Risk if not executed	
Employer engagement	
Partnership opportunities	

Among the following 18 recommendations for a Viticulture Human Resources Strategy, the following priorities are identified as the highest ones for the Committee to consider for implementation during the first 12 months of the HR Strategy:

- An Industry Leadership Entity, including a Dedicated Staff Position
- Branding and Awareness-Building Activities
- A Viticulture HR Website
- A HRS Communications Strategy, including:
  - Job-Seeker Market Research
  - Branding to Increase the Sector’s and Viticulture Careers’ Attractiveness
  - Social Media Tools
  - Print Collateral
- Attraction Activities
- A Targeted Recruitment Strategy (based on market research)
- Tactics to Address Seasonality Challenges
- Benefit Packages for Employees of Small/Medium Vineyards
- Integration of the HR Strategy with the Training Option

**The Committee has agreed in principle to these being priorities. They should now prioritize each in terms of sequencing, impact and urgency.**





These suggested “priority” recommendations are highlighted with a heading in red text.

## 1. Industry Leadership

### 1.1 Leadership Entity

The Committee should consider asking one or more industry organizations to lead the implementation of the Human Resource Strategy and Training Options recommendations. Given its mandate and its work on the BC Sustainable Winegrowing Program, the BC Wine Grape Council would seem the most appropriate entity.

A critical success factor for the successful implementation of a sector HRS is having a capable agreed upon (recognized) industry body to be the legal entity of record. The Committee could continue to function, but would be an advisory arm of the agreed upon industry entity. Without this, the HRS implementation could easily founder and the responsibility and accountability would be unclear.

An important part of creating an industry leadership body is to include with it a half- or full-time staff position dedicated to implementing and monitoring this HR Strategy and training model.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC Wine Grape Council (Sector leadership entity)</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make decision before January 2013</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initially funded through Labour Market Partnerships</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of leadership, unclear roles, weak coordination</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite employers to a launch event and to participate in leadership entity activities, consider member “fees”</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments</li> </ul>

## 2. Branding, Awareness and Attraction

The Committee and/or new leadership body should, at its earliest opportunity, start to develop sector/career branding, awareness and attraction activities. This includes the following specific recommendations:

### 2.1 Viticulture Website

This could be a new stand-alone website or it could be a new page(s) added to an existing website. If the latter, the new content should have distinct branding and be separate from the rest of the website. The website would start modestly with basic information about the industry and jobs.





Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement short-term option (new section of existing website) by Jan. 2013</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial \$5,000 (contracted services) &gt; continuous improvement (plus monthly hosting and maintenance costs)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to adequately implement attraction and other strategies</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute website launch and information to members of all associations; use local newspapers and trade journals/sites</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, media, employers</li> </ul>

Over time, it could include the HRS activities, training program information, a job matching capacity, information on viticulture careers, showing pathways, and success stories (text and video clips).

## 2.2 Communications Strategy

As part of the Committee’s plans, a comprehensive, realistic and costed communications strategy should be developed as soon as possible. It could include the following elements:

### 2.2.1 Job-Seeker Market Research

As was pointed out in meetings, the viticulture sector needs to undertake more focused research to find out how young people and other potential viticulture employees see the industry and what would motivate them to work in it.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Shotgun’ approach to attraction and recruiting (working in the dark)</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain input on research questions</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments, researchers, BC Human Resources Management Association</li> </ul>

### 2.2.2 Branding – Sector and its Careers

Develop “brand” for the viticulture (and possibly broader wine) sector to communicate a positive image of the industry and its growth and potential, and of its careers and employment and training opportunities.



Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower visibility, unclear image, unclear/inconsistent messaging</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use focus group of employers for input</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups/institutions that represent various workforce segments</li> </ul>

This would include a consistent look for HRS and Training activities, and consistent messaging to be used with the HRS and by individual companies. This would include how the viticulture sector and careers include some positives that other sectors do not have.

### 2.2.3 Social Media

While seen by some as medium with which to reach only young people, social media is becoming more important for connecting with mature workers, career changers, mature students, workers in and outside of viticulture, and even retirees. The communications strategy must include a clear social media strategy with specific tools and should be based on the earlier recommended research.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingent on website work; Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10,000 (staff time or contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missed opportunities – failure to reach thousands of people</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via social media tools</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major sector employers, social media groups</li> </ul>

### 2.2.4 Print Collateral

The sector can start small with a simple brochure that can be used at career fairs, in other venues (like schools) and elsewhere. While “virtual” media is very important, many people still like to take away something physical from a career fair. The brochure can also be used in direct mail campaigns if the sector targets certain groups to reach including out of province. The brochure could be updated annually (so print runs should not be too high) to add emerging information on HRS activities and on the training program.







Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic in Q1 (January-March 2013); more sophisticated/detailed in Q2 or Q3 (after Training decision/development) (April-September 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$7,000 (contracted services) for design and first printing</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of print material for a portion of potential job-seeker population that rely on it</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out from employers what basic information would be useful</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, training institution(s), major employers</li> </ul>

### 2.2.5 Multimedia

For versatility and attraction, it is important to use a variety of media in promoting the viticulture, its careers and other positives. Therefore, in addition to a website and print material, the video clips on the website could also be available on a CD or flash drive, associations and employers could be equipped with a top-notch PowerPoint presentation (including slides with sound and video).

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic (by Chair) in Q1 (January-March 2013); continuously update and add multimedia features thereafter as needed</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of good tool for presentations at career and job fairs, trade fairs, other industry meetings, etc.</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not applicable</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee</li> </ul>

## 3. Recruitment

### 3.1 Attraction

Attraction of people to one's sector and careers is not a stand-alone activity; it is also part of a sector's recruitment strategy. A sector has to first inform and make people aware of what it offers, then get their attention and attract them to be interested in the sector; and then actually recruit people from key target segments.

A lot of the above recommendations will support attraction and recruitment activities, however, the sector requires an intentional attraction strategy to bring the above resources to life and make the best use of them.



Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start basic in Q2 (April-March 2013); expand as needed and as training is ramped up</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (staff or contracted services to implement above strategies)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate capacity with which to actually use the attraction tools developed</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite employers to be part of group attraction strategies, and to contribute ideas and tools for promoting viticulture careers</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, training institution(s), major employers, other sectors, other regions</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Recruitment Capacity

The viticulture sector needs to increase its capacity as a sector and its capacity as individual businesses to recruit the workers it needs, particularly in positions beyond simple labouring. At the sector level, viticulture associations and the Committee should consider some type of collective effort for facilitating recruiting, whether this is recruiting in BC, the rest of Canada or other countries. This may involve recruiting as a group to develop a pool of skilled labour and some kind of web-based worker/job matching mechanism (i.e. an association or a newly created service). For example, in other wine regions, companies provide human resource services to vineyard and wine employers (e.g. <http://www.viti.com.au/> and [http://www.personnelperspective.com/wineindustry\\_overview.asp](http://www.personnelperspective.com/wineindustry_overview.asp)). Perhaps the BC Human Resource Management Association (BCHRMA) could provide useful advice and/or be a potential partner on recruitment (and other HR activities) with the viticulture sector.

The other part of recruitment capacity is including simple tips and tools in a handbook or toolkit and/or in a web-based format. This could be part of a Recruitment and Retention toolkit (see below).

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review possibilities in Q2 and proceed accordingly (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ~\$10,000 – could be a business, fee-for-service relationship (invite companies to submit a proposal)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of company coordination and synergy in their individual recruiting; missed opportunities because of inadequate capacity</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask employers about their interest in such a service/resource</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major employers, other sectors, BCHRMA, training institution(s)</li> </ul>



### 3.3 Targeted Recruitment

Based on job-seeker market research recommended above, it is important that the viticulture sector has a clear sense which potential employee segments would be the best ones to focus on in attraction and recruitment strategies. This should shape the recruitment strategies of the sector as a whole and of individual companies. Such targeted recruitment may be implemented via sector associations, a new or existing contract organization, and individual businesses.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start Q3 (July-September 2013) after research</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be determined for each recruitment activity; could be implemented through a business, fee for service relationship</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfocused recruitment approach risks being too broad and watered down, and not targeted at most promising job-seeker segments</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate targeted recruitment approach to employers; invite employers to be part of employer group recruiting</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments, training institution(s), representatives of workforce segments, BCHRMA</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Immigrants and Foreign Workers

Many medium and large viticulture employers and contractors have used the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, and even a few have recruited skilled workers through the Provincial Nominee Program (or Federal Skilled Worker Program). Many vineyard employers and contractors are calling for changes in SAWP, making it more flexible and responsive to the industry and allowing for groups of small growers to share foreign workers. The sector should continue to advocate for changes in government policies and programs.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to push for SAWP improvements and explore other options starting in Q2 (April-June 2013); develop and implement more comprehensive approach starting in Q4 (October-December 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 for strategy develop; \$15,000 in long-term to develop web-based toolkit</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missed opportunities</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide employers with more information on various options</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments, Central Okanagan Economic Development</li> </ul>



	Board, immigrant agencies, major employers, Immigrant Employment Council of BC, training institutions
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The viticulture sector – with help of associations and larger employers – may want to take a more strategic approach to recruiting immigrants and foreign workers. As the competition for talent heats up in coming years, employer will have to tap all possible sources of labour. In addition to SAWP, has the sector attempted to use the Working Holiday Program (WHP) and the Student Workers Abroad Program (SWAP)? Can groups of companies work together to develop and implement a comprehensive immigrant/ foreign worker recruitment strategy?

Two industries in particular have been successful at this: construction; and tourism and hospitality. Tourism has some features in common with viticulture. The go2 website (<http://www.go2hr.ca/article-category/foreign-workers>) provides some invaluable resources, including its *Foreign Worker Guide for Tourism & Hospitality Employers*. A modest version of this renowned resource guide could be developed for growers.

### 3.5 Seasonality

Seasonality is a fundamental part of wine grape growing and a challenge for recruiting and retaining workers. Based on best practices in other sectors described earlier in this report, there are some concrete tools and practices that the viticulture sector or groups of companies could pursue to address seasonal employment challenges. These could include the following:

- Sharing employees with wineries
- Sharing employees with other (complementary) seasonal businesses
- Utilize multi-tasking and cross-training to keep employees working longer
- Targeting potential job-seekers that want part-time and/or seasonal work

The associations could provide examples of how companies have addressed seasonality; they could provide “how to” steps in print or web-based formats.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	• High
Immediacy	• Medium-term
Best entity to execute	• Sector leadership entity
Timeline	• Start in Q2 (April-June 2013)
Estimated cost	• Partnerships with others; costs incurred by associations, companies
Risk if not executed	• Seasonality will continue to be an obstacle to recruitment and retention, and sector will be less likely to create year-long positions
Employer engagement	• Show examples and good practices among viticulture and other employers in increasing full-time work and a longer work year
Partnership opportunities	• Other associations, major employers, other sectors, other regions



Also, because of potential impact of change in Employment Insurance on workers in part-time or seasonal jobs, the viticulture sectors should keep a watching brief on federal government implementation of EI changes in September of this year. According to limited media reports, the impacts of early implementation of changes may be different from what was originally indicated.<sup>17</sup>

#### 4. Employee Engagement and Retention

##### 4.1 Engagement and Retention Toolkit

Employee engagement is the critical success factor by which employers develop a positive work climate and retain employees. There are two ways that the viticulture sector could promote the adoption of such practices by individual companies. First, simply communicating the importance of engagement practices and disseminating real-life best practice case studies are important. Second, engagement and retention could be key parts of a simple, practical viticulture employer “toolkit” that would be available on the viticulture website, by email and in print. It could have practical tools, templates, other resources, case studies, where to get more information, self-tests, etc. Ideas from the *Lodi* and *Vinewise* handbooks and from other BC sectors with such toolkits could be adapted for a BC viticulture resource.

Perhaps a phased approach towards this would be: 1) in the short-term strengthen the HR section of the BC Sustainable Winegrowing Program guidebook; and 2) in the long-term develop a stand-alone toolkit. Important parts of employee engagement are: communication; good management practices; employee involvement; non-monetary rewards and recognition; and opportunities for taking on new work for advancement.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term, medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop during Q2 and Q3 (April-September 2013); test/implement thereafter</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$50,000 hard copy and web-based tool (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little help for smaller companies with no capacity</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect success stories and best practice information from employers; hold focus groups with employers on what information/tools/etc. would be a most use to them</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments, other sectors, major employers, small business groups, BCHRMA</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> Bill Curry. “Opposition lambastes Tories over fine print in EI changes.” *Globe and Mail*. September 20, 2102. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/opposition-lambastes-tories-over-fine-print-in-ei-changes/article4558065/>



## 4.2 Compensation

### 4.2.1 Wages

The relatively low wages in vineyards has been identified as one of the challenges in attracting and retaining employees. While it is not possible to simply ramp up wages for all employees, there are examples of vineyards that have been able to administer their wages in a way to offer incentives for performance and retention. Whether it is a graduated pay scale, end of season bonus, or retention incentive, some viticulture employers and contractors have tried to be creative in making best use of the sector’s limited wage structure.

The sector’s employers will need to consider if they will reflect in their wage structure a possible premium for graduates of a “new, improved” training program.

Wages and other financial aspects of a business are very competitive and proprietary factors, so it remains to be seen whether any kind of sector approach to a more effective wage structure could be implemented in viticulture.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 2 Q1 (January-March 2014)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs incurred by individual companies</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector will continue to have a ‘low-wage’ stereotype</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via associations</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, other sectors, small business groups, major employers</li> </ul>

### 4.2.2 Benefits

Benefits can be an important incentive for certain segments of the viticulture workforce, however small companies find it difficult to afford benefit premiums.

The earlier referenced Okanagan Purchasing Group may be an answer, or associations and small businesses in the sector should see if there are other benefits companies that could help.

Some degree of benefits is definitely an added feature in a business’ recruitment and retention approaches.

One form of “benefit” that has been mentioned in the context of other challenges and strategies is companies using “accommodation” or housing as a benefit.



Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate in Q1 (January-March 2013) and proceed accordingly; include benefits in retention tools work</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer time to work with Okanagan Purchasing Group and/or other benefits providers</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced number of incentives with which to attract and retain good workers</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and tools for small employers to consider benefits options</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, Okanagan Purchasing Group, other sectors, other benefits providers</li> </ul>

## 5. Other Strategies

### 5.1 Regional

While this project only had the benefit of hearing from a few vineyards outside of the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys, it is understood that soils, climates and other factors (e.g. labour markets, critical mass, etc.) vary by region. The implications of regional differences need to be factored into the HR Strategy and the training approach. First, the HRS and training program will need to recognize that there are these differences. Second, the training program's basic knowledge and skills will apply to any region but the content should show the students examples from different regions in the province. Third, there are certain recruitment and retention tactics that may need to be adapted for regional application.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In longer term, obtain funding to customize HRS and training for each region</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alienation of regional companies not feeling served by HRS and training; reduced HR support for small companies in outer regions</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate strategy and benefits to employers/members in all wine regions</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments, business and community organizations in each region</li> </ul>

### 5.2 Integration with Training Option

While throughout this project and report, we have distinguished distinctly between a Human Resource Strategy and Training Options. However, there are many interrelationships between the two. In fact, training should be a key part of any HR strategy. Therefore, once decisions are made on the Committee's training direction,



there will be a need to a) integrate the training strategy into the HRS; and b) ensure the attraction, recruitment and retention pieces are updated to reflect this connection.

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistencies between HR and training activities; mixed messaging; weak synergy between HR and training activities</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do as part of promotion of training strategy that is implemented</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major employers, training institution(s)</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Other – Accommodation/Housing

The research for this project heard from many viticulture employers about the cost and shortage of accommodation for viticulture. Is it possible to advocate to all levels of government on incentives for developing domestic and foreign labour housing, including treating this as a “community” (not just employer/worker) issue? In the U.S., the federal government recently announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide technical assistance grants to help communities submit quality applications for funding to increase the supply of affordable housing in rural communities. The announcement noted, “..[it] not only helps the residents, it helps the entire community.”<sup>18</sup>

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q3-Q4 (July-December 2013) and beyond</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer time to advocate</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing pressure and cost of living for employees; decreased attractiveness for people to relocate from other regions/provinces/ countries</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via associations</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, other sectors, other regions, governments, major employers</li> </ul>

As indicated earlier, accommodation and housing may be provided to workers as a benefit.

<sup>18</sup> *Journal-news.net*. “Department of Agriculture announces grants to improve housing for farm workers.” <http://www.journal-news.net/page/content.detail/id/584469/Department-of-Agriculture-announces-grants-to-improve-housing-for-farm-workers.html?nav=5001>.





## Resources for the Human Resource Strategy

Resources for next steps on the implementation of the Training Options recommendations are discussed in the next section (6.2). This sub-section briefly outlines possible sources of financial and in-kind resources for implementing a BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy (HRS). Table 5 summarizes the resource options that may support the implementation of various parts of the HRS.

**Table 5**  
**Potential HRS Funding Sources**

Sector	Sub-Sector	Specific Types of Organization/Program	Financial	In-Kind
<b>Private</b>	Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine/grape-related</li> <li>• Agricultural</li> <li>• Other sectors</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wine grape growers, wineries</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vineyard and winery employees</li> <li>• Employees in other sectors</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Job-seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth, students, mature workers, immigrants, etc.</li> </ul>	✓	
	Commercial - service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viticulture contractors</li> <li>• HR service companies</li> </ul>	✓	✓
<b>Non-Government Organizations</b>	Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit organizations</li> </ul>	✓	
	Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Social development</li> <li>• Housing</li> </ul>	✓	
	Representatives of workforce segments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people</li> <li>• Immigrants</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Older workers</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	✓	
<b>Government</b>	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Economic Diversification</li> <li>• Human Resources and Skills Development Canada</li> <li>• Service Canada</li> <li>• Citizenship and Immigration Canada</li> <li>• Industry Canada</li> </ul>	✓	
	Provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology (funding of training)</li> <li>• Industry Training Authority (funding of training)</li> </ul>	✓	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Social Development (funding for training/employment of welfare and EI recipients)</li> <li>• Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Labour Market Partnerships</li> <li>○ Labour Market Solutions</li> <li>○ Other programs for specific groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
	Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities, town, villages, municipalities</li> <li>• Regional districts</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	✓	
<b>Training institutions</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public post-secondary institutions</li> <li>• Private career training institutions</li> <li>• Secondary schools</li> </ul>	✓	✓
<b>Other revenue streams</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees for services</li> <li>• Membership fees</li> </ul>	✓	

It is possible that many of the specific (immediate and short-term) recommended strategies for the Viticulture HRS could be resourced by the Labour Market Partnerships Program. Other government programs, private sector funding, community and NGO funding and new creative revenue streams could support and could come into play in the longer term. These all will need to be explored further during the early implementation planning phase of this work.

## 6.2 Training Options Recommendations

Having considered the scope and terms of reference of this project, its assumptions, what we know from the Committee and from the research in this project and that of others (e.g. RKA), and other considerations, we know that the BC viticulture sector needs a human resource strategy and some kind of formal, standardized provincial training program for VTs and perhaps others. The status quo is not viable, and there is much industry agreement on the desired features of such a training program.

Human Capital Strategies reviewed four training model options against criteria and other considerations (Option 1 was status quo and Option 6 was a hybrid of other options):

2. Develop an enhanced **non-ITA institution-based certificate program** delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (*occupational credential*)
3. Develop a **new ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program** with a technical component delivered by a post-secondary institution; developed by industry against an industry standard (*occupational credential*)



4. Develop and build an **ITA workplace-based apprenticeship program ladderred with an existing program** (e.g. Landscape Horticulture) (assuming significant content overlap) (*occupational credential*)
5. Develop a **(non-ITA) workplace-based non-apprenticeship program with a technical component delivered by an industry body or post-secondary institution**; developed by industry against an industry standard (*educational, occupational or industry credential*)

After reviewing the variables for a VT training program and rating the relative merits of four training model options, Human Capital Strategies recommends that the Committee seriously consider pursuing Option 5, and follow a staged approach regarding introduced a new VT training program as part of its BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy:

### A Staged, Iterative Approach in Moving Towards VT Training Program Implementation

Next Steps	Description	Timelines
1. Preparation stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and submit a proposal to the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) to implement the recommendations of this report, in particular:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To develop an HR Strategy Implementation Plan</li> <li>○ To start to implement the HR Strategy</li> <li>○ To develop a Training Program Development and Implementation Plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	December 2012- January 31, 2013  HR Strategy implementation (January 2013 and ongoing)
2. Due diligence stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further investigation of key questions by the Committee before it makes a definitive decision:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Confirm there will be a critical mass of students</li> <li>○ Confirm the program will be VT only and not include training and certification for others (e.g. winery occupations)</li> <li>○ Canvas small, medium and large growers, contractors and wineries on non-apprenticeship preferences and buy-in</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Make a decision on a specific training model to pursue and develop a “go forward” action plan for doing so</li> <li>• Preferred model should reflect most, if not all the features of VT training desired by the sector</li> </ul>	January-March 2013  HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)



Next Steps	Description	Timelines
3. Enhancement stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action various enhancements to build the Option 5 training model, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creating an Industry Standards Committee</li> <li>○ Expand marketing of program to a broader learner profile, including social media tools</li> <li>○ Expand other promotion and awareness activities</li> <li>○ Attract strong, qualified instructors from industry</li> <li>○ Effect more direct industry engagement and participation in the program</li> <li>○ Improve the practicum (increase duration, timing, relevance and linkage to classroom)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It should be noted that there will not be time to include all desired features of VT training program in the new program in the shorter term</li> <li>• Usual OC intakes are January and October – it will be important to try to make improvements before any further intakes if possible. This will not be a problem for October 2013 but is too long to wait for change</li> </ul>	<p>April-August 2013</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>
4. Proof of concept stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use action plan to obtain necessary approval(s) for new preferred VT training program</li> <li>• Plan program delivery</li> <li>• Pilot the preferred training model</li> <li>• Evaluate the pilot delivery</li> </ul>	<p>Start to deliver on a pilot basis by fall 2013</p> <p>Evaluate program upon completion of pilot</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>



Next Steps	Description	Timelines
5. Permanent program stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make necessary VT training program changes</li> <li>• Implement the permanent program</li> </ul>	<p>Start to make changes upon completion of the evaluation</p> <p>Start to deliver permanent program in fall or winter 2014</p> <p>HR Strategy implementation (ongoing)</p>

**It will be very important that this new training program is branded as new and not simply incremental improvement to the existing Okanagan College program.**

It will also be important to keep Okanagan College involved and engaged with and supportive of the new training program, even though it will not own it. They may have a very good opportunity to deliver and administer/manage the new program.

Also, based on the Committee’s discussions, viticulture employers would benefit more from a stand-alone viticulture training program that is not part of a broader program including winemaking and culinary training.

These recommendations start with a recommendation for an appropriate wine grape grower industry body to submit a proposal to the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training for funding under the LMP Program. Most of the HR Strategy elements and training development steps would be eligible for funding under the LMP criteria.

There is no upper limit for LMP funding request, nor any limit on duration of the LMP agreement (but usually not beyond three years). It would be important to action this request as soon as possible so it does not get caught up in any possible pre-election freeze in new contracts.

## 7. NEXT STEPS

The next steps regarding this project are proposed as follows:





1. Committee members receive and review this final report by November 19, 2012 (Chair or HCS will make the final changes). The Chair will distribute to the Committee, associations and key stakeholders.
2. If the Executive Summary provided in the report is not suitable, Chair will adapt it for use in distributing the report, posting it on websites, and for accompanying any media release (early December).
3. The BC Wine Grape Council – with input from the Chair and rest of the Committee – will submit an LMP funding request by no later than mid-December.
4. The Committee will schedule a meeting for mid-January to discuss the Ministry’s response to the LMP request and how to move forward.
5. The Committee should refine and desktop the HR Strategy in Appendix 5 and append it to the LMP proposal, and later use it as part of a launch event in early 2013.





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## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: RKA Calculation of Viticulture Technicians and Other Viticulture Workers**

**Appendix 2: July 23, 2012 BC Viticulture HR Focus Group Summary**

**Appendix 3: August 1, 2012 BC Viticulture HR Committee Teleconference**

**Appendix 4: August 10, 2012 BC Viticulture HR Committee Meeting**

**Appendix 5: A Summary BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy**

**Appendix 6: Implementation Details for Each Strategy (appendix to HRS)**



## APPENDIX 1

### RKA Calculation of Viticulture Technicians and Other Viticulture Workers

The first question: we have in the owner/operator survey questions about the number of viticulture technicians they hire and they contract, and the results are in pages 18 and 19 of the report, section 3.2.1. Basically 52% reported that they employ viticulture technicians and the average number for these who answered yes was 5 (4.9 to be exact). Extrapolating to the entire survey respondent population, the average is 2.54 per vineyard. For those owners/operators who said they have contracted viticulture technicians, their reply indicates that there are about 200 technicians in the contract workforce. So for a total of 864 vineyards in the province the **total number of viticulture technicians is about  $2200+200=2400$ .**

This piece was not reflected in the report, but for the entire sector, the best estimate of non-technician workforce is based on the questionnaire, for the average number in each category of workers, is:

- general manager f-t:1
- office assistance f-t:1
- office assistance p-t: 1
- grape pickers p-t: 1
- grape pickers seasonal: 9
- farm labour f-t: 1
- farm labour p-t: 2
- farm labour seasonal: 5

So the average for a vineyard is 21. Extrapolating to the 864 vineyards, **total workforce including non-viticulture technician and other workers, is  $2400+18100=20,500$ .**

The second question: again in section 3.2.1 to section 3.2.3, over the past five years average growth rate per year was about 2.2% (based on 19% who identified growth and average growth of almost 60% (59% to be exact) over the past five years). **For future years, average annual growth rate for viticulture technician workforce is projected to be 2.4% per year.**





## APPENDIX 2

### BC GRAPE GROWING AND WINE EMPLOYER HR FOCUS GROUP

#### VITICULTURE WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

12:30-3:30 p.m., Monday, July 23, 2012

Penticton Okanagan College Campus

Room PC204, Centre of Excellence Building, 583 Duncan Avenue West

#### FOCUS GROUP INTENDED OUTCOMES

1. Top workforce challenges will be identified by viticulture employers;
2. Key tools, information, supports, programs, etc. that could help viticulture employers with these challenges will be identified; and,
3. Suggestions for a BC viticulture workforce strategy will be provided by viticulture employers.

#### FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Navid Arjmand, Vineyard Hand, Summerhill Winery  
Keith Duhaime, Agricultural Support Officer, Central Okanagan  
Economic Development Commission  
Kerry Jothen, CEO, Human Capital Strategies (Facilitator/consultant)  
Jacques LeCavalier, Partner, Mariposa Vineyard LP  
Pamela Lee, Mark Anthony Group Inc.  
Severine Pinte, Enotecca  
Karnail Singh Sidhu, Kalala Organic Vineyards Ltd.  
Theo Siemens, OCP/Switchback Vineyards  
Ralph Suremann, Viticulturist/Partner, Vinifera Custom Viticulture Ltd.  
Elaine Triggs, Co-Proprietor, Arise Ventures Ltd.

After a brief lunch, the meeting was called to order at approximately 12:45 p.m. after introductions and a PowerPoint background presentation

#### FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES AND DISCUSSION

##### 1. Participants were asked about their backgrounds in terms of viticulture and the wine industry:

- 14 years in vineyards; a viticulture diploma; 8 years as viticulture contractor
- Vineyard owner, Niagara on the Lake
- Viticulture technician; training in France





- Involved in viticulture extension and research directed at industry
- University of California Davis trained in plant genetics; pH pathology; farming in Iran
- HR background; attended UBC and BCIT; worked in food industry
- HR activities; immigrant recruitment; on BC Fruit Growers Labour Committee (see Destinations Canada Paris)
- Degree in agriculture engineering
- 14 years in viticulture; emphasis on organic growing including other fruit
- Grew up in farming in Punjab; viticulture diploma
- HR activities; education planner; viticulture education program coordinator

## **2. The Facilitator invited Elaine Triggs – a member of the BC Viticulture HR Committee – provide a Committee perspective:**

- Committee is focused on the middle level gap (not manual labour but between vine manager and manual labourers) – we are calling them “viticulture technicians” and they are distinct from (and report to) vineyard managers
- There are a lack of vineyard people with agriculture degrees; the best viticulture people in the valley are all recruited from elsewhere
- Only Brock University (degree) and Niagara College (2 year) have viticulture-specific programs
- Links to lead hand jobs, irrigation work, equipment operators; increasing technology intensiveness
- Need both theory and strong practical skills
- We need high-quality people to maintain high-quality grapes in order to produce high-quality wine
- To sustain the industry, we need quality people
- We have some key leaders – an opportunity to leverage their support to increase the talent base and skill-level
- People skills are important for viticulture technicians
- Small vineyard owners need education too
- People tend to be more attracted by ‘romantic’ side, the wine-making business; we need to turn that around and make viticulture more sexy

## **3. Participants were asked, why did you come here to discuss human resource (HR) issues today? What motivated you to take the time to attend this focus group session?**

- Frustration – lack of people with which to achieve the best; we train and then we lose the talent





- I have to do things later in the cycle because of delays in getting people or of using under-qualified people – this becomes more expensive
- Provide education incentives to make people see there is value to work in viticulture → increased job satisfaction → increased value, productivity, quality
- Integrate viticulture and wine-making – both need a dual understanding of each others' work; everyone has to understand the whole process (all sides) – it starts in viticulture
- In France the emphasis is on the **land**; less on the **romantic** side
- In Europe having some type of “apprenticeship” is common – why isn’t this in place in BC/Canada? What can we do to get this going?
- Need more research into farming; this is needed to increase productivity and viticulture industry competitiveness (e.g. extension, formal PSE) – are we ready?

#### 4.1 What do you think are the most attractive features of your sector from the perspective of potential employees and those who influence them (e.g. parents, media, friends, educators)?

- Going back to the land
- Working outdoors, no ‘cubicles’
- Pride in growing something and being part of the cycle
- Team work
- Creating a product
- Healthy work environment
- Problem solving, working with different variables (e.g. weather, marketing, etc.) – the challenge, and rewarding
- Need a holistic (start to finish) approach to make viticulture more satisfying
- Attracted to recording/data-gathering (e.g. growing patterns); a knowledge-intensive career
- Frequent new/changing technologies
- Creative thinking is required
- A variety of tasks – not boring
- The satisfaction of people leadership/mentorship

#### 4.2 What are the least attractive features?

- Seasonality – part-year jobs
- Hard manual work
- Long days
- Difficult outdoor working conditions (wind, rain, cold, heat, dust/dirt, etc.)



- Dangerous/risks (e.g. equipment, tools, chemicals, etc.)
- Relatively low wages and benefits
- Lack of a perceived career path; few education opportunities
- Part of the lack of perceived appeal of agriculture in general – a perceived lack of technology (a ‘city-dweller’ perception)
- The whole concept of farming has a negative image to young people not brought up on a farm

## 5. What is the top 1 or 2 obstacles or challenges to viticulture employers being able to attract the qualified, skilled employees you need? Please indicate what they are top obstacles.

- Lack of year-round work – especially a challenge for workers with a family
- Housing costs
- Alberta/oil patch is a magnet for drawing potential workers away
- Vineyards are concentrated in areas – commuting costs
- Low wages – note that viticulture technicians are not minimum wage jobs
- Lack of perceived career path
- Example of one winery – keep core viticulture staff via year-round redeployment in other seasons to create full-time employment
- We don’t want to encourage viticulture employees to move into winery jobs
- Quebec – ‘management syndicates’ in agriculture – pool of funding matched by the Province

### 6.1 What are the careers and career pathways in your sector?

- Viticulture technician – This could have different levels (e.g. levels of tractor drivers in Australia, paid by the level)
- Tractor operators
- Irrigation technicians
- Lead hands
- Supervising, mentoring aspect
- Database, recording data, other administrative roles
- Can eventually move into a vineyard manager job
- Should view/treat wine-maker as a part of the viticulture team
- Viticulture consulting opportunities
- A viticulturalist (4 years) does not include managing people
- Entrepreneurial opportunities





## 6.2 To what extent are people in and outside of the sector aware of these?

- We need speakers from viticulture to go into high schools to promote the careers – passionate, presentable ambassadors
- We need to embed agriculture (including viticulture) knowledge in K-12 curriculum; and make it parts of existing courses (e.g. Biology)
- Participate in professional associations
- Jobs for young people → get students out to our vineyards
- Include a focus on young women
- **How** do we reach them – social media (have to think in new paradigms)
- Videos on YouTube (guerilla marketing)
- Okanagan College has tried to get high school students out to vineyards in promoting viticulture – limited turnout
- Need to work on the how the industry is perceived – IMAGE
- The relative status of viticulture vs. winemaking
- Consider other demographics
  - Older, second career, retirees
- Most vineyards are 5-10 acres (BC) – SMALL
  - Owners do everything
  - What are their needs? Part-time training?
  - They don't have the theory or formal training
- A policy lever? The Quebec government has been encouraging owners to get training (including a credential)

## 7. What are the key reasons for losing workers in your sector? Please be specific. What retention practices or strategies work?

- A tough job – cold, heat, physical (winery tough in a different way)
- Sometimes have to let people go because I see it's not for them
- Not as tough as ground crops (ergonomically)
  - Suited more to women – not always heavy work
- Lost someone to Alberta (a tractor driver)
- "Don't give a damn" attitude – I want people who really care (work ethic)
- Young people have work ethic for **certain** things; industry "culture" works against this
- Formal education, on the job training; incentives to take education
- Tractor drivers may tend to be more family oriented – benefits or wage increase may be an incentive







- What's of value to them (the existing or potential employee)?
- Need to treat employee mistakes/damage as a cost of education – not a punitive reaction
- Give employees more responsibilities; treat them as part of the viticulture “family”
- Show them the wine you produced (e.g. a review, the amount sold, etc.) – create/reinforce job satisfaction
- Participants expressed interest in the Roslyn Kunin & Associates’ Labour Market Information project on the BC viticulture industry recently completed for the BC Viticulture HR Committee; it will be put on the Grape Growers’ website within 10 days

### **8. To what extent do you think it is important for a Viticulture Technician training (and certification) program to be developed? Why? How should it be delivered?**

- E.g. France – 2 years right out of high school – includes practicum with a business
  - More intense schooling during winter
- Post-training for viticulture technicians – maintain their qualifications
- Could also use a training program for owners and older workers (maybe part-time and only parts)
- The Okanagan College program is a certificate (one-year) program
- UBC Okanagan might be an option for delivering training because of its research activities
- The Committee has defined the “what” of training. The question now, is how should it be structured and delivered?
- A heavier practical aspect (e.g. co-op, internship) is needed
- Delivery should be timed with the wine cycle
- France – consulting companies in industry do training sessions – update knowledge and provide extension services
- Penn State extension example
- Discussion of how long (duration) the program should be – ranged from 1 to 2 years but depends on how intensive it is and what knowledge and experience students already have
- Need 2 years for full growing cycle
- Pre-requisites?
  - Backgrounds may vary from high school grad/unemployed person with no experience to some experience to existing employees to owners
  - Grade 12 required?
- Need to do market research and ask 17-18 year olds how they decide on their education/training/career?
- Not just 17-18 year olds – older workers, existing employees, women, owners – need to target these too
- Also need ongoing education to keep certified





- Need flexible entry/exit (laddering) – some may enter at the beginning, others with experience may enter later; some may leave after 1 year, others may complete a full two-year program
- Is online delivery desirable to cover the theory/knowledge-based content? Perhaps for some, consider this later after the program starts with traditional delivery
- “Internship” example – Arborist has 3 certifications/levels
- Should be a “proper diploma”; should be 2 years
- Theory is important – viticulture technicians have to know the “whys”
- What is lacking in the existing Okanagan College program? Participants were not too specific, but generally:
  - It could have a stronger theory component
  - It needs a stronger practical component, including employers ensuring that the on-the-job part is related to school studies
  - It needs to be longer in duration
- The OC program may be a good base on which to build a new program that the industry buys into
- There definitely should not be more than one industry training program for viticulture technicians

**9. What strategies, resources, tools, supports, etc. would help your company address its workforce issues? Please be specific. Who should be responsible for providing these (governments, sector associations, training institutions, others)? What human resource best practices are you aware of (in any sector) and why do you think they are effective?**

- A video on vineyards – the whole cycle, beginning to end – all aspects – as a career promotion tool
- In Switzerland there are websites with an alphabetical listing of all occupations – BC and Canada have this too, but....
- The Statistics Canada occupational codes (NOCs) do not include viticulture-specific categories
- Okanagan College is starting on a viticulture and wine studies video; it will get industry input
- Government funding programs may help some employers and workers
- Students should get paid during practica, where apprenticeship, co-op or internship; on-the-job/practical training needs to be structured to relate to training program

**10. What would be one piece of advice you have for the Committee and me on the development of a BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy? Do you have any other/final comments?**





- Keep the training program simple and flexible
- Market research with young people; and also other markets
- Not just new people but look at existing employees – MARKET
- Who – technicians only – especially for training
- Need to define pre-requisites to get into training
- How many viticulture technicians can we absorb each year? Perhaps offer training every two years
- Is there a gap between Okanagan College program and what industry wants. Build on it or create a new one
- Enable various options within the program (laddering in/out, various locations, flexible)
- It will take 2 years to get a program at Okanagan College, so we need to get going

### SUMMARY

- Participants were highly engaged and keenly interested in the topic of viticulture workforce challenges and solutions
- There was strong support for creating a Viticulture Technician training program
- There was strong support for marketing and promoting viticulture careers
- As well as young people and students, viticulture careers should be promoted to other potential employees such as owners, older workers, existing employees and women
- Generally, participants believe – if carefully designed and flexibly delivered – a rigorous viticulture technician training program is necessary and viable

### CLOSING

Elaine and Kerry thanked participants for making the time and effort to contribute to this very important issue. Kerry will distribute a summary of this session to all participants shortly.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:40 p.m.





## APPENDIX 3

### BC VITICULTURE HR COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE

#### VITICULTURE WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

9:30 a.m. to Noon p.m., Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

#### Meeting Notes

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES\*

1. Obtain Committee members' input on key viticulture workforce/HR challenges and potential solutions, particularly in regards to attraction, recruitment, retention and training and education.
2. Obtain Committee members' input on key tools, information, supports, programs, etc. that could help viticulture employers with these challenges.
3. Obtain other Committee members' suggestions/advice to the project consultant as he drafts a BC viticulture workforce strategy.

#### PRESENT

- Troy Osborne, Constellation Brands
- John Haller, Okanagan College
- Tim Martiniuk, Stoneboat Vineyards & BC Grape Growers
- Bob Heiss, Gray Monk Estate Winery & BC Wine Grape Council
- Lynn Bremmer, Mount Kobau Wine Services & Dry Creek Vineyard
- Tracy Black, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
- Kerry Jothen, Human Capital Strategies (Facilitator)

**Meeting called to order at 9:34 a.m.**

\*Note because training program options will be a topic unto itself in meetings with the Committee and others, this session is intended not to dwell too much on this priority topic.

#### 1. ATTRACTION

What is attractive about working in viticulture?



- Outdoor work for those that enjoy getting their hands dirty
- Interest in working in agriculture
- However, there's the flair of romance of winery work
- A lot of people like part-time and part-year work – some want summer work only; others want fall work; others move from grapes to other fruit in the same year (make extra money)
- There is down time after harvest at the end of November – some may like to take this time off
- Look into the Targeted Older Worker Program (Tracy to follow up)
- Consistency – we need people we can rely on year after year – we lose investment in them if they don't come back
- Viticulture Technicians (VTs) have to build relationships with winemaker – need consistency in these relationships
- Need to find people who want to work with people/supervise
- Diversity is positive for some – not often doing the same thing for a long period
- Could a group of small vineyards have 1 full-time VT to serve all of them
- Location is double-edged – Good lifestyle, however high cost of living
- Little growers especially don't have accommodation

#### What is unattractive about working in viticulture?

- Wages, but we'd pay a premium for someone that stays
- Cost of living
- Southern region of Okanagan is dry desert – some don't like this climate
- Need transportation
- Accommodations in Oliver – “tent ghetto”/”Loose Bay”
- Lack of career path for young people
- Recognition – intangibles help
- General lack of interest in agriculture/farming careers
- Incentives – larger vineyards have them; how can smaller ones offer benefits – work with other vineyards through the Grape Growers Council – although seasonality make this a challenge/not very affordable



- Busiest during nicest time of the year (May to August) when some people may want time off, especially with families
- Maybe 9 months (February-October) should be considered full-year – is this a possible goal (to keep VTs working for this period)

## 2. RECRUITMENT

- Large vineyards are trying to grow their talent – very seldom get people that bring any experience; they come in at hand crew level and it's a long process from there
- Standardized certification would help
- Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) used mostly for labourers; used quite a bit by some, mostly larger growers, and a few small vineyards; some make arrangements to transfer workers to other fruit or ground crops (e.g. tulips in Lower Mainland)
- Growers have discussed sharing foreign workers – this is possible
- Vineyards rarely hire a fully trained VT
- Grape Growers Council looking abroad to bring in VTs from France, Spain, South Africa, Australia; easier to recruit immigrant with degrees
- We don't yet have a fully defined skillset – this would be solved by having training standards
- *Country News* clippings from Lynn on Horticulture training program closing and new Food Processors training program

## 3. RETENTION

- In larger vineyards, there are opportunities to advance – needs to be promoted
- Challenge of benefits – a group program may not be viable at this time
- Turnover – There are lots of other vineyards and wineries that a VT can go to (to bigger vineyards); other causes: climate; social (e.g. Oliver); wages – until they have a certain level of experience, can't pay them more than standard rate
- Willing to pay a premium of ~\$2 to keep them
- Finding someone who is prepared for this lifestyle to begin with (the part-year nature of it, off in the winter)
- Difficulty of finding a good, reliable worker – a training program will help people see where they are going
- Make VTs feel they have responsibility – good HR tactics (e.g. recognition can go a long way)



- Certification will document accomplishments
- Positioning the work as a trade, a skillset, is important
- VTs are a critical position in the vineyard
- The most valuable VTs are willing and able to do the full breadth of viticulture work
- Need flexibility – different jobs in different parts of the cycle; they need to be adaptable to different work situations
- There may not be a good argument for VTs in a small vineyard
- Work with smaller growers and wineries – wineries could offer small perks – it is in their interest – high quality grapes make for high quality wine

#### 4. TRAINING

- How is the take up in the Okanagan College VT Certificate Program? Mixed, not strong enrolment. Low attendance to do with lack of awareness of the program, not strong support from industry, and a need to update and promote the program. OC says, whatever the industry wants, the College will do; they are ready to start with a blank slate and build and deliver what's needed
- It is possible for a training provider to offer a program only every 2 years because of numbers.
- Strong support among Committee members present for a modularized and flexibility scheduled training program.
- Complete training over a period of a few years through short (e.g. two-week) modules
- Employers might be willing to pay for short-period training
- Some modules may not have enough people to fill the course but perhaps “general interest” learners would round out the numbers.
- Modules could be delivered mostly during the slowest 4 months of the year; could include existing employees and potential employees
- Use different instructors for different modules; some training could be delivered in partnership with (at) vineyards and wineries
- Industry will have to work with training institutions – mid-sized and large vineyards will have to work to make the training work for smaller growers
- Hands on/practical component is important; need a better structured practicum – the worksite/on-the-job training needs to be clearly outlined and aligned with classroom component
- Small growers may also want to take the training – some new growers have completed the existing Okanagan College program – modularized one might suit them better





- Even people from wineries (e.g. tour/tasting people) might want to take a few of the modules
- In summary, the profile of a student for the new program could include the following:
- Existing viticulture employees (various levels)
- Existing winery employees
- Unemployed (complete the full program)
- General interest learners
- Small/independent owners
- Other industries (e.g. hospitality, retail)
- Who pays? Employer should contribute but get some type of commitment from employee – could cover all or part of the cost upon receipt of the employee’s certificate; in terms of the cost of employee’s time, if it’s the right employee, larger employers may be willing to cover wages for a week or two at a time; other students may have Employment Insurance or welfare benefits; employer could pay a wage supplement if employee successfully completes the program – employers in the room assume that there would be a raise upon successful completion
- How would those not employed get the practical training? A separate (better than current one) practicum would have to be set up for such students.
- Bigger companies have some specialized teams – maybe during one part of the training program students would spend a week with such a team
- Again, bigger companies will have to step up to help with practicums
- The new program could also have a prior learning/challenge component so that employees/students don’t have to complete a module that they are already proficient in; each module will need to have specific standards that need to be met through assessment
- Program could be structured so that there is a common core shared with other industries (e.g. tractors in Heavy Duty Mechanic training, viticulture in Landscaping, vineyard development for orchards and ground crops, etc.)
- Okanagan College believes there is room for a diploma (two years) as opposed to a certificate (one year) program; the College wants to become the trainer of choice for viticulture and wine

**Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.**







## APPENDIX 4

### BC VITICULTURE HR COMMITTEE MEETING VITICULTURE WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Noon to 2:30 p.m., Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Penticton, Okanagan College Campus

#### Meeting Notes

#### PRESENT

- John Haller, Okanagan College
- Bob Heiss, Gray Monk Estate Winery & BC Wine Grape Council
- Lynn Bremmer, Mount Kobau Wine Services & Dry Creek Vineyard
- Carolyn MacLaren, Chair
- Anne Kadwell, HortEducationBC
- Elaine Triggs, Arise Vineyards
- Kerry Jothen, Human Capital Strategies (Facilitator)

Meeting called to order at 12:30 p.m.

#### AWARENESS AND ATTRACTION/INTEREST

- Going back to nature, to the land (back to earth)
  - Sustainability
  - Organic
  - Horticulture, growing, and production
- It would be useful for Okanagan College (OC) to follow up on graduates

#### *Who*

- Graduates of Horticulture Foundation program
- Graduates of Level 2 Landscape Horticulture program
- People who are interested in growing things, smart, problem-solving, multi-tasking





- People who want part-time or part-year work– mature, older (or work between 2 or 3 vineyards)
- Youth and high school students; develop them (hard for smaller growers)
- Technologically adept, attention to detail
- People skills
- Breadth – variety vs. specialized viticulture roles
- Women
  - Kids in school, part-time
  - Good in vineyard
- People who are willing to be flexible/adaptable

## RECRUITING

- Smaller growers using Mexicans from larger areas (“under the table”) – not a good long-term solution
- Different in Ontario
- Very few vineyards use SAWP for VT work
- Training program graduates
- SAWP – language is sufficient for manual labour
- Mechanically inclined (e.g. tractor operator and maintenance)
- Growers sharing a VT – have to sort out how to share (i.e. logistics)
- VT as a contractor – self-employed
- Some small growers want to share a VT, not a contractor

## RETENTION

- Most of the wine product/quality is a function of what goes on in the vineyard
- Add prestige – growing good product – the “glory”
- It’s about perceptions/image – communicate that positive
- Winemaker comes up and gets the medal – Award medals and other recognition for growers and VTs
- Okanagan Purchasing Group – 20-25 wineries came up with a benefit plan – open to growers
- Certain strategies/tactics that pertain to different potential workforce segments
- Opportunity for multidisciplinary learning – partner with winery (November to January) – related to sharing workers
- EI changes? (not discussed – ask Carolyn/Anne)

## TRAINING

- Get the right faculty
- People teaching from other countries
- How effective are other training models





- Would we have synergies with the Ontario program (Niagara College)
- North-South (Washington State, Oregon)
- ITA/Apprenticeship? Pros and cons – concern about long timeline for approval of ITA programs (may be less is modification of existing one like Horticulture)
- A regular industry standing committee for the OC program – if you can have all features you need and it is paid for
- Include VT training as part of broader program including sommelier, culinary; a holistic vineyard/winery/hospitality model
- Jonathan Rouse indicated it would take 2 years to obtain College approval?
- Build on Horticulture? Or build stand-alone apprenticeship?
  - Modifications to Horticulture – substantive changes take time
- How many horticulture students want to work in viticulture?
- There is a training option in which industry association would own and manage the program – whether it is an apprenticeship model or not
- Maybe BC Wine Grape Council should include education in its mandate
- The training model options may differ depending on short-term vs. long-term – perhaps the training model starts in one form and morphs into something more over time – fast-track the short-term (first) model

#### **INDUSTRY REPS TO BE INTERVIEWED**

- Other employers
  - Small growers
  - Regional growers
- Nathan Goltz – 3 growers
- Manager at Kolbert Farms
- Fort Barons – Lillooet
- Committee members agreed a teleconference on training before next meeting (September 14) might be useful
- Severin Pinte-Kosaka – Viticulture Manager and Winemaker (French trained)

Human Capital Strategies will endeavor to interview a small number of:

1. Employees, managers, VTs – names to come from Committee
2. Small growers – names to come from Committee
3. Regional
  - a. FV – names to come from Committee
  - b. VI – Andy Johnston

**The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:50 p.m.**



## APPENDIX 5

### A British Columbia Viticulture Human Resource Strategy<sup>19</sup>

#### 1. THE IMPERATIVE

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“British Columbia wines have garnered international recognition for their outstanding quality over the last 20 years as a result of the VQA program. Today, British Columbia has in excess of 10,000 acres of grapes planted in the province and more than 200 wineries, with room to expand both in acres and wineries in new areas.” (BC Jobs and Investment Board. *British Columbia Jobs and Investment Board Interim Report*, September 2012, p. 6).

“B.C. wines are enjoyed around the world and consistently rank among the best in international competitions. In 2011 alone they won more than 1,000 awards and, with a growing reputation for excellence, they are coveted by buyers in a long list of jurisdictions...” (BC Ministry of Agriculture. *B.C. Agrifoods: A Strategy for Growth*. 2012, p. 22).

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Unlike other more established agriculture, resource and industrial sectors in BC, the wine and grape sector has never undertaken a project to focus on human resources issues. Therefore this is an important and significant undertaking with an opportunity to address human resource issues proactively rather than waiting to ‘catch up’ as many other sectors have had to. The age of the sector and its significant growth and development, which show no signs of abating based on year over year production and revenue data, make the timing to address these issues even more critical.

One of the most important facts stressed by British Columbia viticulture sector representatives is great wine depends on great grapes, which in turn are dependent on excellence in grape growing and in business and workforce practices.

The BC grape growing and wine sector has expanded and matured over the past twenty years from small beginnings to 864 growers and vineyards in five regions across the province. During that time, the owners, operators and workforce have built up experience and careers. Over the next twenty years, the labour force in BC and Canada is projected to be in transition as the baby-boomers retire with fewer numbers of young workers to take their place.

This sector is working to keep pace both nationally and internationally with new technologies in growing and production methods that will ensure product quality continues to improve and that

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<sup>19</sup> Note that this draft HR Strategy is focused on content and scope and not on formatting and desktopping which the Committee will want to do before it releases it.





enhanced regulatory requirements are met. In order to maximize growth potential, BC grape and wine producers need to meet challenges in production and marketing, environmental stewardship, public safety, and human resources<sup>20</sup>. As a result, the viticulture workforce is facing increased skill and knowledge demands.

In order to keep pace nationally and internationally, the sector will need to address the following and other workforce issues:

- Inability to attract and find qualified, trained employees;
- Too few career pathways or development opportunities;
- Lack of awareness of the sector’s jobs and careers;
- Inability to retain employees (high turnover rate);
- Competition for employees from other sectors and regions; and,
- Absence of practical grape and wine sector-specific training.

To this end, it is imperative that the sector develops and executes an effective human resource strategy to ensure the skilled workforce it requires for long-term sustainability. Therefore, the BC Viticulture Human Resources Steering Committee (the “Committee”) was formed by industry leaders to develop and implement a comprehensive BC Viticulture Sector Human Resource Strategy, focusing on employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and training, including options for a new enhanced viticulture training program.

The Committee hired Human Capital Strategies to help develop the Strategy. A key part of this Strategy is to reach out to the broader grape growing and wine employer, workforce and stakeholder communities to obtain their input this summer.

## 2. CONTEXT

The BC grape growing sector has grown significantly in the last several years and matured into a sector of 864 growers and vineyards – and 210 licensed grape wineries – across five regions of the province, with most concentrated in the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys.

The sector competes nationally and internationally and is applying new technologies in growing and production methods to ensure product quality and adherence to regulatory requirements. The production, marketing, environmental stewardship, public safety and human resources challenges facing the sector, and the new technologies have direct implications for the sector’s rising workforce skills and knowledge requirements.

Ensuring a highly skilled, adaptable workforce through a strategic approach to address human

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<sup>20</sup> Note that “human resource(s)” is used throughout this report to refer to: 1) members of the workforce (in viticulture or other sectors; and 2) strategies, programs, actions, initiatives that involve attracting, recruiting, retaining, education and training workers, whether they are “employees”, contract staff, owners or managers.





resource needs has become one of the key factors in the BC viticulture sector's long-term sustainability.

Other important factors to consider include the following:

- The sector has a preponderance of small businesses, many with little HR capacity or experience;
- A past reliance on foreign-trained workers;
- Little directly related viticulture-specific training in BC;
- Sector interest in a new training model but a lack of clarity on what it should be;
- The central importance of the Viticulture Technician occupation;
- A total workforce estimated at 20,500 – small but seven times the size of shipbuilding and repair and more than twice the size of oil and gas; and larger than mining;
- 2,400 workers performing Viticulture Technician-related work in BC – a critical mass for training and HR practices.<sup>21</sup>

The BC viticulture sector is well positioned for future growth and increased competitiveness; however, the sector concludes that this will be jeopardized without addressing human resource needs.

Therefore, on behalf of the BC viticulture sector, the Committee, through HortEducationBC obtained funding from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to develop and implement a comprehensive human resources strategy, mapped against a framework to understand, attract, recruit, train, retain and sustain a viable employee population for this important sector.

The initial phase is focused on labour market information research and the development of a broad HR strategy. Subsequent phases will focus on the delivery of key aspects of the human resources strategy including the development career awareness materials to promote career and training opportunities, as well as further work toward the development of a standardized training program for Viticulture Technicians.

### **Strategic Challenges**

In summary, the key strategic HR-related challenges facing the BC viticulture sector are:

- A relatively small industry with a preponderance of small (micro) businesses and owner-operators make it challenging to develop critical mass and economies of scale to make HR and training strategies viable;
- Competing with other sectors and jurisdictions for the “hearts and minds” of young people;

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<sup>21</sup> There may be 2,400 people in BC vineyards that do some degree of “Viticulture Technician” work (as defined in the RKA report) but it may range from people who do 10% of the VT scope of work to those that do 100% of it.





- Developing the capacity to link with job-seekers and to recruit skilled workers from within BC, across Canada and from other countries;
- The lack of a clear, articulated viticulture career path;
- The working conditions and seasonality in viticulture workplaces which makes it difficult to retain experienced employees;
- The lack of flexible, reliable and standardized industry-driven training for skilled viticulture positions; and,
- Ensuring HR and training strategies keep up with changing technological, quality assurance, environmental, safety and regulatory requirements of the viticulture sector.

### 3. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

#### Vision (2017)

A skilled viticulture workforce, training and career paths needed to support the development of a strong, viable wine grape sector that produces world-class wines and enhances economic and environmental benefits to the province.

#### Guiding Principles

This BC Viticulture Human Resource Strategy (including its training strategy) is based on, and will be implemented in a way that reflects the following guiding principles:

- **Sector leadership** – The Strategy must be governed and implemented by an sector entity in partnership with other organizations.
- **Sector-wide engagement and participation** – The Strategy needs to reach out to and support viticulture employers of all sizes and in all regions, and its implementation must involve the active participation of a representative employer population.
- **Integrated strategy** – The various parts of the Strategy must be connected and coordinated in a cohesive and consistent manner.
- **Commitment to investment in training and HR management** – By employers, employees, industry groups, training providers and government agencies.
- **Staged/scaled implementation** – The sector should be implemented a staged or scaled way, starting small, achieving early “wins” and momentum, and building on initial successes.

#### Long-Term Human Resource Goals (2017)

1. Members of key job-seeker categories and their influencers will be aware of and attracted to BC viticulture training and careers.
2. The BC viticulture sector will have the capacity to recruit adequate numbers of motivated people from BC, other parts of Canada and other countries to fill viticulture job openings.





3. Employers in the BC viticulture sector will use progressive human resource practices with which to retain employees in key viticulture positions.
4. The BC viticulture sector will develop and sustain a flexible, responsive and effective Viticulture Technician training program and complementary training for other positions.

## 4. STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Implementation details for each of the following strategies are provided in Appendix 6 of this report.

### Priority Strategies

#### 1. Industry Leadership Entity

A critical success factor for the successful implementation of a sector HRS is having a capable agreed upon (recognized) industry body to be the legal entity of record. Without this, the HRS implementation could easily founder and the responsibility and accountability would be unclear.

The BC Wine Grape Council – in conjunction with the BC Viticulture Human Resources Committee and other industry groups – will lead the implementation of this Strategy. would seem the most appropriate entity. The Committee will continue to function as an advisory arm of the Council.

An important part of creating an industry leadership body will include with it a **half- or full-time staff position** dedicated to implementing and monitoring this HR Strategy and training model.

#### 2. Branding, Awareness and Attraction

##### Viticulture Website

This will be a new stand-alone website or initially it may be a new page(s) added to an existing website. The new content will have distinct branding and be separate from the rest of any existing website. The website will start modestly with basic information about the industry and jobs. Over time, it will include the HRS activities, training program information, a job matching capacity, information on viticulture careers, showing pathways, and success stories (text and video clips).

##### Communications Strategy

As part of the Committee's plans, a comprehensive, realistic and costed communications strategy will be developed as soon as possible. It will include the following elements:

##### *Job-Seeker Market Research*







As was pointed out in meetings, the viticulture sector will undertake more focused research to find out how young people and other potential viticulture employees see the industry and what would motivate them to work in it.

#### *Branding*

The sector will develop a “brand” for the viticulture (and possibly broader wine) sector to communicate a positive image of the industry and its growth and potential, and of its careers and employment and training opportunities. This will include a consistent look for HRS and Training activities, and consistent messaging to be used with the HRS and by individual companies. This will include how the viticulture sector and careers include some positives that other sectors do not have.

#### *Social Media*

While seen by some as medium with which to reach only young people, social media is becoming more important for connecting with mature workers, career changers, mature students, workers in and outside of viticulture, and even retirees. The communications strategy will include a clear social media strategy with specific tools and will be based on the earlier recommended research.

#### *Print Collateral*

The sector will start small with a simple brochure that can be used at career fairs, in other venues (like schools) and elsewhere. While “virtual” media is very important, many people still like to take away something physical from a career fair. The brochure can also be used in direct mail campaigns if the sector targets certain groups to reach including out of province. The brochure can be updated annually (so print runs will not be too high) to add emerging information on HRS activities and on the training program.

### **3. Recruitment**

#### Attraction

Attraction of people to one’s sector and careers is not a stand-alone activity; it is also part of a sector’s recruitment strategy. A sector has to first inform and make people aware of what it offers, then get their attention and attract them to be interested in the sector; and then actually recruit people from key target segments.

A lot of the above recommendations will support attraction and recruitment activities, however, the sector will develop intentional attraction strategy to bring the above resources to life and make the best use of them.

#### Targeted Recruitment



Based on the job-seeker market research above, it is important that the viticulture sector has a clear sense which potential employee segments would be the best ones to focus on in attraction and recruitment strategies. This will shape the recruitment strategies of the sector as a whole and of individual companies. Such targeted recruitment may be implemented via sector associations, a new or existing contract organization, and individual businesses.

#### **4. Retention**

##### Seasonality

Seasonality is a fundamental part of wine grape growing and a challenge for recruiting and retaining workers. Based on best practices in other sectors described earlier in this report, there are some concrete tools and practices that the viticulture sector or groups of companies will pursue to address seasonal employment challenges. These may include the following:

- Sharing employees with wineries
- Sharing employees with other (complementary) seasonal businesses
- Utilize multi-tasking and cross-training to keep employees working longer
- Targeting potential job-seekers that was part-time and/or seasonal work

The associations could provide examples of how companies have addressed seasonality; they could provide “how to” steps in print or web-based formats.

Also, because of potential impact of change in Employment Insurance on workers in part-time or seasonal jobs, the viticulture sectors will keep a watching brief on federal government implementation of EI changes in September of this year. According to limited media reports, the impacts of early implementation of changes may appear different from what promised when they were introduced.

##### Benefits

Benefits can be an important incentive for certain segments of the viticulture workforce, however small companies find it difficult to afford benefit premiums. The earlier referenced Okanagan Purchasing Group may be an answer, or associations and small businesses in the sector will see if there are other benefits companies that could help. Some degree of benefits is definitely an added feature in a business’ recruitment and retention approaches.

#### **5. Viticulture Technician Training Program**

The existing state of viticulture training in BC is well-documented in this report and elsewhere. The Committee strongly believes that only an industry-developed, industry-led and industry-owned training program will be successful and sustainable. Therefore, it and the leadership entity will proceed early in 2013 with the development of and fund-raising for an industry-driven Viticulture Training Program. It will reflect the principles and criteria discussed early in





this report. The program will be an iterative continuous improvement process, starting with a vastly improved (over the existing one) program for the next delivery cycle and eventually a fully developed and sustainable program within a few years.

## 6. Other Priorities

### Integration with Training Option

While throughout this project, we have distinguished distinctly between a Human Resource Strategy and Training Options. However, there are many interrelationships between the two. In fact, training should be a key part of any HR strategy. Therefore, once decisions are made on the Committee's training direction, there will be a need to a) integrate the training strategy into the HRS; and b) ensure the attraction, recruitment and retention pieces are updated to reflect this connection.

### Other Strategies

#### **Multimedia**

For versatility and attraction, it is important to use a variety of media in promoting the viticulture, its careers and other positives. Therefore, in addition to a website and print material, the video clips on the website could also be available on a CD or flash drive, associations and employers could be equipped with a top-notch PowerPoint presentation (including slides with sound and video).

#### **Recruitment Capacity**

The viticulture sector needs to increase its capacity as a sector and its capacity as individual businesses to recruit the workers it needs, particularly in positions beyond simple laboring. At the sector level, viticulture associations and the Committee should consider some type of collective effort for facilitating recruiting, whether this is recruiting in BC, the rest of Canada or other countries. This may involve recruiting as a group to develop a pool of skilled labour and some kind of web-based worker/job matching mechanism (i.e. an association or a newly created service). For example, in other wine regions, companies provide human resource services to vineyard and wine employers (e.g. <http://www.viti.com.au/> and [http://www.personnelperspective.com/wineindustry\\_overview.asp](http://www.personnelperspective.com/wineindustry_overview.asp)). The BC Human Resource Management Association (BCHRMA), for example, could provide useful advice and/or be a potential partner on recruitment (and other HR activities) with the viticulture sector.

The other part of recruitment capacity is including simple tips and tools in a handbook or toolkit and/or in a web-based format. This could be part of a Recruitment and Retention toolkit (see below).





## Immigrants and Foreign Workers

Many medium and large viticulture employers and contractors have used the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, and even a few have recruited skilled workers through the Provincial Nominee Program (or Federal Skilled Worker Program). Many vineyard employers and contractors are calling for changes in SAWP, making it more flexible and responsive to the industry and allowing for groups of small growers to share foreign workers. The sector will continue to advocate for changes in government policies and programs.

The viticulture sector – with help of associations and larger employers – may want to take a more strategic approach to recruiting immigrants and foreign workers. As the competition for talent heats up in coming years, employer will have to tap all possible sources of labour. In addition to SAWP, has the sector attempted to use the Working Holiday Program (WHP) and the Student Workers Abroad Program (SWAP)? Can groups of companies work together to develop and implement a comprehensive immigrant/ foreign worker recruitment strategy?

Two industries in particular have been successful at this: construction; and tourism and hospitality. The latter one has some features in common with viticulture. The go2 website (<http://www.go2hr.ca/article-category/foreign-workers>) provides some invaluable resources, including its *Foreign Worker Guide for Tourism & Hospitality Employers*. Perhaps a more modest version of this renowned resource guide could be developed for growers and wineries.

## Engagement and Retention Toolkit

Employee engagement is the critical success factor by which employers develop a positive work climate and retain employees. There are two ways that the viticulture could promote the adoption of such practices by individual companies. First, simply communicating the importance of engagement practices and disseminating real-life best practice case studies are important. Second, engagement and retention could be key parts of a simple, practical viticulture employer “toolkit” that would be available on the viticulture website, by email and in print. It could have practical tools, templates, other resources, case studies, where to get more information, self-tests, etc. Ideas from the *Lodi* and *Vinewise* handbooks and from other BC sectors with such toolkits could be adapted for a BC viticulture resource.

A phased approach towards this would be: 1) in the short-term strengthen the HR section of the BC Sustainable Winegrowing Program guidebook; and 2) in the long-term develop a stand-alone toolkit. Important parts of employee engagement are: communication; good management practices; employee involvement; non-monetary rewards and recognition; and opportunities for taking on new work for advancement.

## Wages

The relatively low wages in vineyards has been identified as one of the challenges in attracting and keeping employees. While it is not possible to simply ramp up wages for all employees, we





heard of examples through which vineyards have been able to administer their wages in a way to offer incentives for performance and retention. Whether it is a graduated pay scale, end of season bonus, or retention incentive, some viticulture employers and contractors have tried to be creative in making best use of the sector's limited wage structure.

The sector's employers will need to consider if they will reflect in their wage structure a possible premium for graduates of a "new, improved" training program.

Wages and other financial aspects of a business are very competitive and proprietary factors, so it remains to be seen whether any kind of sector approach to a more effective wage structure could be implemented in viticulture.

### **Regional**

While this project only had the benefit of hearing from a few vineyards outside of the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys, it is understood that soils, climates and other factors (e.g. labour markets, critical mass, etc.) vary by region. The implications of regional differences need to be factored into the HR Strategy and the training approach. First, the HRS and training program will need to recognize that there are these differences. Second, the training program's basic knowledge and skills will apply to any region but the content should show the students examples from different regions in the province. Third, there are certain recruitment and retention tactics that may need to be adapted for regional application.

### **Other – Accommodation/Housing**

The research for this project heard from many viticulture employers about the cost and shortage of accommodation for viticulture. Is it possible to advocate to all levels of government on incentives for developing domestic and foreign labour housing, including treating this as a "community" (not just employer/worker) issue?

**A more detailed implementation plan with timelines and resources, etc. for each strategy has been drafted and will be made developed after this overall Strategy is released.**

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION**

Once this HR Strategy is completed, detailed implementation plan will be developed in the next phase of the BC viticulture sector's workforce development. In the meantime, the following sub-sections provide initial broad parameters for implementation planning.



## Cost and Revenue Sources

Cost Item	Estimate
<b>FIRST PRIORITIES</b>	
Leadership Entity	Industry in-kind contributions and possible new LMP/LMS funding
Staff Position	\$40,000 to \$80,000 (half- or full-time)
Website	\$5,000 plus hosting and maintenance
Job Market Research	\$10,000
Branding	\$5,000
Social Media	\$10,000
Print Collateral	\$7,000
Attraction	\$5,000
Targeted Recruitment	To be determined
Seasonality	Industry in-kind contributions
Total	\$82,000-122,000 + Leadership entity + in-kind contributions
<b>TRAINING PROGRAM</b>	
	Part of Labour Market Partnerships proposal (development costs)
<b>SECOND PRIORITIES</b>	
Multimedia Presentation	\$5,000
Recruitment Capacity	~\$10,000 + industry in-kind contributions
Immigrant and Foreign Worker Strategy	\$20,000
Engagement and Retention Tool Kit	\$50,000
Wages	Wage increments/incentives by individual companies
Regional Implementation	To be determined
Accommodation/Housing	Industry in-kind contributions
	\$85,000 + regional strategy + in-kind contributions

As part of the next phase of work, the BC viticulture sector will pursue funding options for resourcing HR Strategy priorities. The sources of funding to be explored will be as follows in the table below.

Sector	Sub-Sector	Specific Types of Organization/Program	Financial	In-Kind
<b>Private</b>	Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wine/grape-related</li> <li>Agricultural</li> <li>Other sectors</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wine grape growers, wineries</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vineyard and winery employees</li> <li>Employees in other sectors</li> </ul>	✓	✓
	Job-seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth, students, mature workers, immigrants, etc.</li> </ul>	✓	
	Commercial service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viticulture contractors</li> <li>HR service companies</li> </ul>	✓	✓
<b>Non-Government Organizations</b>	Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-profit organizations</li> </ul>	✓	
	Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic development</li> <li>Social development</li> <li>Housing</li> </ul>	✓	



	Representatives of workforce segments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people</li> <li>• Immigrants</li> <li>• Women</li> <li>• Older workers</li> <li>• Students</li> </ul>	✓	
<b>Government</b>	Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Western Economic Diversification</li> <li>• Human Resources and Skills Development Canada</li> <li>• Service Canada</li> <li>• Citizenship and Immigration Canada</li> <li>• Industry Canada</li> </ul>	✓	
	Provincial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology (funding of training)</li> <li>• Industry Training Authority (funding of training)</li> <li>• Ministry of Social Development (funding for training/employment of welfare and EI recipients)</li> <li>• Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Labour Market Partnerships</li> <li>○ Labour Market Solutions</li> <li>○ Other programs for specific groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓	
	Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities, town, villages, municipalities</li> <li>• Regional districts</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	✓	
<b>Sector</b>	<b>Sub-Sector</b>	<b>Specific Types of Organization/Program</b>	<b>Financial</b>	<b>In-Kind</b>
<b>Training institutions</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public post-secondary institutions</li> <li>• Private career training institutions</li> <li>• Secondary schools</li> </ul>	✓	✓
<b>Other revenue streams</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees for services</li> <li>• Membership fees</li> </ul>	✓	

## Roles and Responsibilities

While led by the sector, this HR Strategy will need to involve multi-stakeholder engagement and action. Therefore, the key players and roles will be:

### *Sector Associations*

- To lead the HR Strategy and training program work in partnership with other stakeholders.
- To engagement viticulture employers and support their active participation in implementation of the HR Strategy and training.
- To pursue partnership opportunities with industry and non-industry stakeholders.
- To contribute time and resources to the HR Strategy and training implementation.

### *Vineyard, Winery and Supplier Employers*

- To provide input during the planning and implementation of the HR Strategy and training.





- To actively participate in and be committed to implementation of the HR Strategy and training.
- To contribute time and resources to implement parts of the HR Strategy and training.

#### *Employees*

- To provide input during the planning and implementation of the HR Strategy and training.
- To actively participate in and be committed to implementation of the HR Strategy and training.
- To contribute time and resources to implement parts of the HR Strategy and training.

#### *Educators*

- To be engaged by the sector and become aware of the viticulture sector and careers.
- To promote awareness of the viticulture sector and careers among middle school and high school students.
- To work with the viticulture sector to create awareness/promotional tools including employer speakers in schools, print and website material, social media tools, and including content on the sector and careers in school curriculum.

#### *Training Institutions*

- To work with sector leaders and employers and workers to develop flexible, effective and responsive training for viticulture technicians and other positions as needed.
- To contribute expertise and resources during the development and delivery of training.
- To proactively and extensively promote developed training within the viticulture sector and to potential training participants.

#### *Governments*

- To provide a support climate for investment in wine grape growing and workforce development in the sector.
- To provide seeding funding for the development and pilot of viticulture HR and training strategies.
- To partner with the viticulture sector on implementation of the HR Strategy and training.

#### **Timelines**

It is important to implement the HR Strategy and training in a phased manner that reflects sector capacity, availability of time and resources, and the annual vineyard cycle.

#### **November-December 2012**

- Committee to review and finalize this HR Strategy and Training Options Final Report and this HR Strategy document, and make a decision on a future training program.
- Association to prepare and submit one or more proposals for funding to the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training to resource the next phase of work on planning and implementing the HR Strategy and future training program.







#### January-June 2013

- Simultaneously working with Okanagan College to make any quick improvements in the existing training program and working towards a future new training program.
- Confirm funding sources.
- Develop implementation plan for, and implement the HR Strategy.

#### July-October 2013

- Prepare new training program and prepare for its proof of concept/pilot delivery.
- Continue to implement HR Strategy.

#### November 2013-February 2014

- Proof of concept/pilot delivery of training program.
- Continue to implement HR Strategy.
- Formative evaluation of HR Strategy and make adjustments as appropriate.

#### March 2014 and Beyond

- Evaluate and refine new training program.
- Continue to implement HR Strategy.

### **Risk Mitigation**

There are a number of risks associated with the HR Strategy implementation and development and implementation of the training. They are summarized below with brief notes; a more detailed risk mitigation plan will be part of the HRS implementation plan completed in early 2013.

#### *Lack of Time*

- This involves industry people and employers not having time to contribute to this Strategy and to participate in its implementation. Role models and larger employers will need to step up to show commitment and invest time in the Strategy and training. This also relates to having a clear, practical value proposition for individual employers.

#### *Lack of Adequate Resources*

- Larger employers and seeding funding from governments will be needed to ensure adequate resources are available to start to implement the HR Strategy and new training model and to achieve early wins and achieve momentum (as soon as possible in 2013) on which to build.

#### *Very Tight(er) Labour Market*

- The HR Strategy and training approach need to show sector employers that solutions/supports will be in place – at least in small ways in the short-term – before labour shortages and other workforce issues become even more acute.



### *Global Shocks/Economic Downturn*

- Major international financial and political developments that affect the North American economy can quickly throw HR and training to the bottom of business priorities. The viticulture sector will need to find ways to keep the longer-term workforce priorities on the minds of employers through economic and sector cycles. This will be a big challenge if the HR Strategy and are seen as marginal (see below) by employers.

### *Lack of Employer Engagement*

- The Committee will need to use creative and practical means for getting the attention of viticulture employers and showing them “what’s in it for me” (the value proposition). They will need to time this to precede and coincide with HR Strategy implementation and to be coordinated with the reality of the vineyard cycle. These efforts need to reach small businesses, owner-operators and all wine grape regions.

### *Delay in Training Options*

- Viticulture sector representatives have indicated a new training approach is needed as soon as possible to avoid skill shortages that could directly impact business performance. A short/long-term approach will be needed to a) use the existing program in the short-term, making small improvements in it and help the College better promote it; and b) develop a new training model to be tested in the next training cycle and made permanent in the longer term.

### *Lack of Employee Engagement*

- The sector and employers cannot assume that employees will automatically buy into the HR Strategy or training. Employers will need to reinforce the value of these with employees and consider providing incentives for participating. Employees will need to be encouraged to consider participating in HR and training programs; they will need to see the value proposition. Participating in these will need to be made relatively easy for employees.

## **Performance Measures**

Performance indicators and measures will be developed during implementation planning in the next phase. These will focus on the following HR and training variables:

- *Employment* (e.g. number of viticulture jobs, proportion of full-time/full (longer)-year positions, proportion of skilled positions, etc.);
- *Awareness/Attraction* (e.g. proportion of public, educator, student, job-seeker, viticulture employer awareness of sector/careers; proportion of students and job-seekers who are interested in viticulture employment; website hits/visits; amount of media coverage);
- *Shortages/vacancies* (e.g. number of viticulture position vacancies, average duration of vacancies, etc.);





- *Recruitment* (e.g. number of new hires by type of position, proportion of most frequent and effective recruitment methods and sources; recruitment costs; frequency of recruitment activity; out of region/out of province/out of country recruitment);
- *Retention* (e.g. average tenure of employees by type of position, etc.; turnover rate);
- *Training* (e.g. number of training seats, number of trainees, number of trainees completing, number of trainees who become employed in viticulture, average training cost, etc.).



## APPENDIX 6

### Implementation Details for Each Strategy (appendix to HR Strategy) (Top Priority Strategies have red text headings)

#### 1. Industry Leadership

##### 1.1 Leadership Entity (including a dedicated staff position)

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BC Wine Grape Council (Sector leadership entity)</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make decision before January 2013</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially funded through Labour Market Partnerships/Labour Market Solutions</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of leadership, unclear roles, weak coordination</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite employers to a launch event and to participate in leadership entity activities</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments</li> </ul>

#### 2. Branding, Awareness and Attraction

##### 2.1 Viticulture Website

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement short-term option (new section of existing website) by January 2013</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial \$5,000 (contracted services) &gt; continuous improvement (plus monthly hosting and maintenance costs)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inability to adequately implement attraction and other strategies</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute website launch and information to members of all associations; use local newspapers and trade journals/sites</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, media, employers</li> </ul>

##### 2.2 Communications Strategy

###### 2.2.1 Job-Seeker Market Research

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$10,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Shotgun' approach to attraction and recruiting (working in the dark)</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain input on research questions</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments, researchers, BC Human Resources Management Association</li> </ul>



### 2.2.2 Branding

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower visibility, unclear image, unclear/inconsistent messaging</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use focus group of employers for input</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups/institutions that represent various workforce segments</li> </ul>

### 2.2.3 Social Media

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingent on website work; Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10,000 (staff time or contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missed opportunities – failure to reach thousands of people</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via social media tools</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major sector employers, social media groups</li> </ul>

### 2.2.4 Print Collateral

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic in Q1 (January-March 2013); more sophisticated/detailed in Q2 or Q3 (after Training decision/development) (April-September 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$7,000 (contracted services) for design and first printing</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of print material for a portion of potential job-seeker population that rely on it</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out from employers what basic information would be useful</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, training institution(s), major employers</li> </ul>

### 2.2.5 Multimedia

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic (by Chair) in Q1 (January-March 2013); continuously update and add multimedia features thereafter as needed</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of good tool for presentations at career and job fairs, trade fairs, other industry meetings, etc.</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not applicable</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee</li> </ul>



### 3. Recruitment

#### 3.1 Attraction

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start basic in Q2 (April-March 2013); expand as needed and as training is ramped up</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$5,000 (staff or contracted services to implement above strategies)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate capacity with which to actually use the attraction tools developed</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite employers to be part of group attraction strategies, and to contribute ideas and tools for promoting viticulture careers</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, training institution(s), major employers, other sectors, other regions</li> </ul>

#### 3.2 Recruitment Capacity

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review possibilities in Q2 and proceed accordingly (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$10,000 – could be a business, fee-for-service relationship (invite companies to submit a proposal)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of company coordination and synergy in their individual recruiting; missed opportunities because of inadequate capacity</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask employers about their interest in such a service/resource</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major employers, other sectors, BCHRMA, training institution(s)</li> </ul>

#### 3.3 Targeted Recruitment

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start Q3 (July-September 2013) after research</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be determined for each recruitment activity; could be implemented through a business, fee for service relationship</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfocused recruitment approach risks being too broad and watered down, and not targeted at most promising job-seeker segments</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate targeted recruitment approach to employers; invite employers to be part of employer group recruiting</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, governments, training institution(s), representatives of workforce segments, BCHRMA</li> </ul>



### 3.4 Immigrants and Foreign Workers

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to push for SAWP improvements and explore other options starting in Q2 (April-June 2013); develop and implement more comprehensive approach starting in Q4 (October-December 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$5,000 for strategy develop; \$15,000 in long-term to develop web-based toolkit</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missed opportunities</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide employers with more information on various options</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments, Central Okanagan Economic Development Board, immigrant agencies, major employers, Immigrant Employment Council of BC, training institutions</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Seasonality

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start in Q2 (April-June 2013)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships with others; costs incurred by associations, companies</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seasonality will continue to be an obstacle to recruitment and retention, and sector will be less likely to create long-year positions</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show examples and good practices among viticulture and other employers in increasing full-time work and a longer work year</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, major employers, other sectors, other regions</li> </ul>

## 4. Employee Engagement and Retention

### 4.1 Engagement and Retention Toolkit

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term, medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop during Q2 and Q3 (April-September 2013); test/implement thereafter</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$50,000 hard copy and web-based tool (contracted services)</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little help for smaller companies with no capacity</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect success stories and best practice information from employers; hold focus groups with employers on what information/tools/etc. would be a most use to them</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments, other sectors, major employers, small business groups, BCHRMA</li> </ul>



## 4.2 Compensation

### 4.2.1 Wages

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Year 2 Q1 (January-March 2014)</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs incurred by individual companies</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sector will continue to have a 'low-wage' stereotype</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Via associations</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, other sectors, small business groups, major employers</li> </ul>

### 4.2.2 Benefits

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee &gt; Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate in Q1 (January-March 2013) and proceed accordingly; include benefits in Retention tools work</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time to work with Okanagan Purchasing Group and/or other benefits providers</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced number of incentives with which to attract and retain good workers</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information and tools for small employers to consider benefits options</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, Okanagan Purchasing Group, other sectors, other benefits providers</li> </ul>

## 5. Other Strategies

### 5.1 Regional

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In longer term, obtain funding to customize HRS and training for each region</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alienation of regional companies not feeling served by HRS and training; reduced HR support for small companies in outer regions</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate strategy and benefits to employers/members in all wine regions</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other associations, governments, business and community organizations in each region</li> </ul>





### 5.2 Integration with Training Option

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistencies between HR and training activities; mixed messaging; weak synergy between HR and training activities</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do as part of promotion of training strategy that is implemented</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, major employers, training institution(s)</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Other – Accommodation/Housing

Details	Recommendation/Estimate
Potential impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>
Immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium-term</li> </ul>
Best entity to execute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector leadership entity</li> </ul>
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q3-Q4 (July-December 2013) and beyond</li> </ul>
Estimated cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer time to advocate</li> </ul>
Risk if not executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing pressure and cost of living for employees; decreased attractiveness for people to relocate from other regions/provinces/ countries</li> </ul>
Employer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Via associations</li> </ul>
Partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other associations, other sectors, other regions, governments, major employers</li> </ul>

