

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) Advice & Guidance for Businesses



History of SAWS

The scheme originated after the Second World War and was designed to facilitate the movement of young people from across Europe to work in agriculture.

In the latter years it was normally students who would come across to the UK to work on farms and improve their English-speaking skills.

Numbers of workers allowed varied but were around 25,000 – 30,000 per year

Originally open to all it was traditionally workers/students from EU countries who applied.

When the EU opened up allowing more workers into the UK it was considered less important and was then restricted to only Bulgaria and Romanian applicants

It was scrapped by the Government in 2013



What does the SAWS Pilot scheme cover?

The SAWS Pilot applies ONLY to “edible horticulture” which DEFRA define as:

- Protected vegetables (grown under glass)
- Field vegetables
- Soft Fruit (indoors and outdoors)
- Top Fruit (orchard fruit)
- Vines and bines (grape vines and hop bines)
- Mushrooms

Certain traditionally labour intensive crops (flowers) are currently excluded

What worker activity does the scheme cover?



Crop maintenance/crop harvesting/crop husbandry



Tunnel construction and dismantling



Irrigation installation and maintaining



Packing and Processing of crops on employer's premises



Preparing and dismantling growing areas and media



General primary production work in edible horticulture



Activities relating to supervising teams of horticultural workers

How does the scheme work?

Each operator will recruit and sponsor the individual workers

Assuming the workers application is approved they will be granted a (Tier 5) visa

This will allow the applicant worker to come to & to work in the UK for a maximum of 6 months

The operators are licensed & have to manage the scheme themselves and are subject to strict and regular monitoring by the Home Office

Labour Users will apply to any of the 4 operators for a supply of labour which can be no more than 60% of their total workforce

Under the scheme, the Operator may not source labour for themselves, only as a third-party provider - whereas in the pre-2013 SAWS growers were licensed to recruit their own labour

Operator Responsibilities



- Operators must recruit correctly and responsibly
- They must have processes in place to protect workers against things like exploitation and modern slavery
- They MUST work with labour users to ensure that workers rights are respected at all times and they are fully compliant with UK laws and regulations (NMW/H&S/TAX & NI etc.)
- They must achieve the following otherwise their licence to supply workers could be at risk:
 - More than 95% of those recruited must be granted entry clearance
 - Less than 3% fail to arrive at their placement in the UK
 - More than 97% must return to their home country at the end of the 6 month period

What's Next?



Next module

- Module 4 will be about the Youth Mobility Scheme for workers aged 18-30 years old

Further Details

If you require more information, use these links:

[Seasonal Workers Pilot request for information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Coming to the UK for seasonal agricultural work on English farms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

If you require more specific and individual assistance email:

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With thanks to the following for their vital contribution to this presentation:





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- Would you kindly answer the following questions...

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