**MINUTES OF THE ALL-MEMBERS CALL – 9TH AUGUST 2022**

A recording of the first part of the call can be found here [members call 9th August recording](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/87s0S-rDlZkPc06dHDp3DHNJkzvCb5jRVCmMOoxwkjQvvMPwN-WibAQa2PtJw2B0.OpmU0dgcCoQcOzg6). Access Passcode: **Ur=Myy9t**

# **Defra Update on Labour Shortages**

Defra has updated on a planned Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain

[Defra updates on Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defra-updates-on-independent-review-into-labour-shortages-in-the-food-supply-chain)

* John Shropshire previously CEO of G’s will chair the Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain
* JS will be supported by a panel across farming, fisheries, processing & manufacturing. More information on members of expert panel at link above
* The review will consider the challenges facing food and farming businesses to recruit & retain the labour review will provide recommendations for industry and Government to consider.
* The review will encompass the roles of automation, domestic employment, and migration routes. (See **The Automation in Horticulture review**)

# **Just Right Scotland**

Just Right Scotland is an NGO that runs an advice centre for seasonal migrant workers in Scotland and are specialised in their legal rights. **Caroline of JRS gave a brief presentation**

The Centre is funded by Scottish Government and holds regular clinics to assist seasonal workers. Members with sites / contacts in Scotland were requested to share the Calendar of clinic dates widely with their employees. Calendar of clinics is available at this link [JustRightScotland outreach clinics calendar](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UXdHE3TJ6odkMw5H2af0oFe91-I5sLE4/view?usp=sharing). JRS together with the Scottish Government produced a guidance booklet for Seasonal workers on their rights which can be found at this link [https://www.sasa.gov.uk/covid-19-guidance/seasonal-agricultural-workers](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.sasa.gov.uk_covid-2D19-2Dguidance_seasonal-2Dagricultural-2Dworkers&d=DwMFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=u0TlGOoUfULzMUFHzrXnCh6uQvKzSE2p99dkioac90TdVjtsmNWaaiVKwTEhyI28&m=P_awT2MORy5e1WDghHZqmsVlH0UtTHlLWuTWD65O7t0&s=dFdw0mNp5AgT2eQRkfqYCqZMFT3skGwB9_2DdpHl7_o&e=)

**Q&A**

* JRS haven’t encountered cases of modern slavery yet
* Loans – workers expressed concerns on loans
* The Centre collects data on cases of workers seen, issues raised, and this is reported to the Scottish Government monthly. JRS have thought of sharing anonymised version to share out widely with – retailers, FNET – this is not yet in place.

# **Just Good Work Seasonal Workers Scheme App Version Update**

Just Good Work SWS version was launched beginning of June ([https://justgood.work/resources](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__justgood.work_resources&d=DwMF-g&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_CdpgnVfiiMM&r=u0TlGOoUfULzMUFHzrXnCh6uQvKzSE2p99dkioac90TdVjtsmNWaaiVKwTEhyI28&m=aXEF_1Vtw-D5X4rOdd6iBgQIYFUdMgHAu9jvBUf5W_g&s=wCvR1mI8RTu-JvI70UujaOfN5pBz1hK1uxjMkkxK7m8&e=)). - What is being learnt from its use / feedback from workers? – **Quintin Lake updated**

12000 users have downloaded app. Most workers are from Nepal, followed by Ukraine. Workers are looking at information on how to apply, what is needed and so forth. Also, some workers already in UK have downloaded app. On what matters most to workers - see the graph on the presentation on meeting recording.

**Q&A**

* Plans to extend languages - to Swahili for example - QL yes, an App already exists for Mauritius and Madagascar and 58 will look to add Swahili on that one.
* Who shares the code mentioned - the SWS scheme operators. The code is specific to operators.
* Where a farm is identified what are they doing? Referring workers to helplines such as the Modern slavery help line. QL asked if FNET can look at protocols for this. It was proposed a call be held with interested to discuss this point on ***protocols***.
* Is App tracking cases of exploitation - QL reported they have contacted modern slavery helpline to request to share information on reported cases received via phone calls that mention use of JGW App.
* It was suggested that questions on fees paid be framed in such a way as to capture separate payments such as bribes to get information versus fees to obtain visa fees etc

**Follow up Call** **re-*protocols*** – FNET LN & MN/ DC ALP / Shane PE held a subsequent call to discuss the request on protocol. It was agreed (i) to check that the JGW App includes available reporting lines (e.g. modern slavery help line, Local councils etc). David ALP will talk to QL to check that App includes all available help lines. (ii) The main purpose of the App is to provide information to workers and collect intelligence (anonymously). If the think that information will be reported to farms, they may stop sharing. To avoid un-intended consequences of workers / farms stopping to use App it is App serve its function. (iii) Check with QL if possible that if someone raises an issue there be some targeted sign-posting to helplines.

# [**The Automation in Horticulture review**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-led-review-of-automation-in-horticulture/automation-in-horticulture-review)

# Launched in December 2020 at the same time as the government announced an extension of the Seasonal Workers Pilot, from 10,000 visas to 30,000 for 2021 has just [concluded Seasonal worker scheme is vital](https://www.fwi.co.uk/news/long-term-seasonal-workers-scheme-vital-concludes-review) given the limitations of farm robots. The review’s key recommendations is that Defra should pursue a long-term Seasonal Workers Scheme for horticulture and increase the number of visas made available.

# **Supplier Case Studies of Best Practice**

Coop Rebecca shared some case studies ….. Rebecca Webb shared **(… not on SWS theme)**

Coop launched some awards to promote suppliers who are doing work to improve workers’ rights. The aim of the awards was to celebrate excellence in human rights practice, encourage suppliers to learn from each other and inspire new ways of mitigating future threats to worker welfare. Topics of case studies varied – modern slavery, response to covid and other topics. Suppliers have worked with an independent consultant. Submissions for the award assessed by an independent panel. Case studies will be shared with FNET & published on Coop website & farmfoodhelp website – members to assess for peer-to-peer learning. Coop intends to run awards again.

# **Member Discussions / Updates -on Seasonal Workers’ / Labour Supply Situation**

4 breakout groups created for member discussions. Suggested questions were as follows: -

The seasonal work period is well advanced into late summer.

1. Have businesses obtained sufficient workers or are worker shortages persisting?

2. With the seasonal workers on SWS being from different countries this year, what new challenges have businesses experienced?

3. How are businesses dealing with the challenges arising? What are learnings?

**Member discussions:**

Group 1

* Challenges on information coming through due to labour providers being at the point of tenders being renewed
* businesses cautious to share information if media investigation ongoing.
* ALP will put together a series of question to ask horticulture businesses to collect more information

Group 2

* Apart from delays in visa processing at beginning of season, no major labour shortage issues experienced. This one business has received enough workers from Ukraine & Uzbekistan.
* There is ongoing concerns with recruitment fees. There is positive feedback on JGW App facility

Group 3

* Focus: not so much how many people we’re getting but quality of experience they’re getting
* Not necessarily returnees this season
* Some issues have arisen to do with different ethnicities, cultures, ways that people express themselves, not always considered acceptable behaviour
* Additional training/awareness should be put in place to mitigate risk
* Looking at resources on inclusion in the workforce induction process: in person induction process to ensure there is a more inclusive culture
* Could perhaps be included in JGW App/ FNET reminder of best practice for inclusion
* Challenge suppliers are seeing is of information coming forward

Group 4

* fees identified from all nationalities / more males on this year’s scheme /
* reported caravan shortages
* some providers have excess labour due to other providers approaching farms to offer workers which raises questions of legalities of sourcing these workers?

**Member question:** “We are aware that some of our growers are experiencing culture clashes amongst the seasonal workers. It would be beneficial to develop & deliver some cultural awareness training. Does any FNET members have any suitable resources that they would be happy to share?

# **FNET Expertise Register**

This point was discussed in a previous call. A reminder that members are being requested to complete / update this register of expertise available with FNET members by Monday 12th September for sharing at All member meeting. Please return to Margaret to compile into one list.

# **FNET Meetings**

1. **FNET All-member meeting - Wednesday 21st September in Manchester at Coop**

**Reminder!** – for everyone to please [register](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/375434192777) and book a place asap. There is an evening meal planned for 20th September. Its key that FNET can supply all these number confirmations to Coop to facilitate planning.

**b) Recently Held Meetings**

* **Risk Assessment and Mitigation Working group -** in person meeting 3rd August 2022. Notes and presentation recording have been shared with WG members. Any other member interested in receiving then please email Margaret.

**c) Upcoming Working Group Meetings**

**Employee Engagement Working Group** - Tuesday 16th August at 10 – 12.00hrs

**Responsible Recruitment Working Group** – Tuesday 27th September 13.00 – 14.30 hrs

**Agents Working Group** – Monday 3rd October 13.00-14.30

**Risk Assessment and Mitigation Working group** – next meeting will be in person, at Pilgrim’s Pride Warwick, on 4th October 10 - 16.00 hrs (10-11am will be to join the fortnight members call with WG meeting from 11.00am). Details to follow

**Climate Change Working Group** – Tuesday 11th October 10-11.30am. Please complete the survey to contribute to the development of the group.

# **AOB**

There was no other business