

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Agricultural Technologists & Technicians [NOC 2021: 21112 & 22110 / NOC 2016: 2123 & 2221]

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians may also be called:

- *agrology technician*
- *plant breeding technician*
- *seed technologist*
- *biological technologist*
- *biological technician*
- *botanical technician*

1. What Would I Do?

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians use their knowledge of agriculture to help farmers run their businesses, finding the most efficient ways to work their land.

As an Agricultural Technologist or Technician, your duties can include:

- providing information and advice to farmers about their businesses
- selecting crops based on soil conditions
- studying weed control
- helping farmers pick the right livestock
- conducting lab tests and take field samples

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians often specialize in food, plant, soil, or animal technology.

More information:

- ***WorkBC Career Profile for Biological technologists and technicians including Agricultural Technologists / Technicians***
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- ***WorkBC Career Profile for Agricultural representatives, consultants and specialists***
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- ***Career Cruising database (Profile for 'Agricultural Tech')***.
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians should be:

- *able to make precise observations*
- *able to draw conclusions from data*
- *able to communicate technical information clearly and accurately*
- *flexible and versatile, particularly for field work -*
- *able to work independently but also work well as part of a team*

You should have:

- *good writing skills*
- *communication skills*
- *research skills*
- *an interest in natural processes*

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians may work outdoors at farms or research stations, or indoors in offices. Outdoor farm work can be physically demanding and may require long hours, often starting early in the morning.

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for *Biological Technologists & Technicians* is \$52,140. The median annual salary for *Agricultural Consultants and Specialists* is \$64,508.

In BC regions, you can expect to earn:

Biological Technologists & Technicians

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	16.12	21.00	30.00
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	16.50	22.00	31.50
North Coast Region	16.00	20.00	27.00
Thompson–Okanagan Region	15.20	20.00	31.25
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	17.00	21.25	29.24

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

Agricultural Representatives, Consultants and Specialists

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	15.20	30.93	53.63

<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

Many agricultural techs start on a seasonal or part-time basis and are paid an hourly wage. If you progress to full-time work, you usually receive a salary. Full-time agricultural techs often receive benefits, such as dental plans, paid vacation time, and paid sick days.

Sources: WorkBC Career Profiles and Career Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

A number of job openings for **Biological Technologists and Technicians** (including Agricultural Techs) will come from the need to replace retiring workers.

The growing prominence of environmental issues for federal, provincial and municipal government agencies will create additional employment opportunities for biological technologists and technicians. The Professional business services industry also employs biological technologists and technicians to provide services such as environmental consulting and services to biotechnology companies. These areas are all expected to see increased levels of economic activity and employment growth.

Employment Outlook, 2021-2031 – Biological Technologists & Technicians

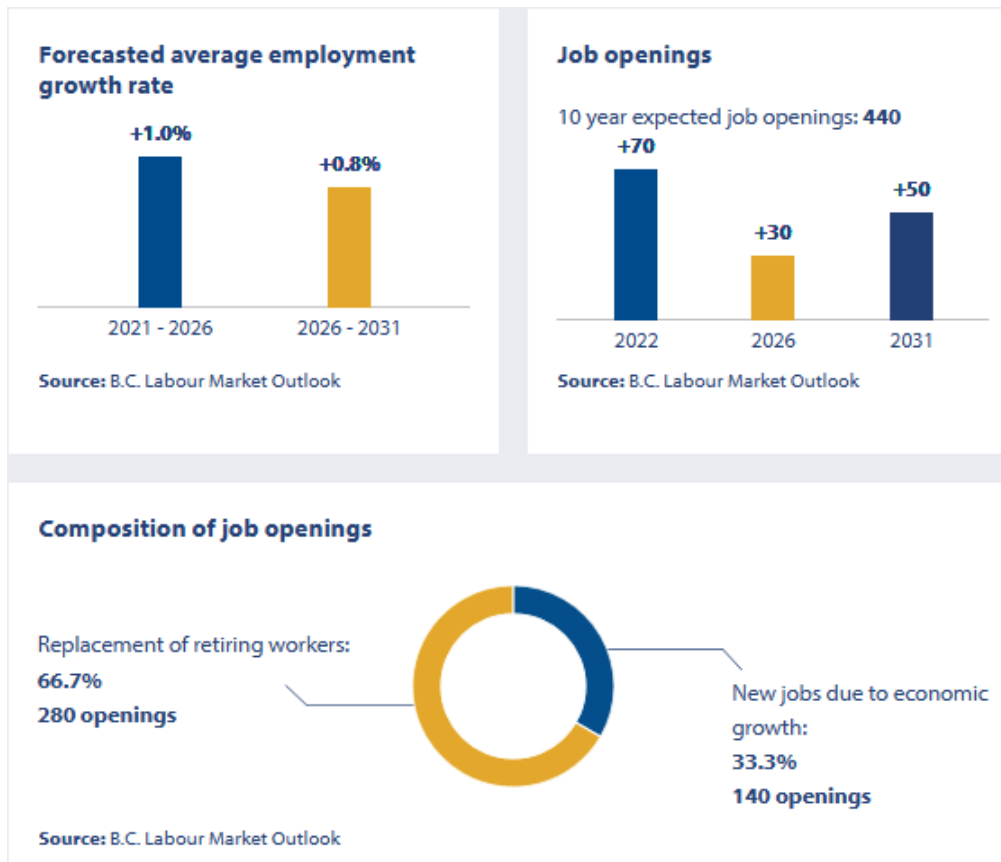


Chart from WorkBC

Employment Outlook, 2021-20311 – Agricultural Consultants & Specialists

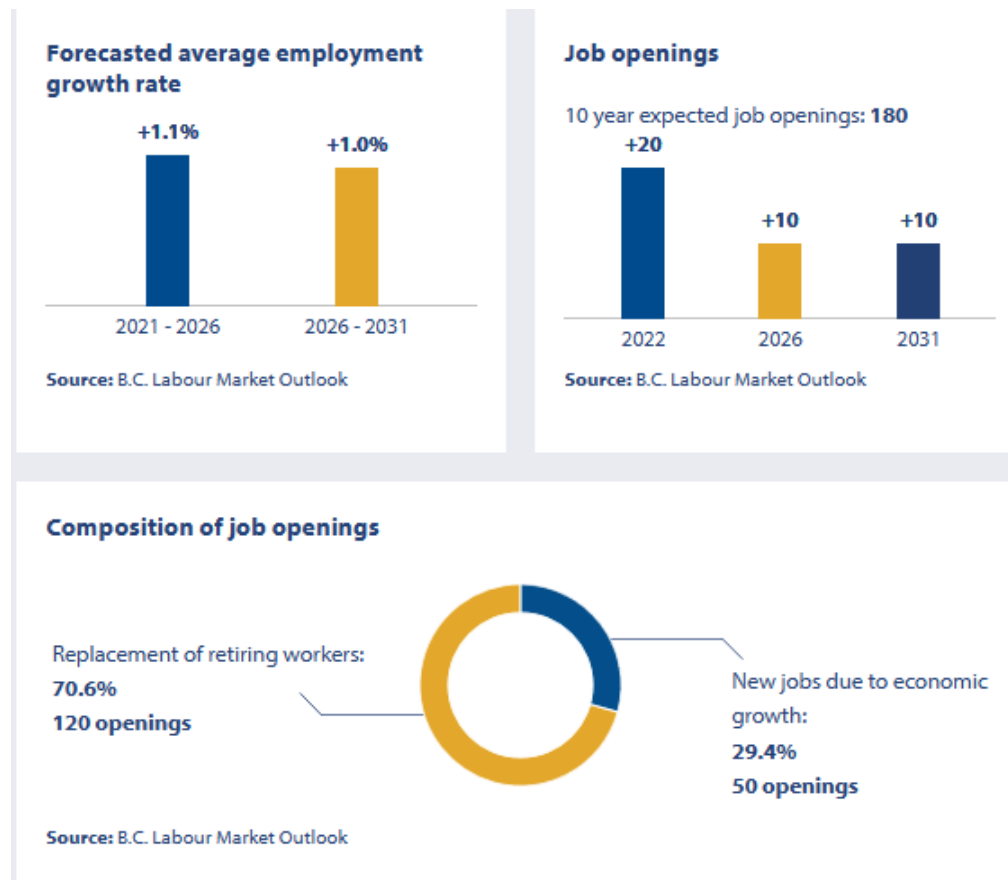


Chart from WorkBC

Source: WorkBC Career Profiles

5. How do I become an Agricultural Technologist or Technician?

In B.C., agricultural technologists & technicians are not regulated. Some form of post-secondary education is usually required and many agricultural technologists & technicians earn a degree or diploma in agricultural technology or a related field, such as agribusiness or general agriculture. Agricultural diploma programs typically include biology, agricultural technology and business, and crop and livestock management.

Certification as Technologists/Technicians:

Although certification is not required, it can provide better employment opportunities. In British Columbia, the **Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC)** (www.asttbc.org) is responsible for certification as an *Applied Science Technologist (AScT)* **OR** *Certified Technician (CTech)* in Agricultural Technology.

Minimum requirements include:

- for AScT: Diploma of Technology (2 or 3 years) from a nationally accredited program or equivalent
- for CTech: Certificate (1 or 2 years) from a nationally accredited program or equivalent.
- for AScT **OR** CTech: two years of related work experience, with at least one year at the level of certification sought

Internationally trained professionals (technologists and technicians) that have equivalent education and work experience in other countries may be granted *Trainee registration* if you have not achieved required work experience in Canada. There will be a separate application process for Trainee.

For further information, see:

- **Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC)**
<https://www.asttbc.org/>
 - Application Process
<https://asttbc.org/applicants/application-process/>
 - Trainee Registrants
<https://asttbc.org/registrants/trainee/>

Sources:

- *WorkBC Career Profiles & ASTTBC*

6. How Do I Find a Job?

Where would I work?

Agricultural Technologists & Technicians work in:

- *laboratory and field settings*

You may work for:

- *government*
- *food processing plants*
- *fertilizers, chemicals, biotechnology companies*
- *health, research and educational institutions*
- *farm machinery companies*

Finding Advertised Jobs

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

Online Job Postings

- **Agricultural Labour Pool**
<http://agri-labourpool.com/jobpostings.aspx>
- **ECO Canada, Environmental Job Board**
<https://eco.ca/new-practitioners/employment-support/job-board/#/>
- **Agri-Food Innovation Council**
<https://www.aic.ca/careers/job-board/>
- **Vancouver Urban Farming Society**
<http://www.urbanfarmers.ca/participate/jobs/>
- **Indeed.ca**
<https://ca.indeed.com/Agriculture-jobs-in-British-Columbia>

- **Neuvoo**

<https://neuvoo.ca/en>

Finding "Hidden Jobs"

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this "hidden" job market.*

Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of employers in this industry. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **BC Provincial Industry Contacts**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/animals-and-crops/industry-contacts>

List of provincial agricultural and producer associations, covering farm animals (beef cattle, hogs, sheep), dairy products, grain crops, fruit & berries, grapes, poultry & eggs, organics, vegetables & greenhouse

- **BC Agriculture Council**

<https://bcac.ca/>

30 member associations, each representing a sector of producers or growers within BC's agricultural industry

- **Fraser Valley Farm Direct Marketing Association**

<http://www.bcfarmfresh.com/farms/> (over 80 farms in Fraser Valley)

- **Canadian Poultry & Egg Processors Council – Members List**

<https://www.cpepc.ca/>

click on any of the five categories to view members: chicken processors, turkey processors, egg graders, egg processors, Canadian hatchery

- **Reference Canada**

<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "agricultural" OR "farm"

and click LOOKUP. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

NOTE: You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).

Networking, Volunteering and Temporary Agencies

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

Networking and the Hidden Job Market:

When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.

Volunteer opportunities

- **Volunteer BC**
<https://www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/>
- **GoVolunteer.ca**
<http://govolunteer.ca/>
- **Sharing Farm Society** (Richmond)
<https://www.sharingfarm.ca/volunteer/>
- **UBC Farm** (Centre for Sustainable Food Systems)
<https://ubcfarm.ubc.ca/volunteer-program/>
- **City of Surrey, Historic Stewart Farm Volunteers**
<https://www.surrey.ca/arts-culture/historic-stewart-farm/volunteer>

- **Foodwork.ca** (local & sustainable food jobs)
<https://www.foodwork.ca/volunteer>
- **Vancouver Urban Farming Society**
<http://urbanfarmers.ca/participate/jobs/>
- **Goodwork.ca** (green job site)
<https://www.goodwork.ca/volunteer>
- **Maplewood Farm** (North Vancouver)
<https://maplewoodfarm.bc.ca/about-us/volunteer/>
- **4-H British Columbia** – agriculture based youth development program
<https://www.bc4h.bc.ca/aboutus/getinvolved?highlight=volunteer>
- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> [Search Networking for Employment]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> [Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience. Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

For more information see:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

Agricultural technologists & technicians may start by helping other technical staff prepare, manage, and harvest plots; making observations and assessments on

crops/studies. With experience you may progress to managing and supervising a team of research assistants; coordinating and carrying out research projects.

Source: *Career Cruising* database (Profile for 'Agricultural Tech').

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia (ASTTBC)**

<https://www.asttbc.org/>

- **BC Agriculture Council**

<https://bcac.ca/>

represents over 14,000 BC farmers and ranchers and thirty farm sector associations from all regions of the province.

- **Province of BC – Agriculture & Seafood Resources**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood>

(information on BC's agriculture business & economy, animals & crops, agricultural regions and more)

- **Fastest Growing Industries: Agrifoods**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> [Search 'Agrifoods']

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> [Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.



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