



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2022

Fisheries Council Applauds Federal Government for Short-Term Relief of Labour Crisis

OTTAWA, ON: The Fisheries Council of Canada stands with other leading food and beverage manufacturing associations to thank the federal government for taking concrete measures to address industry's debilitating labour crisis.

Today, the federal government announced it would make the 270-day CAP exemption for seasonal workers permanent. This is really good news for our seasonal fisheries. Other aspects will also make it easier to use temporary foreign workers where domestic labour can't be found. These measures will provide short-term relief for Canadian companies and their workers as longer term measures are developed to address chronic labour shortages.

"Canadian fisheries are an essential service that support the food supply chain for Canada and countries around the world, and they've been working tirelessly to continue that support throughout the pandemic," said Paul Lansbergen, President, Fisheries Council of Canada. "It is critical that industry and government work together to ensure the food and beverage industry has adequate labour."

Food and beverage manufacturers across the country are facing labour shortages, with companies reporting vacancy rates of 20 per cent and more. In December, eleven industry associations came together to develop a proposal for an Emergency Foreign Worker Program, which recommended measures to provide immediate relief in the short term. We are pleased to see that Minister Qualtrough has considered this proposal closely, and has included some of our recommendations in today's announcement.

Food and beverage is Canada's largest manufacturing employer, with almost 300,000 workers. The sector was already experiencing labour challenges prior to COVID-19, but the pandemic has exacerbated the situation and the sector now requires an urgent solution. The inability to secure a strong and stable workforce is impacting food security and economic recovery, is undermining the sector's ability to support a domestic agriculture and food system, and is placing pressures on the current workforce.

Today's announcement is welcome and will provide much needed relief for those working to feed Canadians. Industry looks forward to working with federal and provincial governments on longer-term measures to address persistent and chronic labour shortages in the long term.

-30-

The Fisheries Council of Canada (FCC) is the voice of Canada's wild capture fish and seafood industry, promoting a healthy resource and prosperous industry playing a vital role in the Canadian economy. Our members include small, medium and larger-sized companies along with Indigenous enterprises that harvest and process fish from Canada's three oceans.

For more information or to set up an interview please contact:

Kelly McCarthy

Manager, Communications

kmccarthy@fisheriescouncil.ca

613-727-7450 ext. 2722