Spotlight on Land Based Industries

As you can imagine the land based and environmental sector is really important for Wales and the UK. It covers a range of 17 industries across the UK. So there are a large number of different jobs to look at in this sector. Read on for more information.

So what’s involved?

In Wales there are 19,000 businesses in the land based sector which is equal to 16% of all Welsh Businesses.

So what type of businesses actually come under this sector?

Businesses which make up sizeable parts of the sector in Wales are:
- Agricultural livestock and agricultural crops - a massive 69%
- Horticulture, landscaping and sports turf (8%)
- Animal care (5%)
- Game and wildlife management (4%)

There has been a large growth in the number of businesses within equine (up 83%), animal care (54%) and fencing (51%) – in contrast the number of environmental conservation businesses has gone down by 44%.

Agriculture’s share of the total national employment in Wales was 4.29% which makes it an important part of the Welsh economy.

The sector is made of mainly small businesses – 98% employ fewer than 10 people. Around 90,000 people across Wales are employed in this sector.

The sector businesses are responsible for land management and production, animal health and welfare and looking after the environment. As you can imagine it is a complex and diverse sector which helps improve the quality of life for all people. They improve well being, supply quality assured food, ensure the health and welfare of animals, provide leisure activities, enrich the rural and urban environment and protect our natural heritage.

The importance of the sector was summed up in June 2010 by Caroline Spelman, UK Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - “Farming and food contribute around £86 billion to our economy and are an indispensable part of the green economy we are putting at the heart of our economic recovery.”
(Source: Cereals Show June 2010)

There are an estimated 500,000 regular volunteers within the sector in the UK especially in work with the environment and migrant workers form a significant part of the agricultural workforce in non skilled jobs.

Did you know?

- There are 500,000 regular volunteers within the environmental and land based sector in the UK
- 98% of businesses employ fewer than 10 people
- The sector’s workforce is predominantly male (71%) and from a white ethnic group (100%) Wales has the highest proportion of female workers
- 79% in the sector are employed full time
- The land based and environmental sector has weathered the impact of the recession better than most sectors.

What does the future hold?

There’s a lot of unknowns in terms of how the recession will affect this sector in the long term. In future the skills required will be a mix of high level technical skills as well as business management skills. There will be a need to cope with increasing environmental and legislative demands driven by consumers, new technology and government policy. The level of change is high and skills relating to managing change are essential to the running of successful future business.
(Source: Daily Post December 2011)

There are plans for 3 public bodies in Wales to merge into one super organisation - Countryside for Wales, The Environment Agency for Wales and the Forestry Commission

Tip

- Do your research – a strong understanding of the industry you are interested in will give you the edge over other applicants
- GoWales [www.gowales.co.uk](http://www.gowales.co.uk) can help with graduate work, tasters and placements plus free support for freelancers.

Useful links

- [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk)
- [www.soilassociation.org](http://www.soilassociation.org)
- [www.rspca.org.uk](http://www.rspca.org.uk)
- [www.bctv.org](http://www.bctv.org)
- [www.environmentagency.co.uk](http://www.environmentagency.co.uk)
- [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)
for Wales will merge into a Single Environment Body by April 1st 2013. The impact of this on job opportunities is as yet unclear.
(Source: Daily Post December 2011)

Only 12% in the industry are in the 16-24 age group. In the next few years the industry will need younger people as around 30% of the workforce is 55 years of age or older, more than that across the UK as a whole (18%). To combat this the sector will need to develop programmes for improving the skills of its workforce and systems to record such development and lifelong learning. In addition apprenticeships could provide an answer for encouraging and developing new entrants to the UK sector.

Find out more
For more information and advice about working in the Land Based Industries:
• Talk to your Careers Adviser
• Use your school or college library
• Use your local Careers Centre library
• Ring 0800 100 900

What jobs could I do?

• Farm Manager
  Conservation Manager
  Head Forester
  Zoo Manager

• Land Based Engineer
  Ecologist
  Veterinary Surgeon

• Floristry Consultant
  Agronomist
  Field Technician
  Zoo Education Officer
  Animal Technologist

• Farmer
  Stockperson
  Green keeper
  Grounds person
  Florist

• Farrier
  Animal Trainer
  Service Technician
  Groom

• Zookeeper
  Veterinary Nurse
  Animal Groomer
  Animal Boarding Assistant

• Retail Assistant
  Sales Representative

• Forest Machine Operator
  Tractor Driver
  Horse Transporters

• Farm Worker
  Seasonal Worker
  Packer

Do you know what these jobs involve? Click on them to see, or you might miss out on a job you’d really like.

Where could I work?
You could work in:

• Agricultural Crops – producing crops, and fruit and vegetables.

• Agricultural livestock – production of beef, sheep, dairy, pig, poultry and eggs.

• Animal care – pet shops, kennels/catteries, animal breeding, animal training, animal grooming, animal welfare charities, zoo/wildlife parks and dog wardens.

• Animal Technology – care of animals bred to be used in scientific research

• Aquaculture – including farming fish, marine plants and lobsters/shrimps.

• Environmental conservation – management of landscapes, habitats and species

• Equine – riding schools, training, racing and competition stables, breeding/studs, training horses, clubs and hunts, trekking, horse sales.

• Farriery - treatment of the foot of a horse

• Fencing – eg. agricultural, high security and electrical, environmental.

• Fisheries management – the provision of freshwater angling, conserving freshwater fish and habitats.

• Floristry – design, creation, retailing the use of flowers and decorative plants.

• Game and Wildlife management – management of land used for game shooting and fishing.

• Horticulture - landscaping, sports turf and golf green-keeping, heritage and botanic gardens, private, commercial and public grounds, parks.

• Land-based engineering – manufacture, dealership, hire and maintenance of agricultural machinery.

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- Production horticulture – producing fruit, vegetables, plants and nurseries
- Trees and Timber – maintenance and management of trees, woodlands and forests
- Veterinary nursing activities – offering care for animals usually within a veterinary practice.

What skills do I need?

In Wales, there are currently 8 specialist colleges, 6 higher education establishments and a range of training providers who offer courses from entry level to higher education qualifications. So there are lots of chances to develop skills. Many employers rate the right attitude, enthusiasm and team working as key skills they require.

The following skills are required across all the sectors:

- Customer Service
- Managing People and managing change
- Industry specific skills
- ICT
- Business advice and support
- Leadership and Management
- Business awareness skills

Farmers, growers, those involved with animal health/welfare, and those working in the environment will need:

- Business management skills associated with running a small business
- Marketing and Sales

Having Welsh language skills can also be of benefit in this sector especially in those jobs which involve working with the public.

Skills in demand

Future skills

- There is strong evidence that jobs are becoming more skilled within the sector and new skills will be required for workers to remain competitive in the workplace. An example is in Agriculture where skilled trade roles (e.g. farmer, stockperson) account for more than 45% of workers in Wales. This has significantly risen from 41% since 2008 and compares to just 11% across all sectors.
- General business skills such as management, marketing and sales, financial skills, accounts and record keeping are skills which will be required in the future.
- Uncertainty in today’s market, climate change, new technology and increased competition will have an impact on the future skills required within the sector.
- The many changes within the industries mean workers must be upskilled to cope with the increasing environmental and legislative demands. Managing change well will be essential for running successful businesses.

What can I earn?

Examples

Farm Workers – There are 6 grades set by the Agricultural Wages Board e.g. 1st year apprentices are paid a minimum £3.57 an hour; a grade craft worker is paid a minimum £7.76 an hour. Overtime and other extras can increase take home pay.

A manager of a large farm can earn £30,000+ a year.

Veterinary Nurse – around £17,000 a year

Zoo Keeper – starting on around £12,000 and increases to £17,000 - £20,000 – team leaders and head keepers can be paid a higher wage.

Countryside or Conservation Officer – £15,000 to £20,000.

Senior Officers - up to £30,000.

Rangers or Wardens £16,000 to £22,000.

Greenkeeper - £18,575

Gamekeeper - £12,000 to £20,000

Qualified Landscape Professionals - £20,000 to £45,000
What do I need to do?

If you’re interested in working with the environment, getting voluntary work experience could really help you develop your skills. Many employers in Conservation and the Environment will ask for this. If you’re interested visit www.volunteering-wales.net

From reading this, you will now know that you need to get as qualified as possible to get into this sector. Remember that it’s not just university that could be an option. Apprenticeships and vocational courses could also be available. When you’re ready to think about getting qualified click Courses in Wales which has links to a variety of training and work based and further education opportunities in your area. If you want to find out about apprenticeships and see what’s available click on Apprenticeship Matching Service. So, take the time to research and give yourself the edge!

Research, research, research! You wouldn’t download music without sampling first. One of the biggest keys to your success is to know as much as you can about the work you’re interested in. Ask friends and family if they know anyone that works in this sector and speak to them. Speaking to a careers adviser can really help, especially once you’ve done lots of research!

This website can really help get your research underway! Click the links under What Jobs Could I Do for information about getting into different jobs in this industry as well as the weblinks under Useful Links

Don’t forget, one of the 3 main reasons employers give for not employing applicants is lack of work experience. So, if you want to wow your employer with your knowledge and practical experience and get the advantage you need, start finding out about Work Experience opportunities.

Sources of Information

Cererals Show – ‘Biodiversity – The canary in the mine’, June 2010
Wales Skills Assessment 2010/2011 Lantra (Sector Skills Council for Environmental and land-based industries) www.lantra.co.uk
Careerswales.com – Career Choices www.careerswales.com
Lantra Model for Employment Forecasting 2010
Daily Post December 2011
National Council for Voluntary Councils 2009