



ON-FARM REMUNERATION BENCHMARKING REPORT 2025

FOR WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN AND NEW
SOUTH WALES GROWERS

First crop - Rose Mooney (NSW)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Attracting and retaining skilled on-farm staff remains a persistent challenge for Australian grain growers. In response, GrainGrowers commissioned this independent benchmarking report to provide growers in Western Australia (WA) and New South Wales (NSW) with clear, reliable data on remuneration practices across four key roles: Farm Manager, Senior Farm Worker, Farm Worker, and Truck Driver.

Scope and Purpose

This report benchmarks salaries and non-salary benefits for permanent on-farm roles, as well as casual and seasonal wages for Farm Workers, based on survey responses from a total of 169 growers, comprising 100 from WA and 69 from NSW. It aims to equip employers with practical insights to support competitive hiring and retention strategies.

Key Findings

Remuneration Reflects Role Seniority:

Farm Managers collected the highest median salaries and median benefits across both states. In WA, Farm Managers earned a median salary of \$130,000, with a median of \$30,000 in benefits; in NSW, the figures were \$105,000 and \$30,000 respectively.

Non-Salary Benefits are Commonplace:

Benefits such as accommodation, vehicles, fuel, and utilities are widely provided, especially for senior roles. In WA, 100% of Farm Managers received at least one benefit, compared with 88% in NSW.

Higher Earnings for Truck Drivers in Western

Australia: Truck Drivers in Western Australia report a median annual salary of \$102,000, notably higher than the median salary of a Senior Farm Worker. This pay disparity highlights the strong demand for freight and logistics skills in the state, where long transport distances and resource sector activity drive competition for experienced drivers.

Accommodation is the Most Common Benefit:

Offered to over 90% of Farm Managers and Farm Workers in both states, accommodation remains the cornerstone of non-salary compensation.

Implications for Growers

This report offers useful insights into pay and conditions to help tackle common workforce challenges on-farm. By offering a combination of salary and benefits, growers can better position themselves as employers of choice in a tight labour market.

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Canola Harvest Cannie Ridge - Kerry McFarlane (VIC)



INTRODUCTION

Attracting and retaining a reliable workforce is a significant challenge for grain growers in Australia. Annual survey data published by GrainGrowers consistently shows that Australian growers find it difficult to hire and retain on-farm staff. This issue impacts on farm productivity and has identified as a key issue in successive annual policy surveys conducted by GrainGrowers.

Information about on-farm remuneration can be difficult and cost-prohibitive to access. Growers aiming to improve their remuneration practices, thereby strengthening their ability to attract and retain staff, struggle to benchmark their current practices against industry standards. Unlike other industries, remuneration data for on-farm roles is not regularly published. This makes it difficult for growers to find the tools and information they need.

To fill this information gap, GrainGrowers commissioned an independent remuneration benchmarking survey. This survey, put to growers across Western Australia and New South Wales, sheds light on the remuneration of four roles reported by state: Farm Manager, Senior Farm Worker, Farm Worker, and Truck Driver.

This is a pilot study, rolled out in two states: Western Australia, selected due to the prevalence of workforce challenges identified in GrainGrowers' annual survey results, and New South Wales, selected for its strong grower networks that support high survey participation.

This report details the results of the survey, with state-level information provided on salaries, the value of benefits provided to staff, and the types of benefits received.

GrainGrowers is proud to provide growers in Western Australia and New South Wales with a resource that contributes to ensuring a profitable and sustainable operating environment for growers.



Opening Up the Box in Case it Rains - Stephanie Frost (NSW)

RESULTS SUMMARY BY STATE

New South Wales

Median Salaries and Benefits

Role	Median Salary (\$)	Median Benefit (\$)
Farm Manager	\$105,000	\$30,000
Senior Farm Worker	\$85,000	\$19,750
Farm Worker	\$75,000	\$15,000

Table 1. Median Salaries and Median Benefit Values for NSW.

In NSW, median salaries and median benefits aligned with role seniority and responsibility. Farm Managers received the highest overall remuneration, followed by Senior Farm Workers and then Farm Workers.

Benefits Provided

Role	Farm Manager N=25	Senior Farm Worker N=43	Farm Worker N=84
Benefit Provided (%)	88%	84%	82%

Table 2. Percent of roles receiving at least one form of benefit.

- Benefits were often provided to Farm Managers, with accommodation (91%) and vehicles (86%) the most frequently offered.
- Senior Farm Workers and Farm Workers were highly likely to receive benefits, most commonly in the form of accommodation.

What does median mean?

The median represents the middle value when all reported salaries or benefit values are arranged from lowest to highest.

This means that:

50% earn less than the median
50% earn more than the median.

There are often a few very high earners that can skew the average. The median gives a more accurate reflection of what most people earn in each role.

Survey Top Tips

“N=” means the sample size.

For example, N=22 means 22 responses for that question was recorded.

RESULTS SUMMARY BY STATE (CONTINUED)

Western Australia

Median Salaries and Benefits

Role	Median Salary (\$)	Median Benefit (\$)
Farm Manager	\$130,000	\$30,000
Senior Farm Worker	\$100,000	\$16,500
Farm Worker	\$91,300	\$15,000
Truck Driver	\$102,500	\$16,000

Table 3. Median Salaries and Median Benefits for WA.

- In WA, median salaries generally reflected role seniority and responsibility; however, Truck Drivers recorded the second-highest median salary among the four roles.
- Farm Managers received significantly higher-value benefit packages compared to all other positions.
- Across the roles of Senior Farm Workers, Farm Workers, and Truck Drivers, benefits were consistently provided at similar levels of value.

Benefits Provided

Role	Farm Manager N=30	Senior Farm Worker N=52	Farm Worker N=140	Truck Driver N=32
Benefit Provided (%)	100%	96%	91%	69%

Table 4. Percent of roles receiving at least one form of benefit.

- Benefits were always provided to Farm Managers, most commonly in the form of fuel (97%), accommodation (90%), and utilities (87%).
- Most Senior Farm Workers and Farm Workers were provided with benefits, with accommodation identified as the most frequently offered benefit for both roles.



Spring Field Day Season - Kathi McDonald (WA)

EMPLOYEE ROLES

New South Wales

Farm Manager (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$99,460	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$105,000	Median
\$135,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 5. Farm Manager Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=25.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$15,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$30,000	Median
\$50,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 6. Farm Manager Benefit Value Range, N=22.

In NSW, 88% of Farm Managers received at least one form of benefit.

Survey Top Tips

Quartiles help describe how salaries or benefits are distributed across a role. Quartiles divide the data into four equal parts:

Lower Quartile (25th percentile): 25% of employees earn less than this amount.

Median (50th percentile): The middle amount - half earn more, half earn less.

Upper Quartile (75th percentile): 75% of employees earn less than this amount; only 25% earn more.

These measures are useful for identifying the typical salary and benefit range and spotting outliers.

Benefits Provided to Farm Managers by Employers (%)

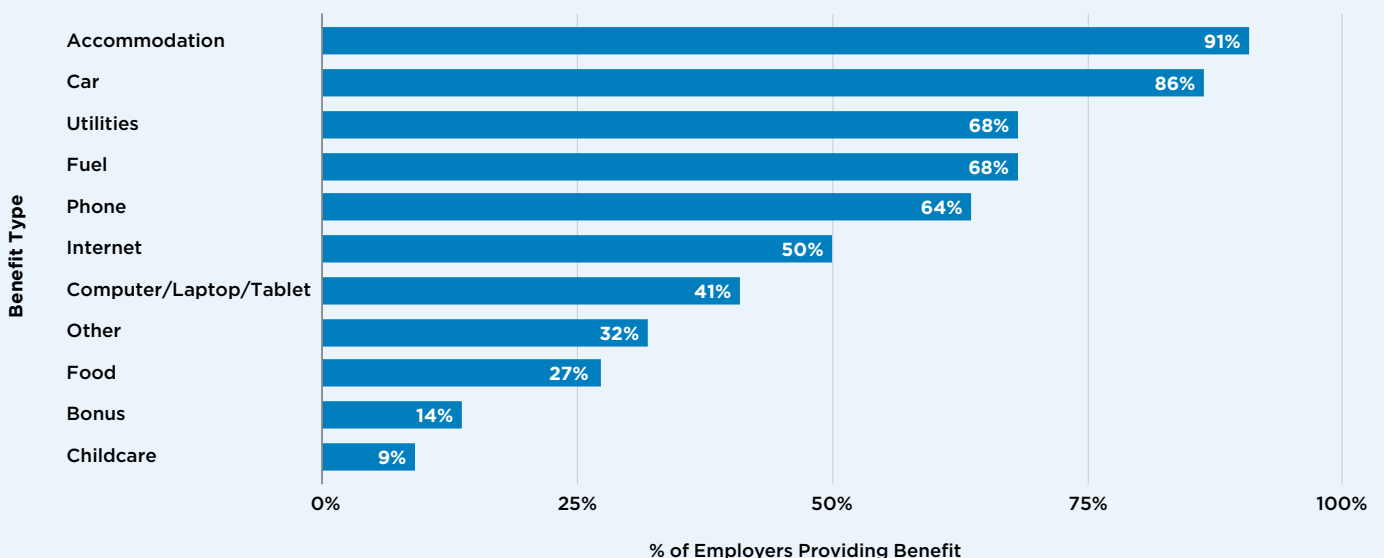


Figure 1. Benefits provided to Farm Managers, N=22

EMPLOYEE ROLES

New South Wales

Senior Farm Worker (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$72,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$85,000	Median
\$95,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 7. Senior Farm Worker Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=37.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$10,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$19,750	Median
\$25,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 8. Senior Farm Worker Benefit Value Range, N=36.



In NSW, 84% of Senior Farm Workers received at least one form of benefit.

Benefits Provided to Senior Farm Workers by Employers (%)

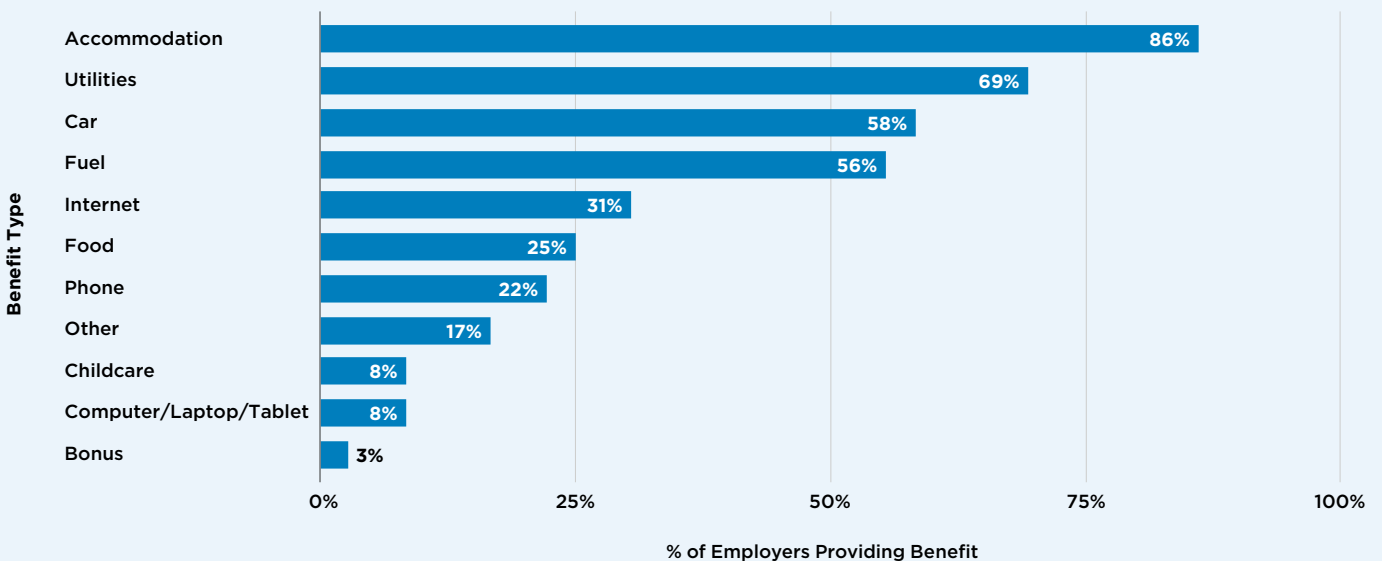


Figure 2. Benefits provided to Senior Farm Workers, N=36

EMPLOYEE ROLES

New South Wales

Farm Worker (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$62,400	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$75,000	Median
\$85,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 9. Farm Worker Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=6.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$8,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$15,000	Median
\$25,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 10. Farm Worker Benefit Value Range, N=69.

In NSW, 82% of Farm Workers received at least one form of benefit.



Paddock Dinners - Judith Gawne (NSW)

The typical hourly rate for seasonal and casual farm workers was **\$35.00** (excl. superannuation), N=17.

Benefits Provided to Farm Workers by Employers (%)

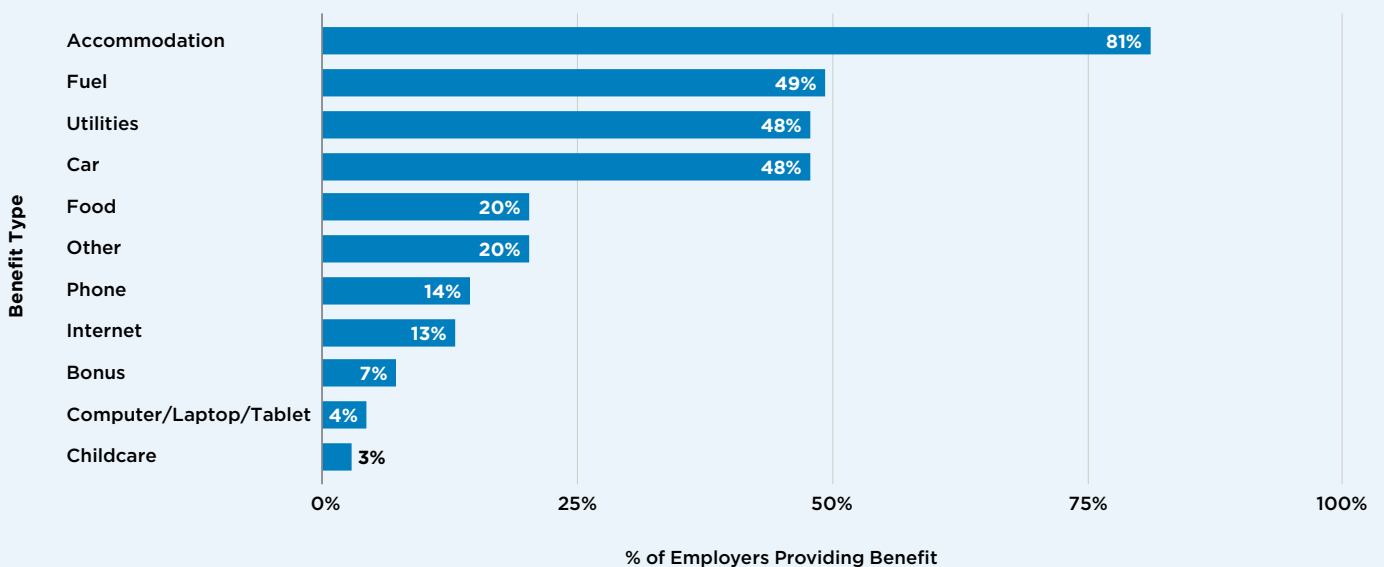


Figure 3. Benefits provided to Farm Workers, N=69

EMPLOYEE ROLES

Western Australia

Farm Manager (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$100,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$130,000	Median
\$150,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 11. Farm Manager Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=29.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$20,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$30,000	Median
\$45,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 12. Farm Manager Benefit Value Range, N= 30.



In WA, 100% of Farm Managers received at least one form of benefit.

Benefits Provided to Farm Managers by Employers (%)

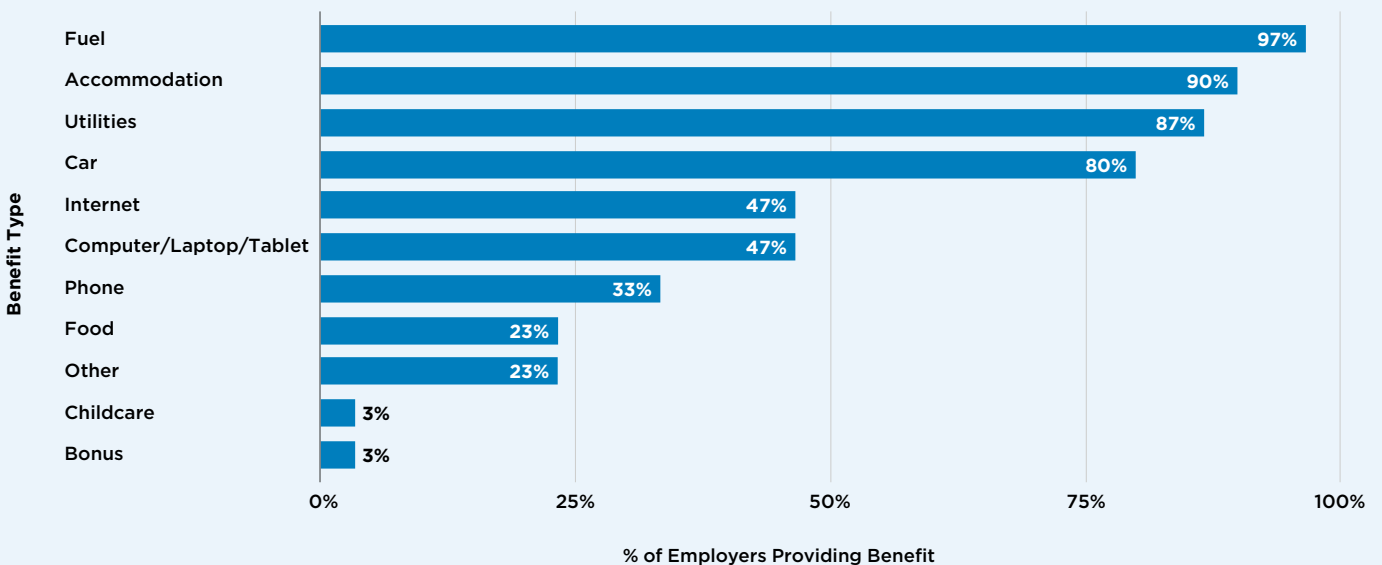


Figure 4. Benefits provided to Farm Managers, N=30

EMPLOYEE ROLES

Western Australia

Senior Farm Worker (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$89,600	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$100,000	Median
\$110,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 13. Senior Farm Worker Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=43.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$10,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$16,500	Median
\$26,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 14. Senior Farm Worker Benefit Value Range, N=50.



In WA, 96% of Senior Farm Workers received at least one form of benefit.

Benefits Provided to Senior Farm Workers by Employers (%)

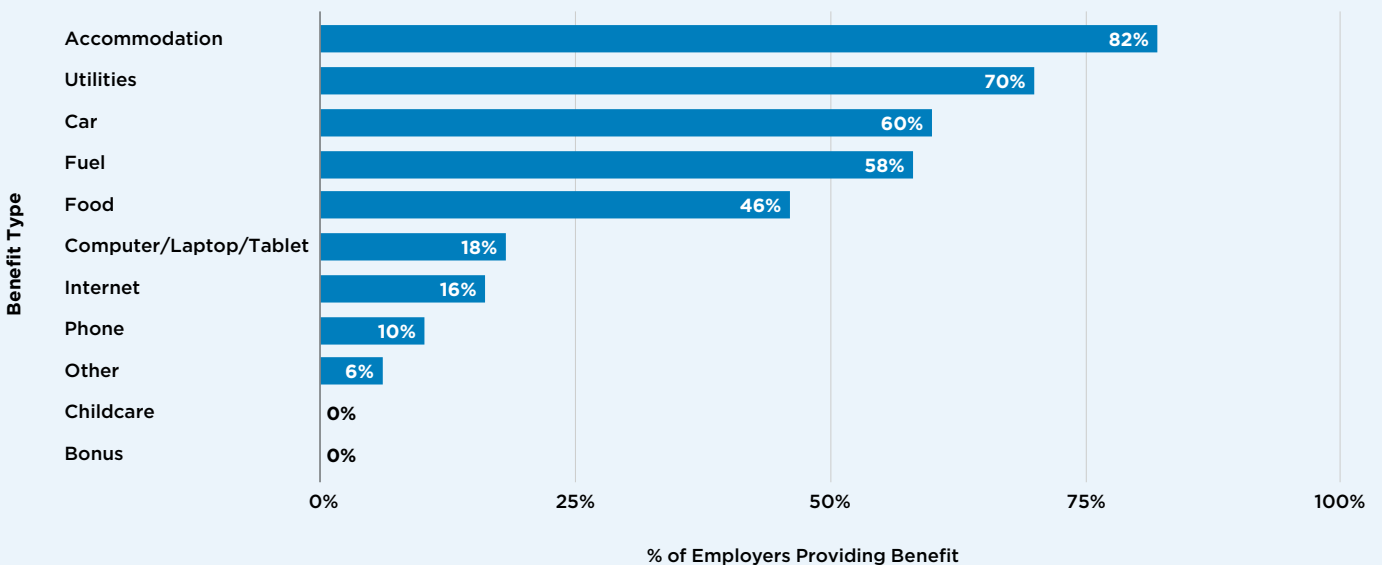


Figure 5. Benefits provided to Senior Farm Workers, N=50

EMPLOYEE ROLES

Western Australia

Farm Worker (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$77,350	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$91,300	Median
\$110,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 15. Farm Worker Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=97.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$10,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$15,000	Median
\$20,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 16. Farm Worker Benefit Value Range, N=127.

In WA, 91% of Farm Workers received at least one form of benefit.



The typical hourly rate for seasonal and casual farm workers was **\$35.00** (excl. superannuation), N=43.

Benefits Provided to Farm Workers by Employers (%)

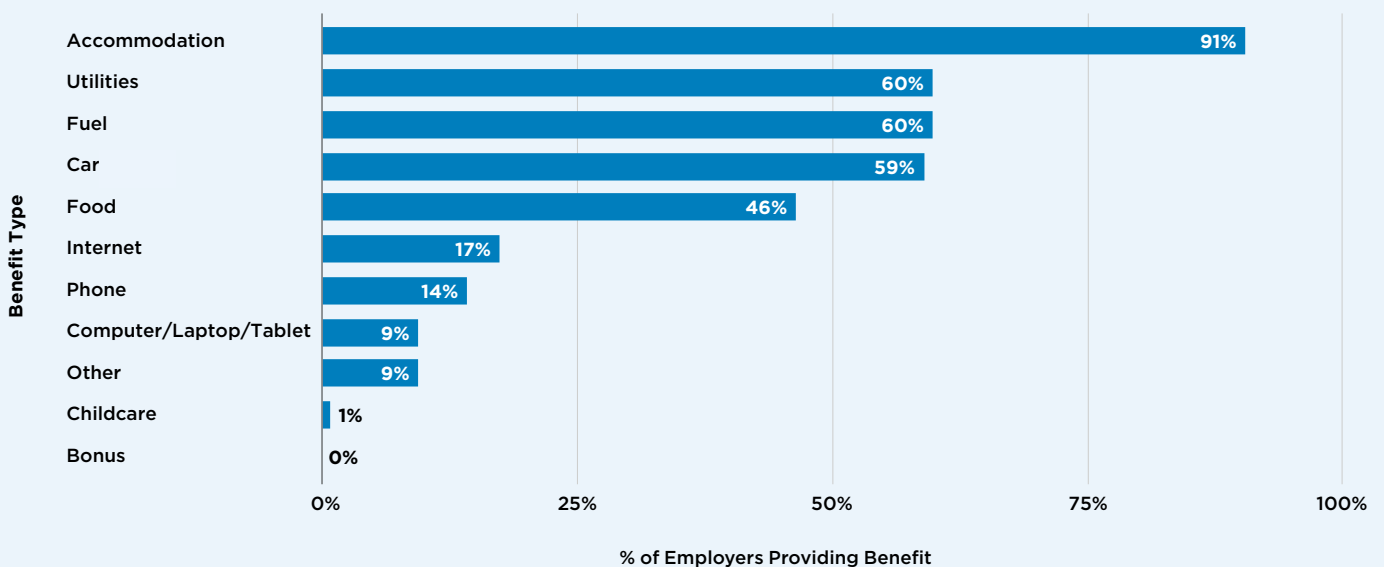


Figure 6. Benefits provided to Farm Workers, N=127

EMPLOYEE ROLES

Western Australia

Truck Driver (Permanent)

Salary Range (\$)	Description
\$90,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$102,500	Median
\$120,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 17. Truck Driver Salary Range (excl. superannuation), N=18.

Benefit Value Range (\$)	Description
\$5,000	Lower quartile (25% earn less)
\$16,000	Median
\$20,000	Upper quartile (25% earn more)

Table 18. Truck Driver Benefit Value Range, N=22.



In WA, 69% of Truck Drivers received at least one form of benefit.

Benefits Provided to Truck Drivers by Employers (%)

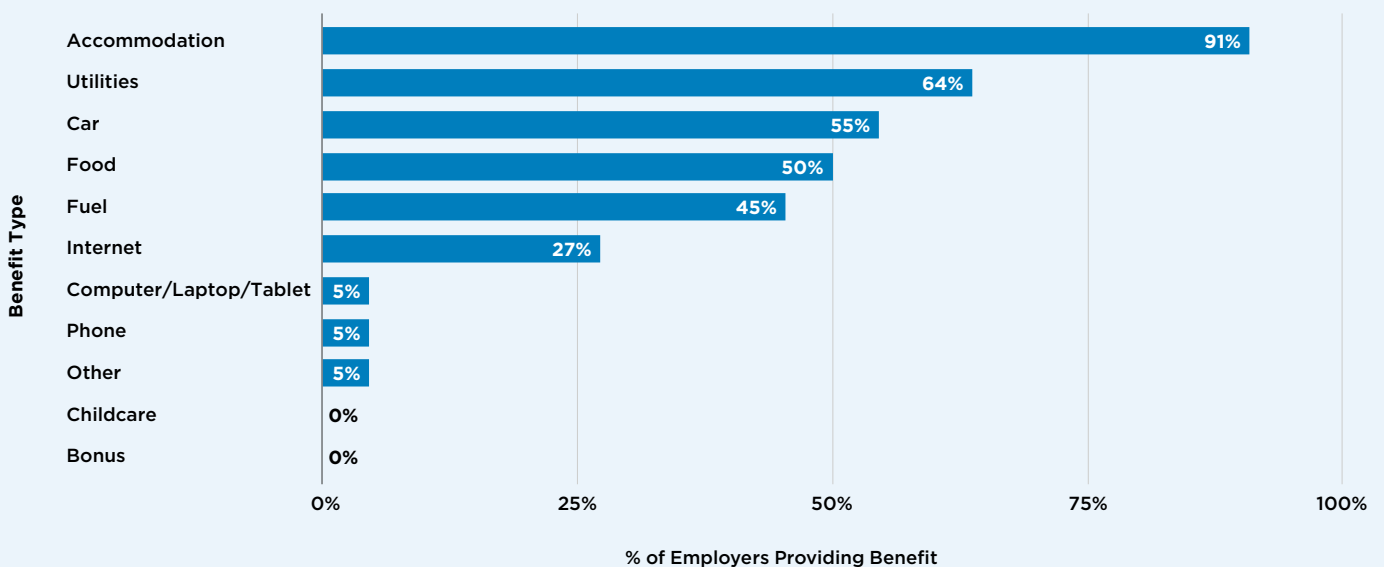


Figure 7. Benefits provided to Truck Drivers, N=22

RESULTS OVERVIEW

New South Wales

Findings

In NSW, median salaries generally reflected the level of responsibility associated with each role, with Farm Workers earning a median salary of \$85,000 and Farm Managers earning the highest median salary at \$105,000. Benefit value followed a similar pattern, with a median benefit value of \$15,000 for Farm Workers and \$30,000 for Farm Managers. Truck Drivers reported a lower median benefit value of \$9,250; however, due to the small sample size for this group, this figure should be interpreted with caution.

Farm Managers were most likely to receive additional benefits (88%), followed closely by Senior Farm Workers (84%) and Farm Workers (82%). Only 21% of Truck Drivers received any form of benefit, reflecting the limitations of the sample size. Accommodation was the most commonly provided benefit across all roles. Notably, Farm Managers were more likely than other roles to receive a vehicle, with 86% reporting this benefit.

Summary of Results

Role	Median Salary (\$)	Median Benefit (\$)
Farm Manager	\$105,000	\$30,000
Senior Farm Worker	\$85,000	\$19,750
Farm Worker	\$75,000	\$15,000
Truck Driver	\$89,000	\$9,250

Table 19. Salary and Benefits Summary for NSW.

Role	Farm Manager N=25	Senior Farm Worker N=43	Farm Worker N=84
Benefit Provided (%)	88%	84%	82%

Table 20. Percentage of roles receiving benefits.

RESULTS OVERVIEW

Summary of Results (continued)

Benefit Type	Farm Manager N=22	Senior Farm Worker N=36	Farm Worker N=69
Accommodation	91%	86%	81%
Food	27%	25%	20%
Utilities	68%	69%	48%
Car	86%	58%	48%
Fuel	68%	56%	49%
Phone	64%	22%	14%
Computer/Laptop/Tablet	41%	8%	4%
Internet	50%	31%	13%
Childcare	9%	8%	3%
Bonus	14%	3%	7%
Other	32%	17%	20%

Table 21. Types and Percentage of Benefits Provided to Employees.

RESULTS OVERVIEW

Western Australia

Findings

In WA, median salaries increased in line with role seniority and responsibility, ranging from \$91,300 for Farm Workers to \$130,000 for Farm Managers. While Farm Workers, Senior Farm Workers, and Truck Drivers reported similar median value of benefits (between \$15,000 and \$16,500), Farm Managers received a higher median benefit value of \$30,000.

Notably, all Farm Managers received some form of benefit, while the vast majority of Senior Farm Workers (96%) and Farm Workers (91%) also received benefits. The most commonly provided benefits for Farm Managers included fuel (97%), accommodation (90%), and a vehicle (90%). Accommodation was the most common benefit across all roles.

Summary of Results

Role	Median Salary (\$)	Median Benefit (\$)
Farm Manager	\$130,000	\$30,000
Senior Farm Worker	\$100,000	\$16,500
Farm Worker	\$91,300	\$15,000
Truck Driver	\$102,500	\$16,000

Table 22. Salary and Benefits Summary for WA.

Role	Farm Manager N=30	Senior Farm Worker N=52	Farm Worker N=140	Truck Driver N=32
Benefit Provided (%)	100%	96%	91%	69%

Table 23. Percentage of roles receiving benefits.

RESULTS OVERVIEW

Summary of Results (continued)

Benefit Type	Farm Manager N=30	Senior Farm Worker N=50	Farm Worker N=127	Truck Driver N=22
Accommodation	90%	82%	91%	91%
Food	23%	46%	46%	50%
Utilities	87%	70%	60%	64%
Car	80%	60%	59%	55%
Fuel	97%	58%	60%	45%
Phone	33%	10%	14%	5%
Computer/Laptop/Tablet	47%	18%	9%	5%
Internet	47%	16%	17%	27%
Childcare	3%	0%	1%	0%
Bonus	3%	0%	0%	0%
Other	23%	6%	9%	5%

Table 24. Types and Percent of Benefits Provided to Employees..

CONCLUSION

This report highlights the varied nature of remuneration practices within the grains industry. On-farm employment arrangements often comprise a combination of salary and benefits, such as accommodation, fuel, vehicles, and utilities. This reflects the realities of rural and regional employment, where work and living arrangements are often closely connected.

This report shares data from growers in WA and NSW to help build a clearer picture of remuneration practices across the industry.

By outlining median salaries, benefit value, and how often benefits are offered for key on-farm roles, it aims to support growers in reviewing and refining their employment offerings.

In an environment where workforce shortages remain a key challenge, competitive and well-structured remuneration is essential for attracting and retaining staff.



Sorghum Harvest - Janet Dampney (NSW)

2. APPENDIX

2.1. About the Study

2.1.1. Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

1. To survey growers across NSW and WA.
2. To benchmark salary and benefits for select on-farm roles.
3. To determine the distribution of salary across select on-farm roles.
4. To inform a report for growers in NSW and WA that benchmarks current remuneration practices in their state.

2.1.2. Sample

The survey was open to NSW and WA growers online for a three-week period. To participate, respondents needed to meet the following criteria:

- Be a grain grower, regardless of GrainGrowers membership status
- Be located in NSW or WA
- Employ at least one permanent or casual/seasonal staff member in one of the four specified roles.

2.1.3. Design

Kynetec, a market research firm, was commissioned to conduct a 10-minute online survey to collect data on salary (excluding superannuation), the types of additional benefits provided, and the total value of those benefits. The aim was to present a complete picture of remuneration packages used to attract key roles in grain farming enterprises.

The survey focused on four roles: Farm Manager, Senior Farm Worker, Farm Worker, and Truck Driver. Respondents could provide data for multiple employees across any combination of these roles. For example, a respondent might report on one Farm Manager and two Farm Workers. Positions did not need to be full-time to be included.

2.1.4. Incentive

As an incentive to complete the survey, respondents were offered a copy of the final report and entry into a draw to win a share of e-gift cards worth a total of \$1000.

2.1.5. Survey Boundaries

The survey did not collect data on several key factors that can influence individual remuneration, such as enterprise proximity to major population centres, farm size and type, employee experience, or the scope of responsibility (e.g., managing staff, budgets, compliance, and operations). Remuneration may also be higher for roles based in remote or regional areas, for those with formal qualifications or more years of experience, and for positions with strategic decision-making authority. As such, this report should be used as a general guide, with consideration given to these limitations and the broader context in which remuneration decisions are made.

2.1.6. Survey Responses and Role Results

A total of 167 survey responses were recorded, including 67 from NSW and 100 from WA. The survey design allowed respondents to report on each position up to twice, enabling those who employed multiple people in the same role to provide more than one result. For example, a respondent could submit information on two different Farm Workers. This approach ensured the survey captured data on multiple employees in the same role. A summary of the total number of responses by role and state is provided below.

NSW

Role	Position Results for each Role N=152
Farm Manager	25
Senior Farm Worker	43
Farm Worker	84

Table 25. Total number of positions reported on in NSW.

WA

Role	Position Results for each Role N=254
Farm Manager	30
Senior Farm Worker	52
Farm Worker	140
Truck Driver	32

Table 26. Total number of positions reported on in WA.

2.1.7. Farm Profile Summary

Information was gathered on the type and scale of each respondents' farming operation.

ON-FARM INCOME DERIVED FROM GRAIN

	NSW	WA
% income from grain	% of Respondents N=67	% of Respondents N=100
75 - 100%	64	85
50 - 74%	27	13
26 - 49%	6	2
0 - 25%	3	0

Table 27. % of income derived from grain by survey respondents.

Most survey respondents in NSW and WA derived over 75% of their income from grain. This was reported by 85% of WA respondents and 64% of NSW respondents.

FARM SIZE

	NSW	WA
Arable Area (ha)	% of Respondents N=67	% of Respondents N=100
0-2,000	27	7
2,001-3,500 ha	25	10
3,501 - 6,000 ha	22	31
6,001 - 8,000 ha	7	23
8,001 - 10,000 ha	9	6
10,001 + ha	9	23

Table 28. Distribution of farm size by arable area by survey respondents.

Farm sizes varied significantly between states, with WA respondents generally operating larger properties than those in NSW. A total of 75% of NSW respondents operated farms between 0–6,000 ha of farm size by arable area. In contrast, only 48% of WA respondents fell within this size range, while 23% reported managing farms exceeding 10,000 hectares in arable area.

POSITIONS EMPLOYED ON FARM

	NSW	WA
Position	% of Respondents N=67	% of Respondents N=100
Farm Worker	78	84
Senior Farm Worker	46	36
Truck Driver	22	24
Farm Manager	28	23

Table 29. % of position types employed by survey respondents.

Most respondents employed a Farm Worker, with 78% in NSW and 84% in WA. Senior Farm Workers were the next most commonly employed, 46% by NSW respondents and 36% in WA. While 22% of NSW respondents employed Truck Drivers, these roles were largely seasonal, so results were excluded from the report.

2.2. Role Descriptions

Farm Manager

Grain Farm Managers lead the overall operation of the farm, overseeing crop production and planning seasonal activities. They manage farm records, finances, and budgets, while supervising staff and coordinating contractors to carry out key tasks across the business.

Senior Farm Worker

Senior Farm Workers work independently, drawing on their experience and technical knowledge to manage tasks safely and efficiently. They often supervise junior workers and ensure work is completed to a high standard. With additional certifications, such as WHS and chemical handling, they are equipped to troubleshoot mechanical and operational issues in the field without supervision.

Farm Worker

Farm Workers carry out a variety of routine tasks on grain farms, working supervised or semi-supervised. They support key operations such as seeding and harvest, and perform regular duties like maintaining machinery and farm infrastructure.

Truck Driver

Truck Drivers operate heavy transport vehicles to move inputs and supplies on and off the farm. They play a key role during harvest, driving chaser bins alongside harvesters and transporting grain to bulk handling facilities or markets. Some farms may contract these services to external providers, especially during peak periods.






Stay in touch with GrainGrowers

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