

Dear Participant

We have the pleasure of officially inviting you to the UK next season, to take employment on a HOPS registered farm, under the **Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS)**.

Your **Home Office SAWS Workcard** is enclosed. The information on the Workcard includes: your name, nationality and birth date; the name of the HOPS registered farm, and the period of time you are to work there.

When you come to the United Kingdom you **MUST BRING:-**


- Passport
- Workcard
- 2 copies of your Education Evidence or Highest Qualification achieved to date
- 2 copies of your Medical Questionnaire
- The booklet "Seasonal Employment Information for Applicants" with supplementary letter, sent with your application form.
- All the enclosed papers.

The farm where you are to work is one of the HOPS registered farms, of which the British Home Office holds details. The Employer already has details of your name, address, date of birth, passport number etc.

- If your In-Country Representative is not going to contact the farm for you, please now write/email the farmer confirming that you plan to arrive on the farm within 3 days of the start date shown on your Workcard. The farm address and email address (if there is one) can be found on the pink paper.
- If for any reason your travel plans are delayed please inform your In-Country Representative, the farmer and HOPS of your new expected date of arrival.
- When you arrive at the farm the farmer will ask to see your passport and your Workcard.
- If you decide not to take the job offered to you or are not able to travel to the UK to work, **please inform your In-Country Representative and return the Workcard to your In-Country Representative or to the HOPS office immediately.** You must not give the Workcard to any other person. In addition, HOPS can only consider refunding any fees paid if the Workcard is returned.

We hope that you have a safe journey and enjoy your stay at the farm.

Yours sincerely



CARYN MAY
HOPS Administration Manager

IMPORTANT: Information for Participants working on UK Farms

PLEASE READ THIS NOW, AND THEN BRING THIS PAPER WITH YOU TO THE UK:

PLEASE READ THIS IN CONJUNCTION WITH "SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS SCHEME, INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS 2009" SENT WITH YOUR APPLICATION FORM.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. THE SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS SCHEME WORKCARD

To work in the United Kingdom you **MUST HAVE AN AUTHORISED WORK DOCUMENT**. The SAWS Workcard enclosed is an example of an Authorised Work Document and without this you will not legally be allowed to work in the UK. **DO NOT LOSE** this document. When you arrive at a British port or airport, the Immigration Authorities will check your papers. This will state the name of the farm you will be working at and should be valid for the period stated on your Workcard. Keep the Workcard in a safe place – this is a valuable document and it cannot be easily replaced.

Workcard details

a) Employer

You can only work at the farm named on your Workcard. We are not able to change your Employer now. Do not bring any other person without a HOPS Workcard with you. S/he will not be allowed to stay at the farm, and it may be reported to Work Abuse that they tried to work illegally.

b) Working dates

The dates that you are legally able to work in the UK are shown on your Workcard. You should remain at this farm during the dates shown, unless you receive permission, and documents, from HOPS and / or the Home Office to move to another farm. However, the dates that are printed on the Workcard are not contractual. These are the dates that you are allowed to work in the UK under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme. The dates of work should be agreed with your farmer. **You are expected to stay at the farm until the end date on your Workcard or the work is finished. If you leave early you will not be accepted for a SAWS placement with HOPS in future years. If your placement finishes more than one month early, HOPS will endeavour to find another placement until your Workcard end date.**

The dates on the Workcard are when you are expected to arrive at and leave the farm – these may be subject to change depending on the state of the crops and the weather. **You should aim to arrive at the farm within 3 days either side of the start date and the farm should be advised.** If you arrive too early, there may be no work available until the crop is ready for harvesting. If you are late then you may miss the training for the work. If you are very late the farmer may refuse to take you and ask you to return home.

If the weather has affected the harvesting date of the crop, you will be advised of your new start date. Please arrive within 3 days of the new date.

If you would like a few days holiday within the dates given on your Workcard you should agree the dates with your farmer at least 1 week prior to taking the holiday.

If you are unable to come to the UK, and cancel your Workcard for any reason, please inform your In-Country Representative immediately and return your Workcard to your In-Country Representative or to HOPS and send a letter to your Employer explaining that you are now unable to travel to the UK.

c) Location of the Farm

The name and address of the HOPS farm you will be working at is enclosed (pink paper), together with brief details of how to travel to the farm from London.

2. AT THE FARM

a) Behaviour

We expect all participants to be of good behaviour on and off the farm. We also expect participants to act towards the Employer, his staff, and the other participants at the farm, in an honest and friendly manner. If you cause any problems, **on or off the farm**, or if you do not keep to the farm rules, or UK law, then you will be dismissed by the farmer and asked

to return home and the facts may be reported to the UK Immigration Authorities, Work Abuse and your University (if applicable). In this instance HOPS will be unable to find alternative work for you elsewhere.

b) Workcard and Passport

When you arrive at the farm, your Employer will check your Passport and Workcard and return them to you, after he has taken a photocopy of your passport. However, your Employer may offer to retain your documents for safe keeping. It is your decision whether to do so or not.

c) Farm Facilities

Farms offer accommodation usually in mobile homes or caravans. Sometimes the accommodation is in dormitories, in converted farm buildings, or occasionally in houses. The accommodation has a kitchen (where workers prepare their own food); toilets and showers; and usually a room where the workers can meet. Brief farm details are enclosed with the Workcard - please read these carefully. It is expected that there will be a charge for these facilities, which may be deducted each week from your wages. It should be understood that the living and working conditions are shared and will suit participants who enjoy meeting people and communal living. If you are unhappy with the accommodation on the farm, please discuss this with the farm manager first. If the problem is not resolved please telephone the HOPS office.

PLEASE REMEMBER; YOUR FRIENDS or RELATIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK ON THE FARM, UNLESS THEY ALSO HAVE A WORKCARD FOR THAT FARM.

4. JOB SATISFACTION

It should be emphasised that the interest of the farmer is to harvest his crops. For this reason you are expected to attend for the full period stated on the Workcard, work hard and be prepared to work when and where work is available. If you have a problem on the farm, especially with the work situation, accommodation or pay, please discuss it **first** with the farm manager. If he is unable to help you, then telephone the HOPS office for advice.

Your stay at the farm should not be viewed as a form of holiday. It is work experience and, in most cases, is valuable to your academic studies. If your work does not meet the required standard after you have been trained, particularly if you do not work fast enough to earn the minimum wage, your employment may be terminated and you will be asked to return home. HOPS regrets that full work is not guaranteed. However HOPS will endeavour to find alternative employment in the event of a crop failure.

5. WAGES

You will receive your first wages about 7 days after you start work. Please remember that you may **not** be able to start work as soon as you arrive at the farm if the crop is not ready. You will need to have enough money for food during the first week - you should also remember that food and other items are expensive in the UK.

Farms will have work ranging from just a few hours per week (if the weather is bad) to 5 or 6 full days in a week. Each week may be different, the crop may not be ready, or perhaps it is small, and the weather WILL affect the work in the field. Do **not** expect to work for every daylight hour you are in the UK.

In the UK there are basic wages that every employer must pay to all employees – these rates of pay are determined by the Agricultural Wages Board (England & Wales) [<http://www.defra.gov.uk>]; The Scottish Agricultural Wages Board [<http://www.scotland.gov.uk>] and the Agricultural Wages Orders for Northern Ireland [<http://www.dardni.gov.uk>].

All people working in the UK must be paid a minimum wage. Often your pay will be calculated by the **PIECEWORK** method. On piecework the crop you pick is weighed and you are paid for each kilogram you pick. The harder you work the more you are paid. On this system most participants earn more than the minimum rate per hour, but a few participants find it difficult, even though they try, but some just do not work hard enough. If this happens the farmer may train you again to pick the crop quickly. If after this extra training, you are still too slow to earn the minimum wage and the farmer has no alternative employment, then the farmer has no choice but to terminate your employment. It is often difficult for HOPS to move slow workers to another farm. If alternative work cannot be found, you will be asked to return to your home country. Most participants earn on average £220 - 250 per week after accommodation charges are deducted though some can earn a lot more in peak season if working long hours. Slower workers may only earn £170 per week or maybe less after accommodation deductions. HOPS regrets that full work is not guaranteed for the whole of your stay in the UK, particularly when you first arrive when the crop is sometimes late starting or the weather is bad. At other times there may be too much work and the farmer may want you to work long hours for a period.

Remember the majority of participants earn, on average, well over the minimum hourly rate and find their visit to the UK on the SAWS a very worthwhile and financially rewarding experience - **you can do it too**.

6. SAFE KEEPING OF YOUR WAGES

Do not keep all your money with you, or in your accommodation. In order for your wages and money to be kept safe whilst you are working on a farm in the UK, we strongly recommend that you open a UK bank account. Most of the farms will pay your wages directly into your bank account every week and help you to open the account; however, UK bank regulations mean that you will have to open the account yourself (the farm cannot open the account for you, but they will help you).

In order for you to open an account when you arrive at the farm, you **MUST** bring with you a letter from your University. This letter must confirm the following details:- * Full name * Permanent address * Date of Birth. Alternatively, you can bring an original copy of a statement of your own home bank account – this statement must show:- * Full name * Permanent address OR * Copies of utility bills in your name and showing your full name and permanent address

If you do not bring a letter or copy of a recent bank statement confirming the above details, it will be difficult for you to safely keep your wages whilst you are resident in the UK, as a UK bank will be unable to open an account for you.

We also recommend that you bring with you the precise details of your home bank accounts or the details of your parents' bank account. Your money can then be transferred electronically to the account in your home country before you travel home – this avoids you carrying large amounts of cash when you leave the UK. HOPS advise that all participants open a bank account prior to their departure for the UK. Please ensure that the bank in which you open the account has a SWIFT code.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact HOPS.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY

Your employer has a duty under the law to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, your health, safety and welfare at work. In general your employer's duties include:-

- Making your workplace safe and without risks to health
- Ensuring plant & machinery are safe and that safe systems of work are set and followed
- Ensuring articles and substances are moved, stored and used safely
- Providing adequate welfare facilities
- Giving you the information, instructions, training and supervision necessary for your health and safety.

As an employee, you have legal duties too. They include:-

- Taking reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what you do or do not do
- Co-operating with your employer on health and safety
- Correctly using work items provided by your employer, including personal protective equipment, in accordance with training or instructions
- Not interfering with or misusing anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.
- If you feel that you are placed in an unsafe work environment – raise the issue with your employer and contact HOPS

8. BRITISH INCOME TAX AND NATIONAL INSURANCE *(Paper No. HG09001)*

Foreign students are allowed the same benefits as British students – exemption from income tax on approximately the first £6,035 earned (this figure may change). In order for the farm to operate this, HOPS has sent to them a P38(S) tax form, printed with HOPS details. When you work for this farmer you will usually NOT pay tax, providing you do not earn more than the personal tax allowance, (£6,035 per year). On farms where high earnings are anticipated, tax will be deducted every payday. However, refunds may be available if you have paid too much income tax.

If you are not a full time student you will not be PAYE (Pay As You Earn) exempt and will have to pay PAYE from the day that you start work in the UK.

You will have to pay National Insurance (approximately 11% of your wages)

9. REPATRIATION INSURANCE

All applicants must equip themselves with suitable insurance cover prior to arrival in the UK. HOPS are able to offer cover through the NFU at a cost of £13.50. Most employers require SAWS participants to have the NFU insurance as a condition of employment. A summary of the NFU insurance is attached to the booklet "Seasonal Employment Information to Applicants" sent with the application form.

If you are purchasing insurance in your home country, you **MUST** bring with you a TRANSLATED copy of the policy. Participants arriving with no insurance cover are expected to immediately buy suitable cover for the duration of their stay in the UK, or to immediately leave the HOPS programme and return home.

The basic insurance must provide the following cover:-

- Repatriation to the participants' home country in the case of serious illness or injury and in the case of death the repatriation of the body or ashes. This cover should extend to paying for the door-to-door travel from the UK hospital to the participants home or local hospital.
- In the case of serious illness or injury the repatriation insurance should be activated by a letter from the Consultant Doctor leading the medical treatment in the UK hospital.

- It is strongly recommended that the insurance also provides provision for the participants' Next of Kin (say, 2 members of the immediate family) to travel to the UK in the case of serious illness, injury or a death. This cover should extend to paying for the door-to-door travel to the UK hospital and return door-to-door travel home and the costs of accommodation and living expenses whilst in the UK. It should also cover the provision of the services of an interpreter in the hospital if required.

10. THINGS TO BRING WITH YOU

- Warm Sleeping Bag – British nights can be cold.
- Clothing and footwear suitable for the seasons you plan to be in the UK. See above – don't forget clothing and footwear for work.
- Towel and Washbag.
- Passport - You are advised to take 2 photocopies of your passport (the page showing the passport number and your personal details) and to leave one copy with your next of kin and to have the other with you (kept separately from your passport). This is in case your passport is lost or stolen and will be helpful when getting it replaced.
- SAWS Workcard.
- Travel tickets.
- Money (for the first 2 weeks) – approx £75.00 - £100 Sterling.
- Full details of the repatriation insurance (in the English Language) including the emergency contact number and the full name and address of the company providing this insurance.
- An International Driving Licence is useful particularly for drivers whose licence is printed in a non-European alphabet or is not valid in the UK. It is not possible for overseas nationals to obtain an International Licence in the UK – you must do this at home.
- 2 copies of your pre-Employment Medical Questionnaire.
- Electrical equipment, particularly computers, from home may not be compatible with the British electrical supply. Check before departure. Most simple electrical items (eg hairdryers, radios) can be obtained for around £20 each or less. Your employer will require any items you bring with you or purchase second hand in the UK to undergo a Personal Appliance Test (PAT) in the UK by a certified electrician
- Photographs of people and places at home that are special to you can help ease homesickness and make a room feel like home. A special item from home — a picture or ornament for example — can help you feel at home.
- Favourite books or posters
- Make sure you can carry your own luggage for up to 500 metres. You may have to do this!
- Your carry-on/hand baggage should include enough personal articles to last for your first night in UK (clean underwear, warm jacket, toothbrush, and medication etc.). This is just in case your luggage is delayed in transit.
- DON'T pack fresh food. Your luggage may be destroyed.
- Make sure your luggage is clearly labelled in English.

11. COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If you have any concerns about your work placement, for example, with the work you are undertaking, the wages you are earning, your accommodation or your access to social and cultural facilities, in the first instance, please discuss these with your Supervisor or Farm Manager on the farm you are working on.

If the Farm is unable to resolve your concerns satisfactorily, then the next stage is for you to contact the HOPS office, usually by telephone. We will listen to your concerns and if they cannot be resolved over the telephone, we will then ask for the complaint to be sent to HOPS in writing to the address below. In the case of a wages query, we will ask you to supply copies of wage slips.

Your complaint will be investigated, which may involve contacting the farm/employer. Following the investigation HOPS will contact you with a detailed response to your complaint, confirming the outcome of our investigations and any solutions. We would aim to respond to written complaints within four working days.

If you are not satisfied with the way your complaint was dealt with by the HOPS staff team, then you are invited to detail the nature of your concerns, in writing, to the HOPS General Manager, who will investigate how your complaint was handled.

In undertaking the above process, HOPS personnel will be sensitive to the fact that we may be dealing with people who are often away from home for the first time and will endeavour to adopt a sympathetic and practical response to the concerns raised.

12. TETANUS DISEASE & TUBERCULOSIS

You are advised to have TETANUS immunisation before you leave home. This is because you will be working outside, and in farm fields. It may also be a good idea to have an inoculation for Tuberculosis (TB).

13. ILLEGAL DRUGS

If any illegal drugs - except for medical drugs prescribed by a doctor, or purchased at a pharmacy - are found on you, or in your personal possessions, you may be reported to the British police and the British immigration authorities.

14. MAIL AT THE FARM

Employers will accept letters and parcels from your home, whilst you are on the farm.

15. ENTRY PERMIT RESTRICTIONS

You can take part in the scheme for a maximum of six months. This means that although you are able to remain resident in the UK, you will not be allowed to work without an Authorised Work Document. Under the SAWS this carries a maximum work period of 6 months if work is available for this period. You may return home after 6 months, or remain in the UK. If you remain in the UK you will not be permitted to work unless you obtain another Authorised Work Document.

16. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CARD – Full time students only

As you are responsible for arranging and paying for your own travel, we suggest you get an International Students Card (if applicable) before you leave your home country. Students with this card can often obtain a reduction in travel costs from travel/tour/bus/train companies.

17. HOW TO CONTACT HOPS

HOPS Labour Solutions
YFC Centre
Stoneleigh Park
Kenilworth
Warwickshire CV8 2LG

Tel: 02476 857206
Fax: 02476 857205

Email: hopsqb@nfyfc.org.uk
Website: www.hopsqb.org.uk

GLA License: HOPS0001

Office hours: Monday to Thursday 9.00 am – 5.00 pm
Friday 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Guidance Note for 2009 HOPS Applicants (HG09001)

Income Tax and National Insurance Contributions

All employees in the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) normally have to pay two deductions from their earnings before wages are paid to them. These two deductions are known as Income Tax (PAYE) and National Insurance Contributions (NIC's). NIC's are a payment for certain Social Security benefits in the UK. HMRC, the UK government tax collector, administers the collection of Income Tax and National Insurance.

Employers have a legal responsibility to deduct any Income Tax and NIC's due from employees to pay to HMRC. Employers are liable to pay the tax and NIC's due from employees if they fail to make the proper deductions from employees.

Income Tax deducted by employers - also known as PAYE (Pay As You Earn)

Income tax will be deducted from wages at the rate of 20% of all earnings over the weekly portion of the annual tax free personal allowance. **The annual tax free personal allowance is £6035 (£116.06/week) for 2008/09 and £6475 (£124.52/week) for 2009/10.** The tax year runs from April 6th to April 5th in the following year.

If the period of employment is across two tax years, the participant will have the benefit of the tax free personal allowance for each tax year.

If a participant comes to work in the UK more than once in a tax year, the earnings are added together to set against the annual tax free personal allowance for that year. In this case if a P45 was issued at the end of the first employment it should be brought back to give to the next employer on return to the UK.

If Income Tax is deducted from wages, the employer has to issue a P45 tax form to the participant when the employment ends. The P45 form records totals of the wages paid and Income Tax deducted.

If the participant is going to another farm, parts 2 & 3 of the P45 must be given to the new employer. When the employment ends at the second farm a new P45 will be issued.

If the participant is returning to their home country, the participant may ask the local tax office for tax form P85(S) (or they may ask the employer to get one for them). This form should be completed by the participant and forwarded to the tax office with parts 2 & 3 of the P45. The employer should know the address of the tax office they deal with and may assist the participant to complete the simple form. After receipt of the forms, HMRC will decide if too much tax has been paid and if a refund is due, payment will be made direct to the participant in their home country by UK sterling cheque or to a bank account nominated by the participant.

Special arrangements for students

If you are a full time student and can supply genuine education evidence in support of this to the employer, the employer may ask you to fill in and sign a P38(S) tax form. This form, when completed, may allow the employer **not** to deduct Income Tax from wages until the whole annual tax-free personal allowance has been earned. The majority of students earnings do not exceed the personal allowance during their period of employment in the UK and in that case are not required to pay any Income Tax.

Once students UK earnings reach the annual personal allowance, Income Tax has to be deducted by the employer from **all** earnings thereafter. The tax deducted will currently be 20% of earnings.

If an employer expects a student to earn more than the personal allowance during the employment, the employer should put the student on the standard PAYE tax system deducting tax each payday on earnings over the weekly allowance.

National Insurance Contributions (NIC's)

All employed persons in the UK normally have Class 1 NIC's of 11% of any earnings over the earnings threshold deducted from wages to pay to HMRC. The employer also pays an additional sum to HMRC equal to 12.8% of the employee's earnings over the earnings threshold. **The earnings threshold is £105/week for 2008/09 and £110/week for 2009/10.**

Where a worker is an EU national and arrives in the UK to work for a UK employer, they and their UK employer will normally pay Class 1 NIC's.

On some farms, some workers may not have NIC's deducted from wages depending on certain circumstances. This may be confusing but **HOPS participants must always expect to have NIC's deducted from wages.**

Any person liable to make National Insurance Contributions must apply for a National Insurance (NI) number. An application must be made in person at the nearest JobCentre Plus in the UK. There will be an interview and the applicant must have proof of identification with them. Most employers will be happy to assist their employee to obtain their NI number.

Once the NI number has been obtained it should be given to every employer you work for and used again whenever you return to the UK to work.

Participants who cannot obtain satisfactory help or advice on Income Tax and NIC's from their employer should contact the HOPS office for help.

December 2008 (DS)