



# FRUIT PICKING IN AUSTRALIA

*Guide for all Australian states*

A guide to help you find where (towns) and when (time of the year) the farmers are picking their fruit and vegetable crops

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## Overview

### Summary of Fruit Picking

In Australia, the fruit picking season peaks during summer, between the months of December and May. Due to different weather patterns, regions such as Manjimup, Pemberton, and Bunbury in Western Australia hold their apple harvest a bit later between March and May.

In general, becoming a fruit picker requires no experience and most farms and orchards are eager to hire physically fit persons, but be aware it is hard labour. Most fruit pickers start early in the morning and finish before the peak of the summer sunshine later in the afternoon. Therefore, being physically fit and having good stamina helps, and here are some other essentials:

- Sunglasses - the sun can be very bright
- Gloves - protection from spikes, thorns
- Sunscreen - protection from the sun
- Hat - protect your head
- Hardy boots/shoes - protection from snakes and bull ants
- Big drink container - it's thirsty work

Payment depends on a number of issues, such as how good the harvest is, and what the particular fruit or produce is. For example, some land owners prefer to pay pickers by the hour (anything above \$10 an hour is good), such as vineyards and grape growers, because they want the fruit to remain in pristine condition. Bruising is not an option. Most places, however, pay per bucket, bin or box filled rather than by the hour.

There are many different fruits and vegetables grown in Australia (commonly referred to as just 'fruit' by farmers and pickers). They fall into two fruit picking categories:

<b>Ground fruit</b>	Fruit grows on or under the ground. This type of picking can be back breaking as it involves continual bending over to pick the fruit.
<b>Tree fruit</b>	Fruit is picked from the branches of a tree or plant. Often involves the use of ladders to pick



fruit or use of a mechanical boom to pick fruit.

The following table shows what fruits are ground or tree fruits:

<b>Ground Fruit or vegetables</b>	Asparagus, Barley, Beans, Berries, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicums, Cauliflower, Cucumber, Corn, Cotton, Chillies, Egg plant, Grapes, Honeydew, Lettuce, Oats, Onions, Potatoes, Pumpkins, Rock melons, Strawberries, Sugarcane, Tobacco, Watermelons, Wheat, Wild flowers, Zucchini
<b>Tree fruits</b>	Avocado, Apricots, Apples, Bananas, Cherries, Lemons, Macadamia nuts, Mandarins, Mangos, Nectarines, Oranges, Pears, Peaches, Plums,

There are various methods used to pick fruit by the farmers:

<b>Size picking</b>	The farmer is looking to pick a particular size of fruit. Usually, picking fruit by size is conducted at the start of the season.
<b>Colour picking</b>	Sometimes, a certain coloured fruit is required by retailers. e.g. green or red tomatoes or capsicums
<b>Strip picking</b>	Usually involves removing all the fruit or vegetables from the plant.

### What are the Wages for Fruit Picking

The money that can be earned by a fruit picker depends on the energy and enthusiasm of the fruit picker. You will either be paid an hourly rate (wages) or paid for the amount of fruit you pick (contract work)

<b>Wages</b>	You will be paid an hourly rate to pick fruit. Wages are based on the Australia Standard wage rate for casual farm workers
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**Contract** Based on the amount of fruit picked by individual pickers. Usually involves collecting fruit in 'buckets' (or bins) and recording the number of buckets picked each day. You determine the hours worked based on the number of buckets you wish to pick.

If you are a good picker, contract work is usually the best way to make a good casual wage !

### **Free Listing for Employers**

If you are an employer in the fruit industry, contact us at [sales@coastshop.com.au](mailto:sales@coastshop.com.au) for a free listing in our Casual Jobs in Australia Guide.

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## Fruit Picking in NSW

### Step 1 - Find a Town and Fruit Picking Time

Choose a town to see what fruit is grown in that town/region. Then, check the time of the year when fruit picking casual jobs are available for that town/region.

Town	Picking Months / Crop
<a href="#">Barham</a>	December-February - Oranges, Tomatoes
<a href="#">Bathurst</a>	January-February - Peaches, Nectarines
<a href="#">Batlow</a>	March to May - apples June to November - pruning October to April - stone fruit
<a href="#">Bilpin</a>	December-April - Apples, Stonefruit
<a href="#">Bourke</a>	January to May - melons April to May – cotton picking April to May - cotton ginning May to June - grape pruning May to September - citrus picking November to January - cotton chipping November to January - grape picking December to February - citrus thinning
<a href="#">Buronga</a>	January to May - grape picking May to January - citrus picking May to February - vegetables May to September - grape pruning September to January - asparagus
<a href="#">Coffs Harbour</a>	December-August, October-November - Bananas, Berries
<a href="#">Cowra</a>	September-December - Asparagus
<a href="#">Dareton</a>	January to May - grape picking May to January - citrus picking May to February - vegetables May to September - grape pruning September to January - asparagus
<a href="#">Dubbo</a>	April to May - cotton picking / cotton ginning October to December - grain harvest November to January - cotton chipping (at