

On behalf of the Western Australian Asparagus Growers' Association:-

We would like to make a submission to the Government:

Please rethink about raising the Tax threshold for backpackers in the New Year, this will be very detrimental to our Asparagus industry, as we rely heavily on overseas backpackers to do the picking and packing of our vegetables.

There must be a better way to sort out this issue. We believe that we have seen a drop off in enquiries already even though it is only just the start of the Asparagus season.

Points we would like considered are:

The majority of backpackers use all their money in the community in which they reside whilst working. We are proud to employ people who are an asset to the economic bottom line of our community.

We have a great relationship with local backpacker accommodations and this works for us in their vetting applicants and our being able to source labour through their bookings. We both benefit in that they have more nights filled on their books and we have a more stable workforce.

The benefits to Australia of having these young people from all over the world gaining an appreciation for the excellent conditions and rates of pay we have in this country is good promotion for the whole of Australia.

There is a lack of thinking when it comes to paying superannuation to these workers. They build up Super while working and only get access to it when they leave the country. Australia is missing out on this money being invested in the community. If we could pay this in the wage instead of into super we could be benefiting the whole of Australia.

Sheelagh Marshall

Secretary WAAGA

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