

EMPLOYMENT AT A BARANYA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMPANY

Brigitta ZSÓTÉR

***Abstract:** Analyzing the recruitment and selection practice in the case of the surveyed Baranya County agricultural company, it can be stated that the jobs are rarely advertised “publicly”, instead relying on acquaintances, current and former employees and investing little energy in finding the right workforce. When employing a larger workforce, they also use the services of a temporary employment agency. The company, like other agricultural companies in the country, tries to mechanize as many processes as possible in order to eliminate the shortage of agricultural labor and inadequate labor.*

***Keywords:** agricultural companies, recruitment and selection practice, employees*

1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of the investigation is a baranya county agricultural company, which has been operating since 1998. The Ltd., which consists of nearly 250 hectares of arable land and 89 cows and 35 pigs, employs a total of 32 permanent workers and, depending on the size of the work to be performed, occasionally 6-26 people. As in other areas of the labor market, many people and professionals have gone abroad and their shortages have left a large gap in the labor market. Due to the changed labor market situation, as in many other economies, efforts are being made to mechanize the business, which not only saves labor but also produces it more efficiently.

2. RECRUITMENT - THEORY, METHODS

Recruitment and selection is a critical point in human resource management, as only the right amount and composition of manpower can implement the strategies and plans developed by organizations. We can read

several corporate examples in Keczer's 2004 work. In case of a bad decision, not only that the task will not be performed satisfactorily or not at all, but also great damage can occur in the economy and the environment (Gál, Szabó 2017). By creating an appropriate set of employees, the company can assure itself that the tasks will be performed adequately. It is also worthwhile to contact universities, because graduates may also be interested in work (Kis et al., 2019) in agricultural enterprises or possibly in agricultural administration (Nagy et al. 2008).

Agricultural workers are not homogeneous, as they differ in their age, nationality, abilities, work habits, attitudes, personality, ambitions and performance. In the growing season of vegetable and fruit production and harvesting, the sector could absorb up to 50-80 thousand people for labor-intensive tasks. Examples of such areas are the cultivation and harvesting of tomatoes, cucumbers and especially some fruits such as apples, pears, peaches, strawberries and raspberries. Although no skills are required to do the job, recruiting is not easy as workers have the wrong attitude to work. Several studies have shown that the performance of the most productive employee is four times that of the least productive employee. In the same way, each farm unit is different in organization, management, and labor requirements. It can therefore be said that recruitment and selection in agriculture is a creative and planned task. Farms need a well-designed recruitment and selection process in order to reduce the use of inadequate labor.

Although each case is individual, following these steps will help you choose the right workforce for your economy:

- identify farming and workplace needs
- development of the circle of applicants
- evaluate potential employees
- select the right employees
- apply the new workforce.

The identification of needs (Step 1) should be based primarily on the reason for the vacancy, which may be:

- when employees leave the farm,
- as the economy grows - the increased work cannot be carried out by current employees or new units are formed on the farm,
- during temporary vacancy - diseases, childbirth
- As a result of seasonality, which is inherent in agriculture, and thus the size of farms "pulsates", ie it expands flexibly and then decreases, it slows down with the end of the seasonal task.

For the reasons mentioned above, it can be decided whether the farm needs a permanent, casual or part-time employee.

The next step is to analyze the job, which will provide an answer to the physical and intellectual requirements of the job for which the economy wants to employ a new workforce, ie what skills, knowledge and experience are needed and essential to do the job. Some jobs may require strong physical fitness and endurance, while others require the right expertise to perform professionally. All of these job characteristics need to be articulated in order to select the right workforce.

The main goal of recruitment is to attract a sufficient number of suitable candidates (Nagy 2019) from whom the economy will be able to select the right one, and this requires a good recruitment strategy. The economy has to decide whether it is necessary to employ new labor for the vacancy, or whether it can solve the task with existing labor, such as overtime. If a decision is made to hire someone from outside, a strategy for outsourcing should be chosen. A little market research can help to shape this, and after exploring and analyzing the recruitment strategies, recruitment strengths and weaknesses of other farms, you can better establish your own recruitment strategy for that group of workers. Furthermore, before determining the method of recruitment, the following factors that may affect the success of the recruitment should be considered: the type of work, the labor market situation, the remuneration system and the opinions about the farm (i.e. the image of the farm). For example, an economy with a bad reputation needs to make a much greater effort to attract applicants than an economy that is known to treat its employees well, meet its pay obligations on time, value and value good workers, and so on.

According to a research, the most successful recruitment tool in agriculture is the so-called word of mouth, i.e. the rumor and recommendation of existing / former employees. Both have advantages and disadvantages. In the case of rumors, the ad may not reach the most appropriate people, while in the case of referrals, employees can easily become “lawyers” for potential employees. Recruitment can be done with the help of current and former employees, employment agencies, schools and local newspapers, and radio and television should not be forgotten as potential media. Unfortunately, we often see in the newspapers an agricultural job advertisement that reads as much as "I'm looking for a farmer for goods, providing accommodation."

There are several problems with such advertisements, they lack the job description, the time and place of work. These job postings will certainly not be “tempting” for potential employees. A good job advertisement

should include the following elements: the name of the position, the tasks involved, the qualifications, experience, ability to do the job; the essential elements of the remuneration package and how to apply. There are also employment agencies that deal with the mediation or temporary employment of seasonal workers, so their help can be used.

Since for a long time, and even today, many people consider agricultural work to be an unpleasant and undesirable job, it must be made attractive. It lives up to the false myth that agricultural work cannot be as attractive as other non-agricultural work. Many people love these jobs because they can work with animals and see a more familiar and caring job on smaller farms. The various bonuses, competing pay all contribute to this. The so-called “wanderers” or “walkers-in” can also be excellent sources of potential employees who can look for a job at a time when the economy is not in need of new labor. The details of these people need to be recorded (or an application form filled in with them) as there is often an urgent need for staff, and in such cases those who applied when they were not needed can be contacted.

3. RESULTS OF OUR OWV RESEARCH

At the company I have chosen as the subject of my analysis, we can state that word of mouth and employee recommendations are preferred among the recruitment tools. It is interesting to note that in some cases, if they are looking for a permanent person for a more specialized field, or are suddenly looking for a lot of people for physical work, other methods are used, namely village TV and a temporary employment business. Temporary employment is a special form of seeking a way out of the constraints of a traditional employment relationship, where the classical employer rights associated with employment in a subordinate are separated from a portion of the obligations that fall on another party. The basic idea fits well with the process of “escape from the scope of labor law”, as the employment of another employer is used without establishing a direct employment relationship (Bankó, 2008.) In practice, this means that the company only needs basic needs, requires any training, expertise, etc.)

It should be noted that not all potential employees have the necessary knowledge about the work to be done on the farms, so they should be evaluated and ranked based on the expectations of the job description developed in the first step. The method of assessment depends on the profile of the work, so for example, in the case of more complex work that requires several skills, several methods must be used, Figure 1 shows these:

Table 1: Possible evaluation methods in agriculture

Skills / knowledge / abilities	Test	Interview	Deployment	Check recommendations
Operation of tractors	X		O	
Equipment control / calibration	X			
Equipment maintenance	X	O	X	
Use of tools (disc, plow)	X	O		
Control of weeds, pests, diseases	X	O		
Animal care	X	O		
Leadership skills, managing the work of others	O	X	O	X
Qualification of the workforce	O	X		

Source: My edit

Note: X denotes the primary methods, while O denotes the secondary methods for assessing skills, knowledge, abilities.

For periodic and seasonal work, deployment (testing while working) may be the most appropriate choice for the applicant to demonstrate their mechanical skills. The owner of the company uses a one- or two-week probationary period when evaluating the workforce, as it is during this time that it becomes clear whether or not the person is fit for the job. In the case of a managerial position, problem-solving skills and management skills can be assessed with the help of work simulation. In this case, for example, the following questions may be asked: “How would you identify powdery mildew on the plant and what would you do if it appeared?”; or “How long does it take between spraying and harvesting / watering?”. Many decisions have been written about managerial decision-making (Hampel 2009), (Méhes 2019). The owner of the company admits that for permanent jobs it is important to ask the previous employer how he saw his employee. Regardless of the answer - unless there is some ethical thing, theft, etc. due to being fired at his / her previous job - he / she always invites the candidate for an interview, but pays close attention or asks about the errors and problems that caused the interviewee to come from the previous job. However, in a personal interview, always ask the prospective employee at least three test questions.

Once all applicants have been evaluated, a decision must be made as to who will be selected. Of course, if none of the candidates meet the criteria, re-recruitment must be applied, or someone may be recruited on a temporary basis, letting them know that they are being recruited on a temporary basis until they decide, during the probationary period, whether they are suitable for the job. At the company, one of the most basic criteria is the behavior of the candidates during the selection process; I mean, to be reliable, not to be an alcoholic, and not to have a criminal record, I would like to add that this stems from the familial nature of the farms. The family usually lives in or near the place of work (especially in the case of animal husbandry), so it does not matter to the farms how moral a person is employed. Qualification is unfortunately the least important factor in making a decision in certain jobs. For example, when a company hires seasonal workers from a temporary employment agency, the company does not consider whether it has any special or secondary education at all, as in this case almost only the amount of “diligent, skillful” hands counts, such as at harvest.

It is advisable for the selected potential employee to submit the offer live or by telephone, which summarizes the conditions of employment. Once the employee has accepted the offer, the employment contract has yet to be concluded. In any form (oral or written), the agreement should include a description of work and pay, a work schedule, and other important information.

4. SUMMARY

Analyzing the recruitment and selection practices for a given company, it can be seen that jobs are rarely advertised “publicly”, instead relying on acquaintances, current and former employees, and investing little energy in finding the right workforce. When employing a larger workforce, they also use the services of a temporary employment agency. The enterprise tries to mechanize as many processes as possible in order to eliminate the shortage of agricultural labor and the inadequate labor force, just like other agricultural enterprises in the country (Kis, Gál 2012). The effects of this would be worth examining later (Keczer 2021). Thinking further, the impact of the coronavirus crisis could also be researched (Poór et al. 2020) not only in agriculture but also in tourism (Sava 2012a) and in relation to tourism developments (Sava 2012b).

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NOTES ON THE AUTHOR

Brigitta ZSÓTÉR (Dr. habil. PhD) economist, associate professor; University of Szeged, Faculty of Engineering, Department of Engineering Management and Economics, Mars ter 7. 6724 Szeged, Hungary; phone: +36 62 546 569; email: zsoterb@mk.u-szeged.hu.