Meat Inspection Training for University Students

Sharon Fitzgerald - MINTRAC
Providing highly-valued education and training products and services to the Australian meat industry
The Problem

- Critical shortage of meat inspectors in Victoria
- High cost of training for employers
- Ageing population of the meat inspection workforce
- Demand for innovative skills and critical thinking
What is a meat inspector?

- Perception:
  - Messy
  - Repetitive
  - Not many career prospects
  - Unpopular

- Reality:
  - Yes, messy
  - Must be qualified
  - Interesting (esp. if you like diseases)
  - Increasing expectations re diagnosing conditions and providing feedback
  - Problem solving
  - High pressure environment
  - Career pathways - QA
University Graduates in 1970

An era when men’s fashions were flattering and 2% of the overall population had degrees. In the regions that figure was closer to 1%.

There were a lot of smart guys standing on the slaughterfloor.
University Graduates in 2019

An era when men’s fashions were even more flattering and 38% of the 25-34 population have degrees.

In the regions that figure is closer to 20%.
The Solution

MINTRAC

University + RTO

Students
- Critical thinking
- Limited practical knowledge/skills

Training
- Certificate III Meat Processing (Meat Safety)

Work ready graduates
- Critical thinking skills
- Practical skills and knowledge
• Meets employment shortfall
• No cost to the employer for training
  • provide environment for practical experience only
• Graduates typically 20 - 30yrs of age
• Graduates have practical skills and knowledge (VET) + technical knowledge, critical thinking and innovative skills (B. degree).

The Solution
Our Project

Meat Inspection Training for University Students
In partnership with Federation University and South West TAFE
Meat Inspection Training for University Students

Victorian Government

South West TAFE

Meat Inspectors Pty Ltd

MINTRAC

Federation University
How and When?

2017
- August
- December: Collaboration
- December: Funding

2018
- December: Information session
- Student selection
- Orientation week
- February
- Practicum

2019
- December: Graduation!
Where?
Outcomes

Meat Inspection Training for University Students
• Strong partnerships between project partners
• Selection of 15 students from a pool of 20 applications
• Engaging processors across the state in the recruitment of QA and inspection personnel
• Continuation planning for model progression
• Production of work ready graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills to fill positions
• Opened eyes of people who had never considered the opportunities in this industry
Key Successes

Meat Inspection Training for University Students
Key Successes

• 2 students completed to date
• 1 student – partial completion, Statement of Attainment
• Most students have completed placement and a large portion of the theory component
• 2 job offers – one acceptance
• Interest from future students
• Networking dinner held in Ballarat
• Students have indicated interest in moving into industry
• Able to offer choice of species
Lessons Learned

- More females than males
- Providing a virtual experience key to student retention
- Online theory delivery
- Delivery of face-to-face training during university breaks
- Secure and assess placement sites prior to practicum periods
To the Future

- Project completion in December, 2019
- Positive feedback from stakeholders indicating desire to continue the program
- Evaluation plan
- Continuation strategy meeting with the project steering committee in late September
Acknowledgements

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• Students and their families
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