

# Farm Worker interview questions

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## What to expect

Farm worker interviews tend to be practical and direct, often run by the farm owner or manager rather than an HR team. Expect a mix of questions about what you can physically do, what equipment you've handled, and how you cope when the weather or the season doesn't cooperate. Managers also probe hard on reliability and availability, since a no-show during harvest or lambing causes real problems.

- **Practical/process:** Questions about how you actually go about daily tasks like livestock checks or field prep, to gauge whether you know the routine or are guessing.
- **Technical/equipment:** Questions about specific machinery, tools and tickets or licences you hold, since plant operation is a core part of the job.
- **Behavioural:** Questions about past situations, particularly working under weather pressure or picking up extra load during busy periods.
- **Scenario/judgement:** A hypothetical involving animal welfare or competing priorities, to see how you'd make a call on the spot.
- **Safety:** Questions on WHS basics, chemical handling and machinery guarding, since farms carry real injury risk.
- **Logistics/availability:** Questions about hours, early starts and seasonal peaks, to check you can commit to the roster.

Most interviews start informally, often on-site or over the phone, with a rundown of your farm background and what you've physically done before. This moves into equipment and safety questions, then a scenario or two to test judgement. Many employers finish by walking the property with you or setting a short working trial, since they'd rather see you handle a tool or an animal than just hear about it.

## 1. Walk me through your daily routine for checking on livestock.

### Why they ask

The manager wants to know you have an actual method, not just that you've stood near animals before.

### How to structure your answer

Outline your routine step by step, from the first check of the day through to what you're watching for and what you'd do if something looked off.

### Example answer

*"I start with a visual check of the whole mob or herd, looking for anything standing apart, limping or not eating. I check water troughs and feed levels next, then look more closely at any animal that stood out on the first pass. If something's clearly unwell or injured I isolate it if I safely can and report it straight to the supervisor rather than trying to treat it myself. I finish with a quick check of fences and gates on my way past, since a break in the line is often how you end up chasing stock later in the day."*

## 2. What machinery and tools have you operated, and how independently?

### Why they ask

This role involves tractors, chainsaws, fencing tools and harvest equipment, so the interviewer needs to know your actual hands-on level, not just that you've seen the gear used.

### How to structure your answer

Name the specific equipment, say how much supervision you needed, and mention any relevant licence or ticket.

#### Example answer

*"I've driven tractors for slashing and towing, used chainsaws for fence line clearing under supervision, and worked fencing tools like strainers and post drivers on my own once shown the property's setup. I haven't operated a header myself but I've assisted mechanical harvest runs, moving equipment and clearing blockages. I hold a White Card and I'm comfortable picking up equipment quickly once someone runs me through it once."*

### **3. Tell me about a time you had to keep working through bad weather or a tight deadline to get a job finished.**

#### Why they ask

Harvest and lambing don't wait for good conditions, and the employer wants proof you'll push through rather than down tools.

#### How to structure your answer

Use STAR: describe the situation, what you needed to get done, the action you took, and the result.

#### Example answer

*"During a harvest run, rain was forecast to close in within two days and we still had a paddock left to bring in. The task was to get the crop off before the weather hit. I put in longer days alongside the rest of the crew, kept the equipment fed and running, and flagged a minor issue with a header blockage early so it didn't cost us more time later. We got the paddock cleared the afternoon before the rain came in, so nothing was lost to the weather."*

### **4. You're behind on fencing repairs and you notice an animal that looks unwell. What do you do?**

#### Why they ask

This tests whether you'll prioritise animal welfare correctly under time pressure, which matters more to most farm employers than ticking off a task list.

#### How to structure your answer

Explain the decision you'd make, how you'd order your priorities, and how you'd communicate the change of plan to a supervisor.

#### Example answer

*"I'd stop the fencing job and check the animal properly first, since welfare comes before maintenance every time. If it needed more than a basic check, I'd isolate it if safe to do so and call the supervisor straight away to get direction, rather than guessing at treatment myself. Once that was sorted I'd go back to the fencing and let the supervisor know the job had been delayed and why, so nobody's caught out later."*

### **5. What do you know about safety requirements around chemicals or machinery on a farm?**

#### Why they ask

Farms carry real injury and chemical exposure risk, and the interviewer needs to know you'll follow procedure rather than take shortcuts.

#### How to structure your answer

Name the specific standard or certificate you know, what it actually covers, and give an example of applying it.

#### Example answer

*"I've done ChemCert training, so I know the basics of reading labels and safety data sheets, using the right PPE, and keeping withholding periods in mind before stock or workers go back into a treated area. On machinery, I know to keep guards on, do a quick check before starting anything up, and never work alone on anything with a real entanglement risk like a chainsaw or auger without telling someone where I am."*

## **6. This role has long hours during harvest and early starts for livestock. How do you manage that?**

### **Why they ask**

Reliability and genuine availability across peak periods matter as much as skill.

### **How to structure your answer**

Confirm your practical constraints directly and give a real example of managing similar hours before.

### **Example answer**

*"I'm used to early starts, since livestock don't wait for a nine o'clock shift, and I've worked six-day weeks during harvest before without it being a problem. I don't have caring commitments that would clash with peak season, and if I ever did have a genuine conflict I'd raise it well ahead of time rather than leave the farm short-handed on the day."*