

Features

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The Ideal Employee

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At the risk of further dividing an already divided nation, as we began the planning for the 2018 Green Profit Wage & Benefit Survey, we become curious about who is the better employee. Is it your “seasoned” retired workers, who likely come already instilled with some plant knowledge? Or your young and impressionable, fresh-faced high school lot?

There’s no right or wrong, and judging by the wide variety of answers, there’s merit and downsides to both. For example, retirees are more dependable and understand the work environment better. However, they can get stuck in their ways and demand more money. On the flip side, younger employees, while more physically capable of keeping up with a demanding schedule, are inconsistent and can be unreliable. Here’s more from our survey respondents in their own words:

“My seasoned employees have worked with me several years and know what needs to be done. They are not retired, but are young moms who can work the hours that I need. Young high school workers need supervision that I don’t always have time for—they don’t always see the next project or when plants need care now.”—a Michigan retailer

“It depends ... we have a lot of younger customers and have had good luck with younger, high school or college-age students in that regard. Retirees have tended to have a lot of flexibility, so that has worked fairly well.”—a grower-retailer from Illinois

“I like Millennials—they need a little more face time, but (are) easier to inspire.”—a retailer from Ontario

“Depends. Right now, I have a mature 16-year-old who is eager to learn and shows up to work on time. Retirees sometimes work out, but want big money for their ‘experience.’ They can be cocky know-it-alls who disrupt the even flow of business. Age doesn’t matter—they all want to have their cellphones glued to their hands/face!”—a retailer from Pennsylvania

“Young for energy and strength (but not too dependable). Old for stability and knowledge. It takes both.”—a grower-retailer from Kansas

“We hire mostly recent college grads or younger middle-aged moving in to hort as a career change. Teenagers don’t apply and retirees don’t want to work in our fast-paced, high-volume sales environment.”—a grower-retailer from California

“I think it is valuable to have both young energy and older, more knowledgeable employees. I believe they can work well together and learn from each other.”—a retailer from New York

“We’ve had really mixed results. I think it ultimately depends on the person: their drive, knowledge and willingness to learn. It is always great to have experience, but if someone is willing to learn and you can truly shape an employee, that is pretty invaluable, too.”—a grower-retailer in South Dakota

COMPARISON *United States and Canada*

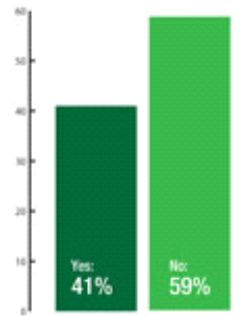
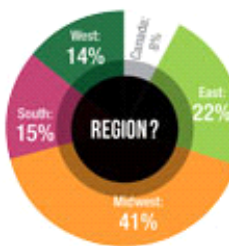
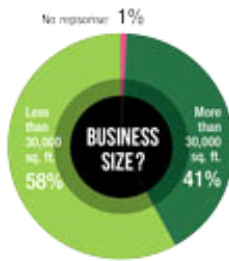
HOURLY EMPLOYEES (per hour)

	United States	Less than \$7.00	*\$7.01-\$8.50	\$8.51-\$10.00	**\$10.01-\$12.50	\$12.51-\$15.00	More than \$15.00
Temp/Seasonal General Labor		1%	18%	40%	33%	6%	2%
Part-time General Labor		0%	13%	39%	33%	11%	3%
Full-time General Labor		0%	1%	9%	41%	41%	8%
Head Cashier		0%	1%	12%	41%	30%	16%
Temporary Cashier		0%	11%	47%	31%	10%	2%
Canada							
Temp/Seasonal General Labor		0%	0%	8%	50%	42%	0%
Part-time General Labor		0%	0%	10%	40%	50%	0%
Full-time General Labor		0%	0%	0%	10%	40%	50%
Head Cashier		0%	0%	0%	0%	70%	30%
Temporary Cashier		0%	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%

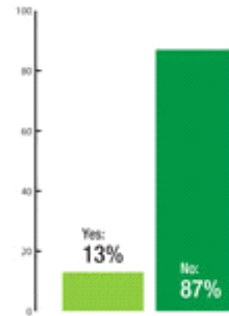
SALARY EMPLOYEES (per year)

	United States	Less than \$20,000	\$20,000-\$30,000	\$30,000-\$40,000	\$40,000-\$50,000	\$50,000-\$60,000	\$60,000-\$70,000	\$70,000-\$80,000	\$80,000-\$90,000	\$90,000-\$100,000	More than \$100,000
Buyer		5%	23%	22%	28%	17%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Floral Designer		8%	35%	38%	8%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Landscape Designer		0%	13%	28%	20%	22%	13%	0%	2%	2%	0%
Landscape Foreman		0%	23%	33%	29%	10%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise Mgr.		8%	30%	38%	8%	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
General Manager		6%	33%	22%	12%	16%	4%	4%	0%	0%	2%
Garden Center Mgr.		2%	8%	22%	18%	27%	7%	4%	2%	4%	6%
Department Mgr.		5%	11%	27%	26%	18%	7%	2%	1%	0%	2%
Owner		2%	17%	31%	29%	15%	3%	2%	2%	0%	0%
		7%	9%	9%	17%	19%	11%	1%	3%	5%	20%
Canada											
Buyer		14%	0%	29%	14%	29%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
Floral Designer		33%	33%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Landscape Designer		0%	0%	20%	40%	20%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Landscape Foreman		20%	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise Mgr.		0%	43%	43%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
General Manager		0%	33%	33%	17%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Garden Center Mgr.		0%	0%	17%	33%	17%	17%	17%	0%	0%	0%
Department Mgr.		0%	11%	11%	22%	33%	0%	22%	0%	0%	0%
Owner		0%	17%	33%	33%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
		18%	0%	9%	0%	9%	27%	9%	9%	9%	9%

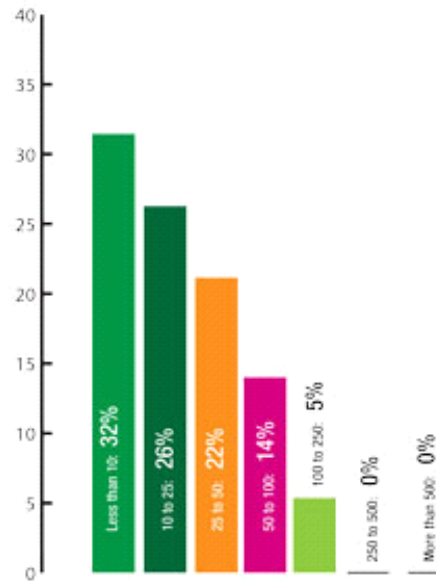
The value between the U.S. and Canadian dollar is about a 25-cent difference. Because of space constraints, we're not showing both. * As of now, the average federal minimum wage in the U.S. is \$7.25—though it's higher in most states, with Arizona, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and Washington at \$10.00 or over. Some states passed legislation to increase the minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour within the next few years. ** The minimum wage in Canada across all provinces averages between \$10.00 and \$13.00 an hour.



LANDSCAPE DIVISION?



MULTIPLE LOCATIONS?



EMPLOYEES AT PEAK SEASON?

Benefits OFFERED

In the U.S., nearly half (47%) of respondents said paid vacation time was the most important benefit they offer, with health care (38%) and a bonus (21%) rounding out the Top 3. In Canada, meanwhile, dental insurance was the most important benefit (according to 54% of respondents), trailed by health care and a bonus (both tied at 46%).

	FULL TIME	PART TIME
401(k)	29%	8%
Pension	1%	1%
Bonus	39%	16%
Health Insurance	44%	6%
Dental Insurance	24%	3%
Life Insurance	18%	1%
Sick Days	35%	14%
Disability	17%	3%
Paid Vacation	64%	16%
Paid Holidays	48%	14%

BREAKDOWN BY *Size*

HOURLY EMPLOYEES (per hour)

Under 30,000 Sq. Ft.	Less than \$7.00	\$7.01- \$8.50	\$8.51- \$10.00	\$10.01- \$12.50	\$12.51- \$15.00	More than \$15.00
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	1%	21%	39%	29%	8%	3%
Part-time General Labor	0%	15%	38%	31%	14%	3%
Full-time General Labor	0%	2%	11%	39%	38%	11%
Head Cashier	0%	2%	15%	32%	37%	16%
Temporary Cashier	0%	8%	46%	30%	16%	0%
Over 30,000 Sq. Ft.						
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	0%	11%	34%	42%	11%	2%
Part-time General Labor	0%	10%	34%	38%	15%	3%
Full-time General Labor	0%	0%	6%	35%	45%	13%
Head Cashier	0%	0%	7%	44%	28%	21%
Temporary Cashier	0%	13%	39%	34%	11%	4%

SALARY EMPLOYEES (per year)

Under 30,000 SQ. FT.	Less than \$20,000	\$20,000- \$30,000	\$30,000- \$40,000	\$40,000- \$50,000	\$50,000- \$60,000	\$60,000- \$70,000	\$70,000- \$80,000	\$80,000- \$90,000	\$90,000- \$100,000	More than \$100,000
Buyer	6%	30%	24%	18%	15%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%
Floral Designer	9%	48%	30%	0%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Landscape Designer	0%	14%	36%	23%	14%	9%	0%	5%	0%	0%
Landscape Foreman	6%	22%	28%	28%	11%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise	10%	41%	31%	7%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise Mgr.	4%	42%	25%	13%	8%	4%	4%	0%	0%	0%
General Manager	4%	11%	26%	17%	22%	7%	2%	4%	0%	7%
Garden Center Mgr.	7%	20%	32%	17%	15%	5%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Department Mgr.	4%	27%	38%	19%	4%	4%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Owner	13%	13%	10%	16%	19%	10%	3%	2%	5%	10%
Over 30,000 SQ. FT.										
Buyer	5%	13%	21%	32%	21%	5%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Floral Designer	13%	19%	44%	19%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Landscape Designer	0%	11%	22%	22%	26%	11%	4%	0%	4%	0%
Landscape Foreman	0%	21%	33%	30%	9%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise	5%	24%	46%	5%	19%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Merchandise Mgr.	7%	27%	23%	13%	20%	3%	3%	0%	0%	3%
General Manager	0%	5%	17%	21%	29%	10%	7%	0%	7%	5%
Garden Center Mgr.	2%	4%	20%	33%	24%	6%	6%	0%	0%	4%
Department Mgr.	0%	11%	26%	37%	21%	3%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Owner	2%	2%	8%	14%	16%	16%	0%	6%	6%	29%

BREAKDOWN BY

Region

HOURLY EMPLOYEES (per hour)

"YOUNG FOR
ENERGY AND
STRENGTH (BUT
NOT TOO
DEPENDABLE.
OLD FOR
STABILITY AND
KNOWLEDGE, IT
TAKES BOTH."
—a grower-retailer
from Kansas

"I LIKE
MILLENNIALS—
THEY NEED A LIT-
TLE MORE FACE
TIME, BUT (ARE)
EASIER TO
INSPIRE."
—a retailer
from Ontario

	Less than \$7.00	\$7.01- \$8.50	\$8.51- \$10.00	\$10.01- \$12.50	\$12.51- \$15.00	More than \$15.00
EAST						
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	0%	20%	17%	47%	10%	7%
Part-time General Labor	0%	10%	30%	27%	30%	3%
Full-time General Labor	0%	0%	0%	22%	70%	9%
Head Cashier	0%	5%	10%	19%	43%	24%
Temporary Cashier	0%	8%	36%	32%	24%	0%
MIDWEST						
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	0%	22%	55%	22%	2%	0%
Part-time General Labor	0%	18%	43%	34%	4%	2%
Full-time General Labor	0%	2%	18%	42%	33%	5%
Head Cashier	0%	0%	19%	42%	21%	17%
Temporary Cashier	0%	12%	59%	24%	4%	0%
SOUTH						
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	0%	11%	67%	17%	6%	0%
Part-time General Labor	0%	17%	52%	26%	4%	0%
Full-time General Labor	0%	0%	5%	59%	32%	5%
Head Cashier	0%	0%	5%	58%	37%	0%
Temporary Cashier	0%	17%	56%	22%	6%	0%
WEST						
Temp/Seasonal General Labor	5%	10%	10%	57%	14%	5%
Part-time General Labor	0%	8%	28%	50%	11%	11%
Full-time General Labor	0%	0%	0%	39%	39%	22%
Head Cashier	0%	0%	0%	47%	32%	21%
Temporary Cashier	0%	5%	21%	53%	11%	11%

STAFFING

Changes

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Add Staff	19%	26%	28%	26%	31%
Reduce Staff	10%	2%	8%	5%	3%
Keep Same	62%	62%	57%	62%	58%
I Don't know	8%	10%	7%	6%	8%

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