

New Career Conversion Programme for the Agri-tech Sector to Benefit 100 Mid-career Individuals by 2023

Singapore, 14 January 2022 –Workforce Singapore (WSG), Singapore Food Agency (SFA) and Republic Polytechnic (RP) have rolled out the **Career Conversion Programme (CCP) for the Agri-tech¹ Sector**, the first programme for the sector. Benefitting 100 individuals over two years, the CCP would attract and build a local talent pipeline to complement the Singapore Green Plan and “30 by 30” goal to build capability and capacity to produce 30 percent of Singapore’s nutritional needs locally by 2030.

2 The agri-food sector is an exciting new field in Singapore and currently employs about 2,000 workers. As Singapore works towards achieving the “30 by 30” goal, higher-value jobs will be created in the high-tech agriculture industry in the longer term. By 2030, it is projected that about 4,700 new and redesigned jobs would be created. Of these, about 70 percent of the jobs are expected to be filled by skilled workers and Professional, Managers, Executives and Technicians (PMETs). The future workforce will require a good understanding of urban food production and multi-disciplinary expertise in science, engineering, and info-communications.

Attract a new generation of Agri-tech skilled workers

3 To plug the demand for the skills gap, the CCP therefore provides an alternative pathway for companies to meet the increasing manpower demands by reskilling mid-career individuals, who possess transferable skillsets, with the relevant knowledge and skills.

4 There are two pathways for the programme. PMETs will undergo six months of structured class training on top of On-the-Job training and will enter the programme as an Agri-tech Specialist, whose job roles includes farm manager/engineers/technologists, produce specialists, crop scientists and agronomists. An Agri-tech Operator on the other hand, will undergo three months of training, and will include job roles such as supervisors, farm technicians and operations executives (*More details of the career progression for these roles can be found in the factsheet*).

5 Some of the modules which individuals will go through include Sustainable Agriculture: Clean and Green Standard for Urban Farms, Plant Factories with Artificial Lighting and Smart Farming Technologies, which will equip participants with the knowledge of cleaner and sustainable farming practices, integration of technology such as Internet-of-Things to enable precision farming and designing indoor vertical farming with technologies.

6 Mr Tan Choon Shian, WSG’s Chief Executive said: “To build capabilities in the future Agri-tech workforce, it is timely for WSG to introduce the CCP for Agri-tech now to help Singaporeans secure jobs in this growth sector, which offers diverse career opportunities. We are happy to partner SFA and RP in this programme to ensure that the Agri-tech sector is supported by a strong Singaporean core.”

¹Refers to high-tech agriculture

²Includes aquaculture, egg farming and general agriculture farms

7 Mr Lim Kok Thai, Chief Executive Officer of SFA, said: “With Singapore working towards its ‘30 by 30’ goal, this is a timely programme and one which will be welcomed by the agri-food industry as our future high-tech farms would require a workforce with multi-disciplinary expertise in science, engineering, and info-communications. We encourage experienced workers who are keen to join the exciting agri-tech sector to embark on this CCP.

8 Mr Yeo Li Pheow, RP’s Principal/Chief Executive Officer said: “As we continue to level up Singapore’s food supply resilience, RP is proud to partner WSG and SFA in this CCP to equip our local workforce with the required skillsets to support the burgeoning agri-tech sector. Through this programme, mid-career individuals will be well-placed to embrace new career opportunities and support the nation’s 30 by 30 goal as set out in the Singapore Green Plan.”

9 As of January 2022, 15 companies have expressed interest in hiring under the CCP. WSG and SFA are monitoring the needs of the agri-food² industry and will work with industry partners to explore new CCPs for other sectors within the industry should there be substantial demand.

About Workforce Singapore

Workforce Singapore promotes the development, competitiveness, inclusiveness, and employability of all levels of the workforce. Its key mission is to enable Singaporeans to meet their career aspirations, take on quality jobs at different stages of life, and help enterprises be competitive and manpower lean. Workforce Singapore's focus is on strengthening the Singaporean core and ensuring that Singaporeans are able to have better jobs and careers. Workforce Singapore, in partnership with key stakeholders, also provides support to business owners and companies to enable them to transform and grow, while building a future-ready workforce.

Visit www.wsg.gov.sg for more information.

About the Singapore Food Agency

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) was formed as a new statutory board under the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources on 1 April 2019. The SFA brings together food-related functions carried out by the former Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore, the National Environment Agency and the Health Sciences Authority.

As the lead agency for food-related matters, SFA's mission is to ensure and secure a supply of safe food for Singapore. SFA works hand-in-hand with the industry and consumers to grow our three "food baskets" – Diversify import sources, Grow local, and Grow overseas, as well as ensure food safety from farm-to-fork. SFA also partners food businesses to strengthen capabilities, tap on technologies to raise productivity, undertake research to develop new lines of business, and catalyse industry transformation to ensure food security.

For more information on SFA, visit www.sfa.gov.sg.

About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to leverage the Problem-based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has seven schools and one academic centre offering 37 full-time diplomas in Applied Science, Engineering, Management and Communication, Hospitality, Infocomm, Sports, Health & Leisure, and Technology for the Arts.

RP is committed to nurturing professionals with strong problem-solving capabilities through an innovative and entrepreneurial learning environment, based on a holistic and industry-relevant curriculum. RP's Academy for Continuing Education also offers a comprehensive suite of lifelong learning programmes to provide adult learners with skills upgrading opportunities.

For more information, visit <http://www.rp.edu.sg>.