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TUESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2021

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The Flavorite team is preparing for a major recruitment drive, seeking 150 staff to support significant expansion (front) Mike Nichol and Chris Millis, (back, from left) Susan Ilett, Jim Madden, Karen Swanepoel, Will Millis, Tim Nicholas and Matt Henshall.

## NEWS Seasonal workers needed at Flavorite

Oct 05 2021 | Updated 3 hours ago



2 min read

**A major expansion of Flavorite's production capacity will see the company embark on a major staff recruitment drive in coming weeks.**

But with seasonal workers difficult to source in other industries, Flavorite chief executive officer Mike Nichol expects it will be tougher this year.

More than 50 new jobs will come online as the Warragul company commissions a new glasshouse into production and prepares for its peak season.

"We have built a new glasshouse and increased production significantly. But, it all comes down to we need more staff. We need another 150 staff before Christmas.

"We normally have seasonal workers queuing up – but we expect it will be difficult this year because there is less in the pool," he said.

Mr Nichol said staff recruitment was a key driver in the company's infrastructure and product line expansion.

At peak the company employs close to 500 people on the Warragul site, averaging 400 staff onsite all year round.

A new 4.4 hectare glasshouse is now in production and combined with a 15 hectare expansion of its blueberries line, staff expansion is imminent.

With changing markets and product demand, Mr Nichol said Flavorite had continued to seize opportunities to diversify its range.

"We were the first business in Australia to bring truss tomatoes into the supermarket and now they are the mainstay," he said.

Expansion has included taking advantage of all corners of the property and market demand.

Mr Nichol said they planted five hectares of blueberries two years ago as a trial and this year planted another 15 hectares on land that couldn't accommodate glasshouses.

Responding to consumer demand for healthy lunchbox foods and a snacking range, Flavorite also expanded its line to include FlavourBites - bite size cucumbers, tomatoes and capsicums.

"Snacking and convenience on the go foods was something consumers wanted. We identified an opening for that sort of thing. People want products that are intense in flavour but convenient," he said.

But, Mr Nichol said all these initiatives create a greater demand on labour - more plants means more crop work and smaller fruit means more picking and packing.

He said the challenge of getting the work done and having enough staff continued.

"We have a lot of staff that have been with us for a long time so now we are looking for our next batch of leaders," Mr Nichol said.

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