

News Release

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ANZ helps RSE workers unpack their finances (+ [video](#))

ANZ is trialling a pilot scheme to help Recognised Seasonal Employees (RSEs) send wages home to their families and communities safely, and understand how to best use their money when it gets there.

The service, trialled by Fijian RSE workers in the Hawke's Bay in the 2018/2019 picking season and extended to include Marlborough for the 2019/2020 season, lets workers open bank accounts in Fiji before arriving in New Zealand.

It also teaches them how to use internet banking to send money back to their families and keeps their wages safe while in New Zealand.

ANZ Managing Director Commercial and Agri Mark Hiddleston said the programme started last year in response to increased demand for RSE workers in New Zealand.

"On one hand we had business customers telling us they were concerned about the labour shortage; on the other we were hearing stories of RSE workers who didn't know where or how to keep their wages safe," Mr Hiddleston said.

"With branches in both Fiji and New Zealand we knew we were in a unique position to help."

Securing temporary and permanent labour can be challenging for growers. Without RSE workers a lot of the fruit produced in New Zealand wouldn't be picked, packed or processed.

"More RSE workers are coming from the Pacific each year which is great for our growers. This year we've opened almost 3,000 new RSE accounts in the Hawke's Bay region, up from 30-40 10 years ago."

"We found workers didn't always understand the banking language and technology used here. To help, local ANZ staff visited the orchards to make sure our customers – both growers and pickers – were getting what they need."

ANZ's pilot scheme also offers workers free financial education through ANZ's [MoneyMinded](#) programme.

Aparosa Bulinitarawereierenauvula, from Wayalilai village in Fiji, has worked on the same orchard in the Hawke's Bay since 2014 and said the pilot programme has helped him understand how to best use his earnings to look after his family and his village.

"It gives us courage to plan, set [financial] goals and try our best to achieve those goals," Mr Bulinitarawereierenauvula says.

ANZ is working to extend the pilot scheme to all Pacific countries with RSE workers.

About the ANZ Pilot Scheme

ANZ introduced the Pilot Scheme in response to the increase in Recognised Seasonal Employees (RSE) coming to New Zealand for seasonal horticulture work.

The scheme lets Fiji-based RSEs open a bank account before they leave the country. Once the workers arrive in New Zealand, the local ANZ team finishes the account opening process and visits the workers on the orchards to issue their EFTPOS cards.

The New Zealand ANZ team then organises education evenings to teach the workers how to use internet banking, ANZ goMoney, how to send money back home to Fiji, and how to access and use a Smart ATM. ANZ also offers financial education for those who'd like to learn more about how to best use their wages.

Fiji was chosen as a trial location because the number of RSE workers from there is small compared to Samoa, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

ANZ is working to extend the service to all regions with RSE workers.

[Click here](#) for a video about ANZ's pilot scheme for RSE workers.

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