

Media Release

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Opportunity knocks in forestry planting, a pursuit to literally build Australia's future with 70 million new trees planted every year

As another winter forestry planting season draws to a close, it's worth considering the great work our forestry planters do getting seedlings in the ground that will grow to become the Aussie houses of tomorrow. Tens of millions of new trees have been planted nationally this year and it wouldn't happen without those willing to put up their hand for the physical work, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Ross Hampton said today.

Take 26-year-old backpacker Rubio Harmsworth from Ontario Canada. Rubio spent two years planting in British Columbia before coming to Australia. She's now added a further two years planting with Outland Resources in the Snowy Mountains area of NSW - and has managed to put an astonishing 320,000 seedlings into the ground!

Rubio averaged up to 3750 trees a day, with her average earnings around \$500 per day. Her best day earnings topped \$715 for an eight-hour shift!

The average planting rate, per planter, per day in the Snowy Mountains is about 2200 trees per day.

Mr Hampton said, "There are certainly opportunities for people who want the work and to earn a very good income."

"Of course, the industry tries hard to recruit as many Australians as possible, but the consistent shortfall means international labour is critical for tree planting. Furthermore, with the pandemic this year we've seen a shortage of workers in key forestry areas. We have therefore welcomed the inclusion of forestry under the new Ag Visa announced by the Federal Government.

"It is obviously physically demanding work, but not only can you earn a great income, but you can see and work in some magnificent parts of Australia and know you're helping a sustainable, climate friendly industry that will help build the homes of tomorrow."

Pictures follow

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CAPTION: Canadian backpacker, Rubio Harmsworth at work planting near Tumut, NSW with Outland Resources.

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AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.