

Fish Farm Worker

Fish farm workers help to breed and rear fish in ponds, tanks, cages or nets in the water. Most fish such as salmon, trout or shellfish are farmed for food, but some are bred for angling or for ornamental ponds. They are also called fish husbandry workers or fish farm technicians.

The Work

You could be:

- feeding fish by hand or operating automatic feeding systems
- grading fish by size, moving them to bigger tanks or cages
- checking and maintaining water quality
- checking fish for disease, preventing and treating infection
- draining and cleaning tanks, filters and nets
- repairing tanks or cages
- getting fish ready for sale, gutting them and packing them in ice for transport
- maintaining buildings and equipment, involving basic joinery, plumbing and electrical work.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for fish farm workers in Scotland range from around £14,000 to £18,000 a year. With experience, this can rise to £24,000 a year, sometimes more.

Some companies offer bonuses and sometimes accommodation and use of a vehicle as part of the package.

Conditions

- In most cases, you would have to live in a rural or remote area, close to water.
- In 'Open Sea' fish farming, workers live on residential barges at fish farms off the west coast, on a shift work basis.
- Working hours can be unsocial, including evenings and weekends, and you may have to work alone at times. You would normally have a 40-hour week.
- You would work outdoors in all weathers and it will often be wet and cold.
- You might have to do heavy lifting.
- You may have to enter water, in pools, the sea or lochs, to check fish and carry out maintenance.
- You may need to work from a boat.
- You would need to be able to cope with the sight of blood, and you would wear protective clothing.

Getting In

- Entry can be competitive.
- You may be able to enter this job directly with a good general education.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship.
- You could take a relevant NC (SCQF Levels 4-6) before applying for a job. You usually need 3 subjects at National 4 or 5, or relevant experience for entry.
- Previous work experience, on a farm or working with animals, is useful.
- You may need a full, clean driving licence.
- You must be fit enough to do physical work.
- You should be able to swim.

You could work for a variety of different organisations, including commercial fish farms, private estates and angling organisations.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- practical
- observant
- reliable
- good at following instructions
- able to work on your own as well as part of a team
- interested in fish and their environment
- aware of all health and safety issues.

Training

- You would train and gain experience on the job.
- You may also be able to gain a relevant qualification through part time study or distance learning.
- You will gain an SVQ if you train through a Modern Apprenticeship. SVQs in Aquaculture are available at SCQF Level 5 and SCQF Level 7.
- The [Institute of Fisheries Management](#) offers a Certificate and Diploma in Fisheries Management by distance learning.
- [The Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association \(OATA\)](#) in Wiltshire offers distance learning courses.

Getting On

- You may have to move to different parts of the country to broaden your experience.
- With some experience you could become a supervisor in a large fish farm.
- With a lot of experience, you may be able to become a fish farm manager.
- There may be opportunities to work abroad, for example in parts of Europe such as Norway and in Asia, Australia and South America.

Contacts

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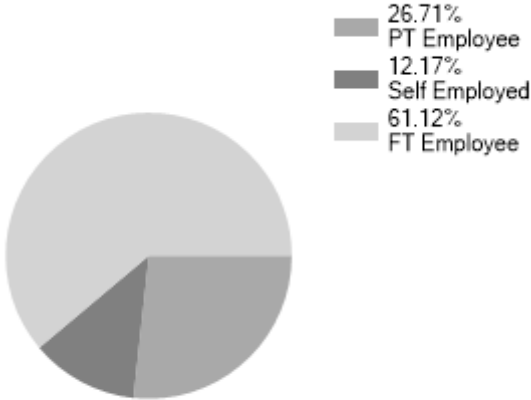
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

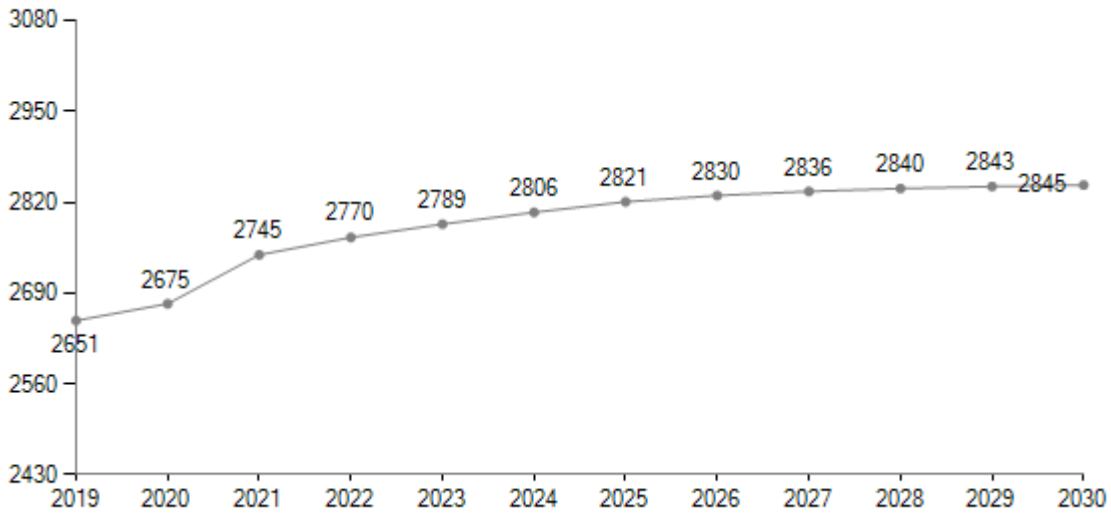


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)