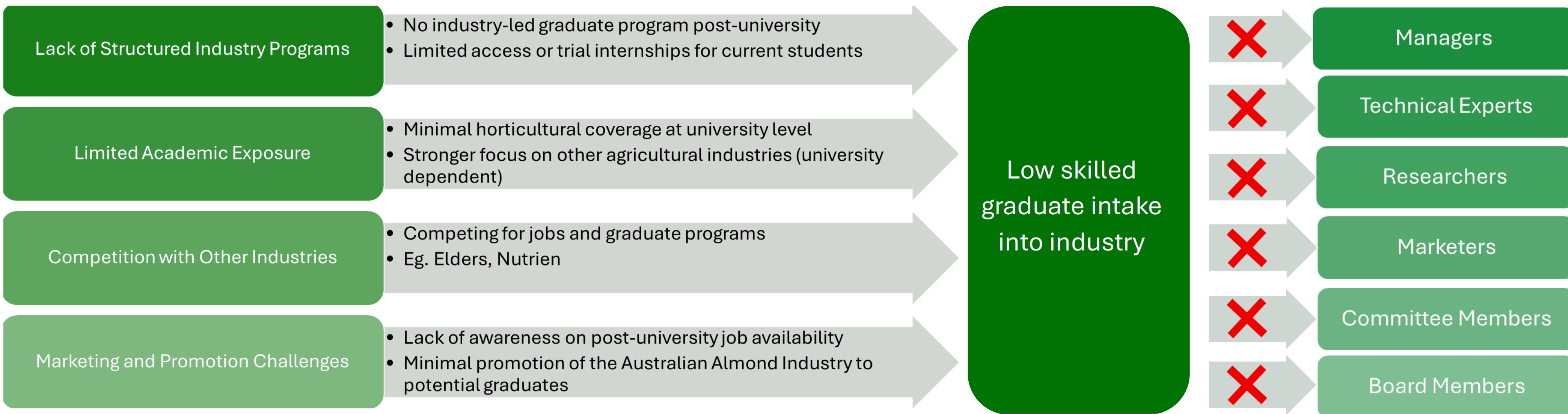


Abstract

Skilled university graduates play a pivotal role in the progression and future of the Australian Almond Industry. If the industry continues along its current trajectory of rapid growth and expansion, there will become an even greater shortage of skilled graduates to progress into leadership, and management roles, limiting the industry’s ability to innovate, adapt, and sustain continued growth. The Almond Pathways: Growing for Tomorrow Graduate Program will provide graduates with structured exposure across the industry, allowing them to progress into desired industry roles and begin their career in the Australian Almond Industry.

The Issue: Low skilled graduate intake into industry



Addressing the lack of structured industry programs

The lack of structured industry programs has been identified as one of the key reasons for low skilled graduate intake levels into the industry. Although some major stakeholders in the industry have their own internship opportunities and graduate programs, there is no available industry-led graduate program which would provide comprehensive exposure to the Australian Almond Industry as a whole.



How it works:

- A **precursor** to the Growing Almond Leaders Program developed by the Almond Board of Australia (ABA).
- 4 graduates** per year.
- 4 main focus areas** across industry.
- 11 weeks** per focus area.
- Rotation** through each focus area.
- Combined 2-week Almond Short Course** (similar to UC Davis) at program conclusion as a cohort.
- Opportunity to **attend ABA Field Days and Workshops**.
- Graduation** at bi-annual Australian Almond Conference.
- Mentoring access throughout program** - Graduates of the Growing Almond Leaders Program would be the ideal candidates to guide this cohort of young graduates through the early stages of their careers.



Further Considerations

Further considerations will also need to be made including but not limited to:

- Industry Participants** - companies willing to participate and take graduates on board.
- Promotion** - key universities/educators with a strong agriculture/horticulture focus. Consider application process and opening and closing dates.
- Housing availability** - across the growing regions. Subsidised?
- Integration of graduates into local communities** - importance for mental health & wellbeing.
- Support and supervision of the cohort** throughout the program - regular check-ins and reviews at the end of each focus area.
- Almond Short Course** - Potential for overseas exposure or experts could travel to Australia?
- Program Responsibility & Funding** - ABA. Potential access to funding? WH&S responsibility.

Opportunities Post-Almond Pathways

Graduates Gain:

- Almond Pathways Graduate Alumni Community.**
- Career Connections** - opportunities available in the industry post-completion of the graduate program.
- Guest speaker and ambassador volunteering opportunities** - attend and speak at careers events to promote the Graduate Program.

Industry Gains:

- Skilled** future leaders
- Strong talent** pipeline
- Improved industry profile**
- Candidates** for Growing Almond Leaders Program