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From serving to sustaining

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EX-SOLDIERS are entering the agriculture industry in what is proving to be a positive transition from army life.

Former Goondiwindi brothers Casey and Luke Brown started Agri Labour Australia in 2010, which is now the top privately owned agricultural recruitment company.

Last year Casey, 32, started Agri Veterans after reading about the success of a similar program in the United States.

"I was searching about defence and about understanding a little bit more about veterans and the different careers for veterans when they leave

defence," Mr Brown said.

"I came across an article about an organisation in the United States which talked about the struggles veterans have finding a career and turning to substance abuse and a program was initiated that helped them into the agricultural sector.

"It said for the first time since they left defence they

felt clear and felt like they had a purpose."

After more research Mr Brown found nothing like it in Australia and so Agri Veterans was born and has been in full swing for about six months.

He now wants to make more veterans aware of a career in agriculture and has so far placed a handful of them into various

industries.

"The feedback from the ex-soldiers has been all positive," Mr Brown said.

"A career in agriculture is not just about milking a cow or driving a tractor. It can provide a very fulfilling career that will compliment their transition."

Mr Brown said the skills learnt in defence were very transferable to any area of agriculture, which required a lot of discipline and following guidelines.

One ex-soldier, Josh, has received a full-time career at a poultry farm at Millmerran and Mr Brown said he was loving the work.

"Growing up in Goondiwindi had a massive

impact on our decision to start Agri Labour," he said.

"We have still got so many friends and family on the land who can't find enough good people."

Mr Brown said more than 5000 members left the defence force every year and bringing even five to 10% of those into the agricultural industry would help the labour shortage and the aging farming population.

"We sit down with the veteran, understand where they are at personally and mentally and provide them with clear understanding and support," he said.

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POSITIVE WORK: Former Goondiwindi brothers Casey (left) and Luke Brown run Agri Labour. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED