



THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND



Digging into Horticulture

The Soil Association, working as part of an industry initiative, wants to introduce new entrants to the possibilities and opportunities within large-scale horticulture. The goal is to highlight the innovative and exciting approaches that producers in the sector are increasingly adopting and create a better understanding of these businesses.

This project has been made possible by the funding of the Prince's Countryside Fund and we are grateful for their support. Founded by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2010, the Fund helps to secure a brighter future for the British countryside and those who maintain it.

In the summer of 2017, we will be hosting two on-site study visits for people interested in finding out more about the employment opportunities in the sector. The first will be held in Nottinghamshire and the second in Worcestershire. Each visit will be open to just 15 students, free of charge, making the opportunity highly competitive for participants.

The Soil Association collaborates with organic and non-organic producers to innovate and implement practical solutions that create a better future. Through our trading subsidiary, Soil Association Certification, we work with over 6,000 businesses including organic farmers and growers, caterers, food processors and manufacturers across more than 50 countries.

Background

UK grown vegetables are worth £1.3 billion annually while UK grown fruits is worth £695 million.¹ These numbers have been steadily increasing over recent years, creating new opportunities. However, while the sector contributes considerably to our economy, there is a lack of new entrants into horticulture.

Across agriculture in general around 60% of total labour is provided by the farmers themselves or their immediate family. A further 20% are regularly employed workers and around 15% are casual (non-regular or seasonal) workers.² In the fresh produce sector employment of non UK labour has been expanding in recent years.

Of those regular and non-regular workers, less than 1% of the UK's working population are employed in agriculture and this has continued to gradually decline over the past decade.³ The majority of horticultural workers are migrants, who may be unable to work in the UK following our exit from the European Union. Stronger training programmes are needed to bring UK workers into horticultural jobs and convince them that a career in horticulture could be a rewarding experience.

¹ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Horticulture Statistics 2015, 22nd June 2016

² Devlin, S 'Agricultural labour in the UK', Food Research Collaboration, 2016,

³ Devlin, *ibid*.



THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND



Event Details

Dates: September 29th and 30th in Evesham

For the visit, we will collect you from the Worcester train station. There will be a morning grower visit with lunch, followed by an afternoon visit. In the evening, a focus group survey will be conducted before a group dinner. On the second day, there will be a morning grower visit with lunch before you are dropped back at the station.

Food, accommodation and travel costs during the visit will be covered. Travel to and from the start point will not be covered.

The closing date for applications will be Sept 8th. You will be notified on your candidacy by Sept 15th .

Please fill in and submit the attached application to heldridge@soilassociation.org



THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND



Application

Name:

DOB:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Academic qualifications:

Describe previous experience in agriculture, specifically in horticulture (100wds):

Have you had previous experience with the Soil Association? If yes, please explain.

How did you hear about this opportunity? Social media [] Newsletter [] College/school [] Other []

Questions

How would you describe your interest and involvement in horticulture thus far? (100wds)

What do you hope to gain from this study visit? (100wds)

How does this study visit fit with your professional goals? (100wds)