

PRESS RELEASE

Thanet Earth and Hadlow College Celebrate Success of New Movement to Work Initiative



18th December 2015

Brimming with pride and new-found confidence, the first group of students have graduated from the new Sector Based Work Academy at Thanet Earth, near Birchington in Kent. Five participants were selected for the scheme by the Job Centre Plus in Margate, where the group of jobseekers are being supported back into work.

Taking place at Thanet Earth, over a five-week period, the group spent time with specialist trainers and mentors from the land-based learning centre of excellence, Hadlow College. They were also given time with managers at Thanet Earth, who provided a practical slant to the course and who oversaw a work experience element that gave the participants time working in all of the operational areas of the Thanet Earth business. This structured programme of learning and on-the-job training was designed specifically to provide new skills, insight and experience for the group and is part of a national scheme called Movement to Work.

The food, agriculture and horticulture sector is a very important part of the Kent economy, with considerable further opportunity for growth. This needs to be supported by an enthusiastic, engaged workforce, and there are many rewarding career paths available. By bringing two of the strongest sector partners together to create a new Sector Based Work Academy, the jobseekers receive the very best in training and support.

Each academy graduate received a full day's introduction to the HACCP food safety management system, and each passed a food hygiene course. The Hadlow College tutors provided sessions on interview skills and preparation of a CV. Throughout the process participants were able to ask questions and apply their learning to a practical situation within the Thanet Earth business.

The ultimate aim was for each academy graduate to leave with a greater confidence, with new skills to help them succeed at interview, and with a better understanding of the routine, the expectations and the opportunities that come with an employed role.

Speaking of the academy's success, Thanet Earth managing director, Des Kingsley, said: "I'd like to give special thanks to Lesley Gregson, the employability lecturer from Hadlow College. With her support, the confidence of each academy member has increased significantly. One part of the picture is having the right skills for the job, but the ability to communicate that you have the right skills can be a challenge. This academy scheme has helped its five graduates to take a more confident step forward into work."

At a special celebration event at Thanet Earth to mark the completion of this round of the academy, Des went on to thank Sarah Quattroluni, the education officer at Thanet Earth, and the rest of the team who

have committed so much time and passion to the project. Each academy student was presented with a completion certificate. The hope is that each graduate will take forward their search for work, supported by the Job Centre Plus, but with new skills that will make them ultimately much more employable in the future.



Left to right (back row):
Michael Eason – Thanet Earth
Trudy Edwards – Thanet Earth
Lesley Gregson – Hadlow College
Des Kingsley – Thanet Earth
Alison Langridge – West Kent & Ashford College
Naomi Johnson – Thanet Earth
Sarah Quattroluni – Thanet Earth

Left to right (front row):
Ryan Dadson
Carl McCallum
William Weaver
Matthew Osborne
Paul Talling

ABOUT THANET EARTH

Thanet Earth is the UK's largest, newest and most environmentally sustainable producer of cucumbers, peppers and speciality tomatoes. With planning permission for seven greenhouses on the Kent site (four constructed so far), the company leads the market in UK salad production.

Packing of the crops grown at Thanet Earth takes place in a state-of-the-art factory on site. The company also imports, packs and markets crops grown overseas, and an agreement with another leading tomato grower, Cornerways, has been announced. This contract sees Thanet Earth market the Cornerways tomato crop from 2016.

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ABOUT HADLOW COLLEGE

Hadlow is a specialist, high quality, land-based college set in the heart of the Kent countryside, offering a huge range of courses, from Entry Level up to Honours Degrees, and land-based Apprenticeship routes. The only Kent college to be graded 'Outstanding' at its last Ofsted inspection and an LSIS Beacon provider, Hadlow prides itself on making all students feel welcome and secure in what is a fantastic learning environment.

With additional campuses at Canterbury, Medway and South East London at Mottingham and Greenwich, Hadlow has just over 1200 full time students studying up to Level 3 (Extended Diploma) and over 600 Higher Education Students studying up to Level 6. In addition, 1000 part time students enrol every year across all campuses, on a range of part time options, from apprenticeships to Saturday workshops.

Hadlow College is passionate about the land-based sector and works hard to give its students' careers the best possible start, providing skills, experience and knowledge to the very highest level.

<https://hadlow.ac.uk/>

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