

Francesca Pritchard

Location: Kent, South East England



Hopes for the Future



To explore different aspects of the industry



To see the changes the next generation makes



More graduate schemes

Rural Youth Project Involvement

Francesca was introduced to the Rural Youth Project by the team at MDS. She would love to see everyone from the hack again in the future to find out what they have done.

Background

Francesca Pritchard recently graduated from the University of Exeter with an undergraduate degree in liberal arts and is currently taking part in a Management Development Services (MDS) graduate scheme. Her first placement is with Coregeo, who manage the licensing of fruit and vegetable products such as Pink Lady apples and Tenderstem broccoli.

The team at MDS introduced Francesca to the Rural Youth Project and the opportunity to take part in the Ideas Hack. Francesca applied as she felt it was a good opportunity to meet other young people in the fresh and food sector. Francesca feels she gained a lot from the hack including more confidence in her role.

“I called my Mum at the end of the weekend and told her how glad I was that my weekend was spent at the hack. I left feeling like I could hold a conversation with anyone and went to work feeling like I knew what I was doing and that I was supposed to be there.”

Like many of the young people at the hack, Francesca had mainly heard about the sector in a very traditional sense, that the main roles were fruit picking, and all the roles were labour intensive, she was however intrigued by what the sector had to offer.

“Now I know that there is actually a lot of opportunities out there. I think that they need to be publicised more to show that there is more than one route. There are so many different opportunities and a really diverse range of roles available.”

In terms of encouraging more people to join the industry Francesca thinks graduate schemes are the key, similar to the path she has chosen.

“I may be biased, but offering graduate schemes and promoting a range of skill sets and knowledge transfer as well as making sure universities promote the sector and all that it has to offer is so important in attracting young people.”



“There are so many different opportunities and a really diverse range of roles available.”

- Francesca Pritchard

Background

One of the ideas generated by the hackers was ‘Paid to Glamp’; a scheme aiming to attract student and backpacker labour by enticing them with a visa offering six months of work, for six months of travel. A temporary summer camp would be available for young workers in temporary roles creating a fun space to live. This idea was Francesca’s favourite as - “For me it’s the excitement of being able to travel not just work, to see not just beautiful parts of the UK but also have the chance to explore other countries.”

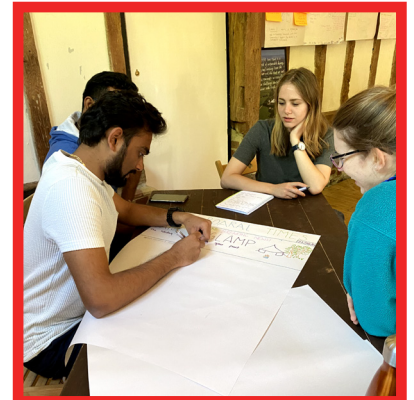
Francesca is excited to see where the industry goes post-Covid and how the next generation makes lasting changes. She would also love to see the Hack team again in the future and see what everyone has achieved and where they are. She is confident that after completing her graduate scheme she will stay in the industry as there are so many different routes, giving her no reason to leave.

“I’m either thinking about food or eating so I’m very happy to be in the fresh food and produce sector.”

Francesca is currently experiencing the commercial side of things but is looking forward to exploring more technical aspects and finding her place.

Solutions

1. Through her graduate scheme with MDS, Francesca will have 4 placements to experience different roles.
2. Post-covid Francesca is excited to see how the next generation adapt to changes in the sector.
3. Francesca would like to see more graduate schemes, similar to what she is doing.



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