

PR1440 – 28 September 2010

Working together to raise awareness of careers in the land-based and environmental sector

Advisers from Skills Development Scotland recently attended a Career Advisers Seminar organised in conjunction with Lantra Sector Skills Council, to learn first hand about the exciting and progressive range of career opportunities available in the land-based and environmental sector. During the event advisers received an insight into the career options available within the sector and also learnt of the need to attract 10,000 new entrants over the next 10 years, just to meet demand. Advisers also had the opportunity to question a range of employers and industry experts about the highs and lows of their experience, and about the career prospects and training available, such as Modern Apprenticeships.

Sandy Thomson from D & J Thomson said: We all need to eat, and someone has to produce our food. It was important to get over to the advisers the variety of jobs that are available within the land-based industries in order that they can help young people make informed career choices.

Outlining his experience within land-based engineering, Brian Sangster from the Reekie Group said: It's becoming increasingly difficult to recruit the correct calibre of person into the land-based sector; we have a very challenging industry that is so easily influenced by seasonal demands and of course the day to day weather.

Brian continued: It was good to get the opportunity to explain the many different types of work there are within the sector and how careers can also be built from within the sector. I believe all the delegates left the seminar with a completely new understanding of the land-based sector and the career opportunities that it has to offer. For the industry, we look forward to a renewed interest and higher profile from a much more understanding careers advisory service.

Easterton Stables owner, Rosemary Brown also presented at the seminar. Rosemary said: There is an obvious lack of knowledge of the roles within the land-based industry; hopefully this seminar raised awareness among those present and will encourage further engagement to understand employers' needs.

Lantra's Regional Partnership Manager, Mary Mitchell said: Careers advisers play a pivotal role and it is crucial that we work with them to ensure that they have all the relevant information about the current opportunities available within our industries.

She continued: In Scotland, the land-based sector employs over 115,700 people, which shows just how important the role of the sector is. Land-based and agricultural careers are perceived as being unfashionable and are not often promoted as a first career choice. However, the sector has made huge technical and scientific advances in recent years and the sector's development is going to be essential in providing a sustainable future for Scotland.

The event aimed to raise awareness of various careers opportunities among those responsible for providing information, advice and guidance to school pupils and job seekers.

Gail Mackay, Team Leader, Skills Development Scotland said: Careers advisers find this kind of event an ideal opportunity to find out about careers in a particular industry. The Lantra event was the first of its kind that has been held in a long time and gave staff a valuable insight into the careers available and the current developments in national qualifications. Meeting employers from the different industries within the sector was also a valuable exercise and gave all present an opportunity to understand what each other do.

Lantra represents the environmental and land-based industries which offer many attractive and sustainable career choices. Information on courses relevant to the sector can be viewed at www.lantraonestopshop.co.uk or for those seeking specific information regarding careers at www.afuturein.com.

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Picture 045.jpg Careers advisers attending the seminar

EDITORS NOTES

" Lantra is an employer-led organisation, which is licensed by the UK government to drive forward the skills, training and business development agenda for the 17 industries in the sector. The industries represented are: agricultural crops; agricultural livestock; animal care; animal technology; aquaculture; environmental conservation; equine; farriery; fencing; fisheries management; floristry; game and wildlife management; horticulture, landscape and sports turf; land-based engineering; production horticulture; trees and timber; and veterinary nursing.