

Bee company nurtures new talent for Scottish Apprenticeship Week

Two new apprentices have been appointed by Edinburgh's Scottish Bee Company as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week (1st-5th March).

Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2021 aims to share the value apprenticeships can bring to individuals, employers and the economy. This year's theme is Business Backing Talent, to showcase the great things that happen when employers back talent through apprenticeships.

The Scottish Bee Company started Scotland's first bee farming apprenticeship and has continued to nurture young talent since it was established in 2017.

Rachel Henderson, 23, from Edinburgh is one of the latest recruits. She has just started a one-year apprenticeship as a digital marketing assistant with the Lothians-based firm. Heather Goater, 23, from Edinburgh has also taken on a one-year apprenticeship as an operations and logistics assistant.

With backing from the Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Bee Company is helping Rachel and Heather get the chance of an apprenticeship, whilst adding real value to its business.



Rachel Henderson (left) and Heather Goater (right) starting their apprenticeship at the Scottish Bee Company

Rachel, who is an Edinburgh Napier University business graduate, will be responsible for managing the Scottish Bee Company's social media channels, as well as digital content

creation, brand partnerships, managing relationships with existing stockists and building links with quality health food retailers across Scotland and the rest of the UK.

Rachel said: "I'm really excited to be joining the Scottish Bee Company's apprenticeship scheme in time for the start of Scottish Apprenticeship Week.

"I was really attracted the ethos and values of the company and how much they've achieved in such a short space of time. I'm looking forward to adding my own creativity to the brand and developing my digital marketing skills at the same time."

Heather studied business management at Napier University before taking on the apprenticeship with the Scottish Bee Company. Her daily duties will include managing the supply of goods from production to customer order and delivery.

This involves the procurement of materials, distribution and transport of products, fulfilling orders, imports, exports, warehouse management, and product processing.

Heather said: "I can't wait to get started and stuck into my new role. I was attracted to the Scottish Bee Company because of its focus on sustainability and everything it stands for.

"I'm confident that the apprenticeship will help me kick start my career by giving me the experience and skills I need. I hope to climb the ladder at the Scottish Bee Company and hopefully turn this into opportunity into a long-term position."

The Scottish Bee Company was founded by Iain and Suzie Millar in 2017 out of a love for the environment and the honey bee. Iain and Suzie were saddened by the continually documented decline in the bee population, so they decided that they would do something to help.

Along with dwindling bee numbers, they were also astonished to

find how much honey consumed in the UK is imported from around the world. They felt strongly that we need more, home grown, bee-friendly honey.

In two years they have increased bee numbers by around 23 million, launched their sister charity Repollinate.org.uk which aims to further increase pollination through education programmes and wildflower spaces, committed to donating 10p from every unit sold to Repollinate, tripled sales year on year, trained as Sommelier in honey and won a Great Taste Award for their Heather honey.

Suzie Millar, Co-founder of The Scottish Bee Company, said:

“We’re huge supporters of apprenticeship initiatives like this and are really proud to have started Scotland’s first bee farming apprenticeship.

“Businesses like ours have needed to adapt to challenging times during the pandemic. Employers and learning providers have innovated so apprentices can learn, achieve and progress. While businesses taking on apprentices have developed new and safe ways to recruit in their commitment to backing talent.

“We look forward to supporting Rachel and Heather as they begin their apprenticeships with the Scottish Bee Company and hope the experience will give them the experience and skills they need to progress in their chosen career.”



Rachel and Heather starting their apprenticeship as part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week

Produced in beehives located in the Lothians, Dumfriesshire, Stirlingshire, Fife and Aberdeenshire, The Scottish Bee Company’s heather honey was revealed as a world-leading superfood in a scientific study in 2020. It contains up to 10 times more of the essential micronutrient, manganese, compared to 200 of its global rivals, including manuka.

In 2020, the Scottish Bee Company's heather honey became the first ever food product in the UK to be awarded the British Standards Institution (BSI) Kitemark verification for provenance. The Kitemark is more commonly used to identify products where safety is paramount, such as crash helmets, smoke alarms and flood defences, but consumers are increasingly looking for trusted industry assurances on the quality and origin of the food they eat.

The Scottish Bee Company has quickly established itself as one of the country's leading super food producers with sales contracts already secured with Selfridges UK-wide; House of Bruar and Edinburgh's I.J. Mellis, as well as speciality health food shops in the Far East.

For more information about Scottish Apprenticeship Week (1st-5th March), visit <https://www.apprenticeships.scot/scottish-apprenticeship-week> and follow on social media, including Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ScottishApprenticeships>, Twitter https://twitter.com/apprentice_scot and Instagram https://www.instagram.com/apprentice_scot

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