

A CAREER IN POTATO FARMING

PASSIONATE ABOUT GROWING THE INDUSTRY

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When **HARRY MADDIX** moved to New Zealand from England eight years ago, he never expected to have a successful career in the potato industry.

Harry (24) now has six years' experience working in potato production with Bailey Farming Company, with a deep understanding of all aspects of the crop cycle – from planting and harvesting to machinery operation.

He is based in Southbridge in Canterbury, growing 60 hectares of potatoes along with complementary crops of wheat, barley and peas.

"I started bagging potatoes at 16 and have worked my way up. It was more of an accident how I ended up there. What I love most is harvesting the potatoes in the summertime, when you finally see the rewards," says Harry.

"It is very satisfying. It shows all that work you have done has finally paid off. It is just good to see them coming out of the ground. Job satisfaction is very high in watching a paddock grow from the start and then four months later you have a beautiful crop.

"I wouldn't change it for the world."

Harry has recently taken on his own lease block, with aspirations to build a successful future in farming. He is also part of the Potatoes New Zealand Youth Council. Encouraging young people to join the industry is a key driver for Harry and the other young growers on the council.

"When we first came together on the council a year ago, everyone in the room, apart from one young fella whose parents have a large-scale potato farm, said we came into the industry by accident.

"We are trying to give young people options to show it is a career path and there are lots of jobs within the sector. We just have to get out there and show them how you can get promoted quickly. You don't have to go to university."

Harry says there is a need for succession planning in the potato industry as there are lots of older people in the industry and not that many young people, which is a bit of a concern.

"When the day comes and they retire or pass away, who is going to take over and know the skills and

knowledge they had? So that's why we are trying to get more people into it."

Harry holds Level 3 and 4 qualifications in Horticulture Management from Primary ITO. He says the qualifications give him a good understanding of the correct way of doing things and a deeper understanding of the industry, including chemical applications.

"I have written a testimony that the youth council is going to publish to try and get more young men and women doing more horticulture courses. We need them to join us."

Away from work, Harry loves his time helping out the Southbridge Volunteer Fire Brigade.

"It is very important, especially in the industry I am in, because you never know when you might need them, and it is great to help out the community."



“IT IS VERY SATISFYING... WATCHING A PADDOCK GROW FROM THE START AND THEN FOUR MONTHS LATER YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL CROP. I WOULDN'T CHANGE IT FOR THE WORLD.” **HARRY MADDIX**

KEY FACTS



- **HARRY MADDIX** GROWS 60 HECTARES OF POTATOES IN CANTERBURY, AS WELL AS COMPLEMENTARY CROPS OF WHEAT, BARLEY AND PEAS.
- **PASSIONATE** ABOUT ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO JOIN THE INDUSTRY, HE IS A MEMBER OF THE **POTATOES NEW ZEALAND YOUTH COUNCIL**.
- **HARRY** HOLDS **LEVEL 3 AND LEVEL 4** QUALIFICATIONS IN HORTICULTURE MANAGEMENT FROM **PRIMARY ITO**.

ONLINE



For more information on **career opportunities** in horticulture in New Zealand, visit www.hortnz.co.nz/people-jobs-and-labour, or for the **Potato Industry** in New Zealand, visit www.potatoesnz.co.nz