

# The **co-operative** farms

## Opportunities for Graduates

David Gardner

The Royal Show Debates - 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009

# Careers with Co-operative Farms

- Farming since 1896
- 20,000 acres owned land
- 60,000 acres total farmed
- Combinable Crops
- Fresh Produce
- One small beef herd



# The Co-operative

- Established 1844
- CWS founded 1860
- Owned by membership
- Currently 22 Societies
- Major Re-branding exercise
- Food Retail Stores
- Plus the Bank, Insurance, Travel, Funerals and Pharmacy

# Co-operative farms broad acre arable crops

- Wheat
- Barley
- Oilseed Rape
- Spring cropping
- Sugar Beet
- Vining peas



# Co-operative Farms Fresh Produce

- Future Growth Area
- 'Grown by us' brand
- Soft and Top Fruit
- Potatoes
- Field Veg
- Potato, Fruit and Veg packing



# Soft and Top Fruit

- Tillington Herefordshire
  - Desert Apples
  - Pears
  - Cherries
  - Cider
- Blairgowrie Perthshire
  - Strawberries
- Applying for planning permission to grow strawberries at Coldham



# Potatoes

- Goole
  - Main crop
- Coldham
  - Earlies
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> earlies
  - Main crop
- The Borders
  - Main crop



# Field Scale Vegetables

- Onions
  - From sets and seed
- Shallots
- Broccoli
- Beetroot
- Sweetcorn
- Seeking joint ventures for other lines



# Packing – Potatoes, Fruit and Veg

- Langley Brook Tamworth
  - JV since 2003
  - Owned since 2006
  - 20,000 tonnes Potatoes
- Carnoustie Dundee
  - Purchased 2007
  - 30,000 tonnes Potatoes
- Longforgan
  - Soft Fruit – 800 – 1500t
  - Broccoli



# Fresh Produce – the challenge

- Quality
- Availability
- Price
  
- In practice
  - Agronomy
  - Labour
  - Customer relations



# The Fresh Produce Management Training Programme

- 'A complete understanding of the Fresh Produce chain from farm to customer'
- Two years
- Four secondments
  - Agronomy
  - Retail buying
  - Labour management
  - Pack house



# The Arable Farms Management Training Scheme

- Understanding of broad acre arable growing
- BASIS and FACTS
- Two secondments
- Involves hands-on experience



# Tailored Training Programme

- Self Management
  - Personal Effectiveness
  - Assertiveness
- Activity
  - Managing Change
  - Managing Communication
- People
  - Leading People
  - Managing Difficult People
- Customer
  - Managing Customer Focus
  - Internal Customer Care
- Processes
  - Negotiating Skills
  - Business Planning Skills

# We are seeking

- Ambitious
- Inquisitive
- Innovative
- Pro-active
- Customer focused
- Good people skills
- Prepared to take a risk



# Career prospects

- Assistant Manager/Enterprise Manager
- Farm Manager/Packhouse Manager
- Operations Manager
- Senior Management

