

# 'Growing Exotic Vegetables in the UK'



## NUFFIELD SCHOLARS STUDY 2006-2007

The demands of many UK consumers (who include a wide variety of ethnic communities) are rapidly evolving, for example, by demanding more exotic foodstuffs. British farming has yet to provide for the more unusual product requirements of such groups. Exotic vegetables and herbs are often grown successfully on a small scale in allotments and gardens in Britain; but are not currently grown commercially. This study aims to investigate the possibility for growing exotic crops on British farms, in terms of crop suitability, growing requirements and cultural appropriateness. The study also aims to widen the knowledge and understanding of farming and locally grown food for groups not usually involved in the industry.

### **Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust**

For more than 50 years the Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust has promoted leadership and the implementation of innovative practices in agriculture through worldwide study and interpersonal contact.

A Nuffield Farming Scholarship is a valuable and prestigious global agricultural award. Scholars have returned with new knowledge and wide contacts and many are prominent leaders in the agricultural community. They are, and have been, represented in government, on agricultural producer boards and in agricultural organisations, as well as taking leading roles within their communities.

### **History**

The Nuffield Foundation was founded in 1943 by Lord Nuffield of Morris Motors fame. The initial goal was to provide support for health and social well-being including Fellowships and Scholarships in medicine but

later extended to Farming after the war. Scholars are selected from the UK, France, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Scholars will travel and upon their return are expected to use all means at their disposal to spread their new knowledge including the writing of an industry report to be published by the Trust.

### **The Topic**

Although Scholars are selected for their personal qualities, to gain an award candidates must provide justification for their topic. It must be of interest to themselves and likely to be of benefit to the industry as a whole.

### **Sponsors**

This study is funded by the YOUNG NUFFIELD (BOB MATSON) AWARD, however any other support would be welcome. This could range from time, information, flights to conference fees.

### **After The Study**

Nuffield's aim is for Scholars to be the brightest and best of a new generation of managers within agriculture. It is hoped they will be key influencers within the industry and that they will help shape the industry with particular reference to their study area. Their report is a valuable industry reference source.



Emma Hockridge

Emma Hockridge is a project co-ordinator for Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming. Her work focuses on increasing the amount of local food being supplied to the public sector in the South East of England.

Emma's family have farmed beef, sheep and arable in Devon for over four generations. She has a MA (professional practice) in Sustainable rural land use from the University of Worcester, and a BA (Hons) in Geography and Environmental studies from the University of Sussex.

After leaving university, Emma worked on a reserve in the Peruvian jungle, where activities included assisting in the development of a training farm. She went on to work for the Rural Payments Agency (an executive agency of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), and received a Nuffield bursary to study 'spatial variation of Nitrogen in clover grassland awards' at the Institute of Grassland and Environmental research, North Wyke.

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