



News Release

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Kent tomato producer beats off strong opposition from around the country to scoop top farming education award

20th November 2019: **APS Produce near Dover in Kent** has been acclaimed as the overall winner of the prestigious **Bayer-LEAF Education Awards**, which celebrate the very best in food and farming education.

Chris Baldwin was one of four winners to be announced at a lunch in Birmingham's Botanical Gardens, attended by nearly one hundred guests from the world of agriculture and education, having earlier scooped the **Innovative Learning Award**.

APS Produce have worked with 500 children from local schools at their high tech tomato production greenhouse facilities around the country and Chris Baldwin encapsulates the company's ethos when it comes to education. The team's dedication to teaching the students resulted in them winning the Innovative Learning Award, for a farm business demonstrating innovative work with schools encouraging an understanding of and interest in current farming practices, whether utilising technology, thinking creatively about showing modern, sustainable farming or raising awareness of on-farm innovation.

Specifically, the judges were impressed with the team's passion and commitment to explaining how a high tech environment can also be a living ecosystem, and their ability to bring the school curriculum to life, especially around STEM subjects. Involving students in identifying projects to improve the productivity and sustainability of the glasshouses was particularly inspiring.

For more information, photos and to talk with the team at APS Produce, please contact Janet Hickinbottom or Justine Hards at LEAF Education in the first instance – see above for contact details.

Head Judge, **Janet Hickinbottom, National Education Officer at *Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) Education*** said, “The competition this year was extremely fierce but the judges were really impressed with how the APS team have been able to make farming and the environment relevant to all parts of the school curriculum, and we were delighted to present them with the **Innovative Learning Award**, and then the **Overall Winner’s Award.**”

Michael Muncey, Head of Business for Bayer Crop Science in the UK, added: APS Produce is a very worthy winner of both these awards. It is fantastic to see the sheer enthusiasm of people trying to reconnect young people with where their food comes from. Farmers, growers and other organisations up and down the country are doing some amazing work when it comes to making UK agriculture relevant to the next generation, and we believe it is worth celebrating their achievements.”

The winners of the individual awards were as follows:

Primary School Partnership Award	For a farm that has built and continues to build a successful relationship with primary schools (5-11year olds) and makes a valuable and sustained contribution to school life, both on and away from the farm.	Nonington Farms Ltd.	Nr Canterbury
Secondary School Partnership Award	For a farm business that has gone out of its way to build a successful relationship with one or more secondary schools (11-18 year olds).	Brockhill School Farm	Nr Hythe
Innovative Learning Award	For a farm business demonstrating innovative work with schools encouraging an understanding of and interest in current farming practices, whether utilising technology, thinking	APS Produce	Nr Dover

	creatively about showing modern, sustainable farming or raising awareness of on-farm innovation.		
Lifetime Achievement Award (supported by NFU Mutual)	For exceptional services to countryside educational activities over a prolonged period.	Nina Hatch	Birmingham
Overall Winner of the Bayer-LEAF Education Awards 2019	For an organisation which has won one of this year's awards and are deemed worthy of the overall award.	APS Produce	Nr Dover

More about the competition and winners, including videos of the individual winners can be found at <https://cropscience.bayer.co.uk/about-us/awards-19/> and www.leafuk.org/education/the-bayer-leaf-education-awards-2019

About Bayer

Bayer is a global enterprise with more than a 150-year history and core competencies in the fields of health care, agriculture and high-tech materials. Bayer Crop Science, a subgroup of Bayer, is committed to supporting farmers on their journey, putting health, nutrition and sustainable food production at the very heart of the business. From roots in the soil, right up to satellites monitoring crop data, Bayer's aim is to reduce the impact of damaging weeds, insects and diseases across the world helping create a better food system for everyone. For more information see cropscience.bayer.co.uk.

About LEAF Education

LEAF Education works to inspire future generations about farming, food and the countryside. It provides teachers with curriculum focused training, tools and resources to help them deliver high-quality learning experiences about farming. It also helps farmers navigate the world of education and supports them in delivering inspiring and engaging on-farm and in-classroom activities. LEAF Education is part of LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) – a leading organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. For more information see www.leafuk.org/education.

About APS Produce

APS Produce are the UK's leading supplier of British tomatoes to the high street, responsible for approximately 30% of total UK production, supplying most of the major UK retailers. They are a family owned and operated business with strong family values and have been producing great tasting tomatoes using environmentally and sustainable methods for over 65 years. APS glasshouses produce around 500 million tomatoes per year ranging from cherry to beefsteak. Alongside conventional hydroponic tomatoes, they are also the largest soil grown organic producer in the UK. As industry leaders, they chair the annual Tomato Growers Association conference and the Research and Development function of the British Tomato Growers Association. www.apsgroup.uk.com