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SURREY: Ecotone UK becomes a Future Maker

The B-Corp certified business will offer career insight to disadvantaged young people



Ecotone UK, the organic and vegetarian food company based in Camberley, has joined MyBigCareer's Future Makers programme, to introduce young people to a career in the food industry.

A natural next step in the company's diversity and inclusion initiative, Ecotone UK will work closely with MyBigCareer to open up opportunities for teenagers aged 12-18 from disadvantaged backgrounds and give them valuable insights into a future career path.

MyBigCareer will be inviting secondary schools in Surrey, serving local communities of high disadvantage, to participate in a range of initiatives hosted by Ecotone UK. The mission-led business, which is home to household brands Clipper Teas, Kallo, Whole Earth and Mrs Crimble's, can offer young people a broad perspective of the food industry from new product development to finance, sales & marketing through to a day in the life of a CEO.

MyBigCareer and Ecotone UK will offer schools the chance for pupils to take part in workshops, 1:1 Career Coaching and Insight Days designed to inspire and spark creativity. Ecotone's employees can also become volunteer coaches to help build self-belief and support young people to break through the barriers to social mobility.

Alongside career guidance, Ecotone UK can also show pupils how the food they eat has an impact on the natural world. Driven by the company's mission, Food for Biodiversity, Ecotone UK is committed to using natural and organic ingredients, that help to protect and grow biodiversity.

Ann Chambers, HR Director at Ecotone UK, says:

“As part of Ecotone's Food for Biodiversity purpose, we have been looking at our own inclusion and diversity and how our internal ecosystem and local community could benefit from greater depth of diversity. This has driven us to look outside the business to how we can create a positive future for the food industry by bringing greater diversity to the next generation of workers in FMCG. We're delighted to be working with MyBigCareer to help open up more opportunities for young people and break down barriers for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Ecotone UK has an internal diversity and inclusion initiative that is focused on creating a welcoming workplace and equal opportunities for all. This means making sure that everyone has a voice and raising awareness of unconscious bias.



Earlier this year, Ecotone UK was certified as a Great Place to Work - the highest recognition for the quality of the work environment. It scored most positively on credibility, fairness, respect, pride and camaraderie.

Richard Watson, MyBigCareer Chief Executive says:

"The partnerships we're building with diversity-focussed businesses like Ecotone UK will play such an important role in unlocking the social mobility crisis facing young people. As a B-Corp company with clear commitment to its people and communities, we're excited to welcome Ecotone UK to MyBigCareer Future Makers. Our collaboration has huge potential to open up workplace opportunities across the Ecotone business for under-represented young people."

ENDS

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Notes to editors

About Ecotone UK

Ecotone UK (formerly Wessanen UK) is a natural and organic food company, with pioneering food brands in expanding market segments, including:

- The UK's first Fairtrade tea company, Clipper Teas, which makes natural, fair and delicious hot beverages and created the world's first fully biodegradable, non-GM and unbleached tea bag;
- Whole Earth, the UK's no.1 peanut butter brand and manufacturer of natural and organic spreads, cereals and drinks, and
- Kallø makes market-leading, organic rice, corn and veggie cakes, as well as the UK's fastest-growing range of stocks and gravies;
- Mrs Crimble's, the gloriously gluten-free cake brand that makes delicious baked goods for all to enjoy.

Ecotone UK has been B Corp certified since 2018 and champions its mission, 'Food for Biodiversity', through a commitment to protecting the living planet for current and future generations. It is focused on providing food that is good for people and the planet and conducts its business in a sustainable way.

These principles are channelled through its involvement with its subsidiaries, and the brand is accredited by or a member of a range of industry bodies and associations including; B Corp, Fairtrade Foundation; Soil Association; UK Tea & Infusions Association, and the Organic Trade Board.

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About MyBigCareer

MyBigCareer is a charity on a mission to Connect, Inspire and Make Change for disadvantaged young people aged 13-18, helping them break through the barriers to social mobility.

- We support schools serving the UK's most disadvantaged communities struggling to provide Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) due to lack of resources and knowledge.
- High quality CEIAG is proven to inspire young people from an early age and challenge stereotypes relating to gender, class or ethnicity - but 82% of teachers don't have sufficient information to be confident giving careers advice.
- Working with schools with high proportions of pupils receiving free school meals, based in communities of high deprivation, MyBigCareer supports thousands of young people every year with 1:1 careers advice sessions, employer Insight Days and inspirational workshops, and offers personalised mentoring for job and university applications.

The pandemic has devastated the employment prospects of the students MyBigCareer supports. The charity is responding by bringing together schools, businesses and volunteers to provide the career guidance, connections and access to job opportunities that under-represented young people desperately need.

MyBigCareer Future Makers is an outcome-focused initiative with leading employers to harness the skills of employee volunteers as Career Coaches, open up workplace experiences and connections, and provide the charity with sustainable funding to help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve the future they deserve.