

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **KENT STUDENTS TO RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING FOR AGRICULTURAL STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY**

The Kent County Agricultural Society has awarded three new Kent students with scholarship funding to support them through their studies in higher education. As part of the Kent Rural Scholars scheme, the Society awards funding to three new students every year to support them for the duration of their studies in agriculture and related industries. This year's funding went to Georgina Francesconi, Briony Balcombe, and Henry Overy.

The Kent Rural Scholars scheme was set up three years ago and provides the recipients with £1000 per year for each year of their degree to support their living costs. Previous recipients include Pip Bradley who is entering her final year studying international equine and agricultural business management at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, Jacob Taylor who is currently completing a placement year with the Forestry Commission's South Scotland Conservancy and Clio Rudgard Redsell who is about to enter her second year studying veterinary medicine and science at Nottingham University.

All applicants must be residents of Kent when the applications are made and must be planning to start a degree in agriculture, horticulture, forestry or other industry related subject at a UK university.

Having grown up on a mixed arable / livestock farm in Ashford, Georgina Francesconi plans to study agriculture at the University of Nottingham. Georgina has taken part in academic studies with the Royal Society in partnership with the University of Cambridge which she used, along with the ideas gained on local crop walks to help develop ideas for the family farm. With an interest in crop science, Georgina said 'the prospect of being able to continue my studies at university with a specific focus towards agriculture is an exciting one.'

Briony Balcombe from Folkestone will be studying animal science and management at Writtle University College. Having been a part of Brockhill Young Farmers Club since she was 11 years old, Briony has been instrumental in the running of the club. Being part of the committee for the last four years, Briony was Vice Chairman when the club were awarded the national accolade of Best School Farm at the School Farm Network Education Alliance awards with the trophy being awarded by BBC Countryfile's Adam Henson. Briony is keen to use the skills she has gained on the farm to continue her studies with the aim of becoming a veterinarian nurse.

Henry Overy from Paddock Wood will be starting a degree in agriculture at Newcastle University. A keen sportsman and member of the Combined Cadet Force, Henry has developed extensive teamwork and

leadership skills throughout his time at school. In 2017, he documented the machinery used in harvest which has been published on YouTube to help encourage others into the farming industry. As the seventh generation on his family farm which grows arable crops, blackcurrants and apples, Henry hopes to use the experience and knowledge from studying agriculture at university to eventually help him manage and develop the local family business.

Lucy Hegarty, Show Manager at the Kent County Agricultural Society, said 'we received a high calibre of applications for the scholarship scheme this year, but Georgina, Briony, and Henry all stood out for their passion for agriculture. As a charity, the Society aims to encourage education and development in farming and we are delighted to be able to provide these three students with the support to achieve this.'

Find out more about the scholarship scheme and the Society's other charitable work by visiting [www.kentshowground.co.uk](http://www.kentshowground.co.uk)

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**Notes to the Editors:**

The Kent County Agricultural Society has been supporting education and improvement in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and related industries since its foundation in 1923. As a charity, the Society aims to encourage education and development in agriculture and related industries. These objectives are promoted through the annual Kent County Show and Living Land events, the Farming in the Classroom and scholarship scheme initiatives and several recognition awards and grants.

**About the Kent County Show**

The Kent County Show is the region's showcase event for farming, countryside and rural life. The three-day show brings together the best food, animals, and excitement that Kent has to offer and reveals the true spirit of "The Garden of England."

This year, the Kent County Show will be on the 5, 6, 7 July 2019 and will feature livestock and equine competitions, trade stands, food halls, the Heritage Vintage Vehicle Section, and the Garden Life Marquee.