

# Do you want to earn between £18,000 & £30,000?

Have you thought about a career in commercial horticulture?

Commercial horticulture - the growing of plants for commercial purposes  
Food crops - fruit, vegetables, salads, herbs, grapes for wine-making  
Flowering plants, trees and shrubs for gardens/parks; fruit trees

Crops are either grown in the field or under protected conditions, in glasshouses or polytunnels

## CASE STUDY



### NAME

Laura Marner

### ROLE

Assistant Crop Manager, VHB (the UK's largest supplier of fresh herbs), Runcton, Chichester, West Sussex [[www.vhbherbs.co.uk](http://www.vhbherbs.co.uk)]

### SALARY

£18,000 - £30,000

### QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY:

Science based degree/diploma; apprenticeship and experience. I have a BTEC and a National Diploma in Horticulture.

### IS TRAINING GIVEN?

Yes, continuing professional development – training in management, health and safety, crop protection.

#### WORKING LIFE (WHAT DO YOU DO?):

I work 'under glass' in a 29,500 square metre glasshouse that covers more than seven acres of land at Runcton in West Sussex. Generally, I work from 7.30am until 4pm, but this can vary and sometimes I work from 6.30am until 5pm. I am on call for monthly weekend duty for herbs. If I got phoned in the middle of the night, I'd have to go into work.

The computer that oversees the environmental monitoring can call me automatically. Practical experience of horticulture is vital because I am overseeing plants from seed to point of despatch (to the supermarkets). The longest growing cycle is 90 days, the shortest, for mint, is 16 days.

#### SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES:

IT skills, management, experience of logistics and people skills, attention to detail, flexibility and leadership. Happy to work in a demanding environment, good practical skills, reliable, responsible, able to work in a team or alone, organisational skills, interested in plants, confident in the operation of machinery.

#### DID YOU DO ANY WORK EXPERIENCE BEFORE JOINING?

I left school at 16 and went to Brinsbury College (now Chichester College) where I gained a BTEC and a National Diploma in Horticulture. I then became a trainee propagation manager in a cut flower business, then moved to a tree nursery where I worked in propagation and despatch. I later worked in retail and moved back into horticulture, this time as a propagation supervisor, before joining VHB in 2011.

#### ROUTES INTO HORTICULTURE:

Routes vary but a good education is useful. Previous experience of working in horticulture is essential to become a manager. Apprenticeship schemes available for over 16s. Some roles require study in Higher Education.

See [www.lantra.co.uk/careers](http://www.lantra.co.uk/careers)