

ESS Partners With Aberdeenshire Farmers 'The Artisan Grower'

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The Energy, Government & Infrastructure sector of ESS, part of [Compass Group UK & Ireland](#), has partnered with Aberdeenshire farmers 'The Artisan Grower', supporting the company's focus on increasing the plant-based ingredients in menus and sourcing produce locally.

ESS has invested in 'The Artisan Grower' and the farmers are producing a range of vegetables and salad items exclusively for use in its menus. These include three varieties of kale, kohlrabi, brassicas, pak choi, Swiss chard, beetroot, heirloom tomatoes, peppers and onions. The products are being served to customers in ESS' Energy contracts on and offshore.

Farm owners Robert and Michelle Sullivan relocated from London to Pitcaple in the heart of Aberdeenshire to realise their ambition of growing high quality food using sustainable techniques. They now operate from ten-acre premises on the Pittodrie Estate near Inverurie where they farm with no animal products, none of the sprays that some organic regulatory bodies allow and using organic seeds wherever possible.

A key objective of the relationship is encouraging customers to engage with where their food comes from and the importance of local sourcing and eating seasonally. ESS' culinary team is working closely with Robert and Michelle to market the produce through a seasonality calendar, seasonal product of the month, plant-forward recipes designed to highlight individual ingredients and supplier showcase events.

There are exciting plans to build on the relationship to enhance its sustainability credentials and impact. These include expanding the range of produce being grown, introducing an apiary housing several beehives and installing a wormery to enable the on-site reprocessing of food waste into nutrient-rich compost for use by the farm.

The partnership with 'The Artisan Grower' is one of several local growing initiatives in place across the business. Others include an organic garden on site at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, gardens maintained in partnership with military veterans at Brompton Barracks and community growing projects in collaboration with Incredible Edible at sites across the UK.

Robert and Michelle Sullivan from 'The Artisan Grower' commented: "We are delighted to be working with ESS, helping them to deliver good quality, sustainable, locally grown produce into their units. It's a privilege to be able to help the company attain its goal of reaching Climate Net Zero by 2030, by substantially reducing its carbon footprint amongst other things. We look forward to a bright future together with ESS!"

Graham Singer, Culinary Director for ESS Energy, commented: "The Artisan Grower partnership is very exciting for us and we're already sourcing some fantastic fresh ingredients from the farm. I'm looking forward to increasing the ranges and volumes being grown, as well as engaging the community in the importance of local sourcing for the environment and showcasing the great food being grown on their doorstep."

Ronnie Kelman, Managing Director - ESS Energy, Government & Infrastructure, added: "It's wonderful to be partnering with a local business built on such a strong ethos of quality and sustainability. The passion that Robert and Michelle have for great food and the Aberdeenshire area is clear to see and we're delighted to be on this journey with them."