

Green beef leads Paul to the zoo

Chemical engineering student Paul Johnson beefed up profits at meat wholesaler Malcolm Allan and won a place in the final of a national environmental competition.

The 22-year-old from Glenrothes (pictured with Councillor Tom Buchanan, head of Edinburgh City Council's economic development committee) qualified for the Scottish final of the Environmental Placement Programme 2009 (EPP), organised by the Business Environment Partnership (BEP), after finishing top of the Central Belt heat.

Paul, who is in the fourth year of a Master's degree at the University of Edinburgh, received a cheque for £100 and will go on to compete in the Scottish National Final, in which prizes will be presented by First Minister Alex Salmond at Edinburgh Zoo on 10 September. He will be joined by six students from other Scottish regional heats, each competing for the £500 first prize.

During his eight week summer placement at Malcolm Allan in Falkirk, Paul investigated how the company could reduce energy usage and improve waste management across its site. By collecting data about the packaging used and researching ways the company could improve its recycling, he identified that the company could save £8,710 per year and divert 22.4 tonnes of waste from landfill.

He has also reduced risks for the company by ensuring it complies with packaging legislation and identified a further £16,000 worth of savings through improved energy efficiency and staff awareness-raising measures.

Gordon Allan, Sales Director for Malcolm Allan, commented: "Paul's project was very practical and achieved real benefits for our company. He had a steep learning curve but showed that small companies can make a real difference."

Paul commented: "I've now worked on environmental projects of a similar nature for the last two Summers. The enjoyment they have given me and the success I have had have definitely influenced my considerations for a future career."

Glen Bennett of EAE Distribution Ltd, one of the judges, added: "The students all showed great passion and commitment. They've been able to identify many savings and learned a lot about business during their placements."

The EPP is sponsored by Shell U.K. Limited, the Scottish Government and SEPA.

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