

Masterclass in Horticultural Business: Built for success

As Kirsty Dickenson reflects on her recent studies, it soon becomes apparent her decision to undertake a Masterclass in Horticultural Business in 2020 was a good one.

Offered through the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) and developed in partnership with some of the world's leading names in horticulture, including New Zealand's Lincoln University, the Wageningen Research Academy in the Netherlands, and Hort Innovation, the course equips current and future farm managers, owners and employers with the agribusiness skills and capabilities required to run profitable and sustainable farm businesses.

A horticulturalist with Costa, Kirsty works in the berry category with a focus on raspberries and an avocado trial in Tasmania's north-west. And it's a role that is so broad and diverse, that the Bachelor of Agriculture graduate said she would find it hard to define an average day.



Kirsty Dickenson, Costa

Photo credit: Costa

"I'm involved in everything from making decisions around planting and crop manipulations, identifying pest and disease concerns, and creating and assessing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, canopy management and all things crop management from pre-planting to ensuring the best fruit possible for our harvest team," Kirsty explained.

"I'm actively involved in our research activities and have begun to move into the development of planning and capital expenditure proposals associated with them."

With so much of Costa business in her remit, Kirsty recognised the Masterclass in Horticultural Business could be a wise next step in her career development.

"I wanted to expand my skillset and be ready to be involved in business management in my future," Kirsty said. "And to increase my understanding of the many elements of running a business, particularly to be more aware of the business I work in, the context it operates in and what it takes to be a successful business."

Kirsty said the Masterclass helped her understand risk and decision-making; the process of identifying where Costa fits in the market; identifying new opportunities and attaining skills in understanding the feasibility of potential opportunities; as well as building the skills required to create a business plan - for either a new business or a new opportunity within an existing business.