

Learning on the job builds new skills

Meet Rotorua native Monica Ohoia, a local legend who's been working with Thompsons Horticulture for the past five years. On the cusp of her sixth year with the company, she's pushing the boundaries, and recently began her level 3 in Horticulture at the Eastern Institute of Technology in Gisborne.



Although Ohoia was born in Rotorua, she was raised in Gisborne, and that's where her journey in the New Zealand Kiwifruit Industry began. Those are her stomping grounds, and where she's done an excellent job in a supervisory role for the past three years. How did she get started? Ohoia reminisces that,

"They had an MSD (Ministry of Development) crew running through WINZ (Work and Income New Zealand). So, I thought I'd just jump on the MSD crew and give it a go."

One of the things she enjoys most about the industry is the opportunity to meet new people and learn new things on a daily basis. She notes that when she first started with Thompsons, she knew very little about kiwifruit, but that the job has given her the chance to learn about the industry and gain valuable new skills. She also appreciates the networking opportunities, like interacting with RSE Recognised Seasonal Employee teams and other professionals in the industry.

"Things I like about my job are meeting new people, people in general, learning new things every day - well I learn new things everyday - and getting to interact with like RSE teams and other guys that come in from other companies."

As a supervisor, Ohoia excels in her role and looks to make the most of each day. Her daily doses of vitamin D are a key element of her happiness in her role, and she prefers to spend the majority of her time outdoors and engaging with others.

She's a firm believer that horticulture makes a great job for anyone who loves to work outside and have a varied role, especially where there's always room to move up. She says that the day passes quickly when you're on your feet and engaged in new adventures, and she never gets bored of it.

"You do have people that show you what they know about the industry as well which is really, really cool. It's awesome. If you're an outdoors person, yeah, horticulture's the job for you," she says.

As a kiwifruit industry professional, Monica's experience and knowledge are invaluable. Her passion for learning and growing within the industry is evident, and she is a respected and admired member of the Thompsons Horticulture team. She is a great example of what can be achieved with hard work, dedication, and a positive attitude!

