



news people

The Grocer 6/9/14

Oliver backs online scheme to attract new talent to the industry

Andrew Don

Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver has got behind an online scheme to help students win work placements with food and drink companies.

Oliver is backing FoodStart, a free service that the Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) will launch in mid-September to attract fresh young talent and address the skills shortage facing the industry. It has also received support from companies such as Waitrose and Warburtons.

The IFST said attracting sufficient numbers of students to the sector was an ongoing challenge, with predictions the industry would need



Oliver: "This industry has never been more dynamic"

over 170,000 additional employees by 2020.

Employers can advertise their work experience placements for free on FoodStart, allowing students to browse and apply for the posts while building a portfolio of their achievements.

Oliver said people from all kinds of backgrounds and skills working in food were needed

"whether you're a genius or a hard grafter.

"I know first hand that this industry has never been more dynamic. This generation and the next will make the biggest impact on the food industry we've ever seen."

The IFST said the website would bring together UK-wide work experience at all levels, from school and university programmes to graduate placements and internships, allowing organisations to showcase their opportunities and attract new talent.

IFST chief executive Jon Poole said: "Our sector relies on fresh talent to ensure we have sufficient skills to meet the sector's future needs."