

Thanet Earth declares the British cucumber season officially open!



23rd January 2014

For a fifth year running, Thanet Earth has become the earliest British cucumber grower to harvest its fruit.

Addy Breugem and Arjan de Gier have once again worked tirelessly and provided the perfect conditions in their 6.1-hectare greenhouse to ensure that British-grown product reaches the supermarket shelves at the earliest opportunity.

Staff from Thanet Earth Marketing joined Addy and today at Tesco Extra in Broadstairs to hand deliver the first boxes of cucumbers and to chat with customers about how the fruit was produced.

They explained that being very early-season fruit the skin would be a slightly lighter, brighter shade of green, but that the flavour would be as delicious as ever. The number of cucumbers harvested each week will rise until the summer months when the greenhouse will be at its busiest and the plants will be working their hardest, helped along by the Thanet sunshine. It's not just the skin of the cucumber that's green though – the plants are watered using stored rainwater captured from the greenhouse roof, and the greenhouse is heated by the waste heat that comes from the gas engine inside the greenhouse. The CHP engine is generating electricity for local homes while keeping the greenhouse perfectly warm inside.



Have you tried these easy party snacks? Take the finest British cucumbers, cut them into chunks about an inch thick, hollow out the centre and fill with cream cheese and peppers or with houmous and red onion. Delicious and ready in seconds!

The team was happy to answer questions from interested shoppers – with most people wanting to know how to grow the cucumbers so straight! Grower Addy Breugem gave away his secret: 'We grow our plants using a high wire technique. We make use of gravity and we make sure we remove any obstructions in the way of the young fruit to help us get the cucumbers as straight as possible. Using beneficial insects to help prevent pest attack on the fruit also helps prevent cell damage on the cucumbers. Cell damage makes them bend too.'

You can learn more about the Thanet Earth crops of cucumbers, peppers and speciality tomatoes online at www.thanetearth.com – take a look at the new Virtual Tour feature for a peek inside Britain's newest tomato greenhouse.

For teachers and pupils, visit www.discoverthanetearth.com for a growing bank of educational resources developed especially with schools in mind.

Thanet Earth is a state-of-the-art greenhouse development in Kent. When completed the site will feature seven enormous greenhouses, producing tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers. So far, four of the greenhouses have been constructed and are fully operational alongside an on-site packing factory. The crops are sold to the UK's supermarkets.

Thanet Earth is a joint venture, owned jointly by the Fresca Group of companies and three specialist grower companies.

Follow us on Twitter - @thanetearth

Further information available from:

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Grower Addy Breugem handing out leaflets and slices of his special edition heart-shaped cucumbers.

