Travel Award Presentation at MOMA, Machynlleth

Helping to reduce the costs of agricultural production in Wales was the theme of the winning Travel Award project at Aberystwyth University this year. The winner, Atish Bansod, is in his third year of studies for a BSc in Plant Genetics.

As agriculture production contributes significantly to the economy of Wales, there is growing concern about the increased cost of feedstuffs particularly the 190, 000 tonnes of soya imported into Wales every year.

With global supply change problems and climate change issues, this is not sustainable and there is an urgent need to find and develop an alternative protein source for livestock feed that can be sourced locally. Many farms are now trialling broad beans and fava beans as possible alternatives feedstuffs. Early results are promising, particularly when they are grown together with other crops such as maize and wheat.

Master John Charles – Atish Bansod – Liveryman Sylvia Robert-Sargeant

Working with Reading University, Atish Bansod will use novel CT scanning processes to assess the phenotypic variety of fava beans and bean pods and their potential to provide local feed sources with high protein content. This project was eminently suitable for this Award. It was not only relevant to the current challenges of agricultural development in Wales, but also offered an opportunity for Atish to acquire new skills.

Since his arrival, his course exams results at Aberystwyth have been exemplary; he has been awarded a summer school scholarship at the prestigious John Innes Research Centre at Norwich and also a Genetics Society Summer studentship. In his spare time he also works as an assistant at a local care home. Atish wishes to continue as a genetic researcher and hopes that Aberystwyth, as a Centre of Excellence in Agricultural research, will the base for his future career.

We were delighted that Atish was able to attend our Reception at MOMA in Machynlleth on Friday 21st April where The Master presented him with his Award certificate.