

PRESS RELEASE

Monday 16th November 2009

RABI TO CELEBRATE JOHN JOSEPH MECHE AT CHELSEA

The John Joseph Mechi Garden, sponsored by Wilkin & Sons Ltd of Tiptree working with RABI and designer Ben Wincott of Writtle College, has just been accepted by the RHS (Royal Horticultural Society) for a place at the Chelsea Flower Show in May 2010.

Why John Joseph Mechi?

A passionate advocate of new farming methods John Joseph Mechi is a fantastic link between RABI, which he founded, his home at Tiptree Hall, now part of Wilkin & Sons' estate where 150 years later innovative farming methods are still being introduced, and the remarkable Writtle College, a specialist land-based higher and further education provider.

“The dedication of a Chelsea Show garden to our founder, whose family motto was *the fruit of the land sustains life*, will be a high point in our 150th anniversary year”, said Andrew Densham, RABI chairman. “With the Tiptree Farm connection, thanks to the generous support of Wilkin & Sons, and the expertise of Writtle College, I am sure that it will be a fitting tribute to John Joseph Mechi.”

“We are delighted to be helping RABI and Writtle with the John Joseph Mechi Garden”, said Ian Thurgood, joint managing director of Wilkin & Sons Ltd. “The RHS Chelsea Flower Show is a prestigious event and we're sure that visitors will share our enthusiasm for this very special garden, dedicated to a champion of rural communities.”

2010 is a time of anniversaries: RABI will be celebrating its foundation 150 years ago and the Wilkin family first made strawberry jam at Tiptree 125 years ago in 1885. The John Joseph Mechi Garden, that will link these organisations, has been designed by Ben Wincott at Writtle College. Ben achieved a silver medal with his first entry at Chelsea, in 2009.

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