



GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY Latest news and updates

9th April 2020

Please continue to feed your experiences, solutions and concerns to gllepbusinessintelligence@lincolnshire.gov.uk

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP continues to work closely with businesses, facilitators, and government to support the Covid19 impact on the food chain and support the food sector to continue feeding the nation. The two schemes which are widely promoted and operating now remain as [Feed the Nation](#) and [SWAP](#). [Deliver to the Nation](#) and the [Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport](#) are also two additional logistics schemes now fully operational.

Please follow the latest updates on our website www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk and follow us on [@GreaterLincsLEP](#) and through [LinkedIn](#).

Robotics acceleration - Yesterday 90 participants from industry, research and government joined a webinar focused on accelerating automation and robotics in the AgriFood sector to reduce the impact of COVID-19. The aims of the webinar were to; establish the scale of potential impacts on the sector of Covid-19 and labour supplies; prioritise opportunities for automation solutions this season (the next 3 to 6 months) and in the next 12-18 months (the 2021 season); and where automation opportunities exist, to clarify any request to Government and the industry support (likely to be combined measures to purchase equipment, repurpose existing equipment or fast track innovation; and identify new opportunities for collaboration to support the sector.)

The evidence will support on-going discussions with BEIS, Innovate UK and DEFRA and does not replace or substitute existing work underway to secure labour for this season.

Led by Professor Simon Pearson (University of Lincoln), with inputs from Ali Capper (Chair NFU Horticulture and Potato Board) and Dave Ross (CEO Agri-EPI) and supported by Martin Collison (Agrifood expert and advisor Greater Lincolnshire LEP), and Jeremy Hadall (Manufacturing Technology Centre), the key message from industry is the immediate need to deliver more automation.

The team are now working with government to further the case for accelerated support for automation solutions. The Greater Lincolnshire LEP and University of Lincoln would welcome industry input on three key questions to help focus activity:-

- 1. Further evidence, ideally quantified, of the need in the industry for automation and what would the impact of failing to act be on the industry?***
- 2. What could be delivered in the next 3-6 months (for this season), if help was provided?***
- 3. What can be achieved in the next 12-18 months (for the 2021 season), if help is provided?***

Please send any suggestions and evidence to the gllepbusinessintelligence@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Free Translation Service - Boston based PAB Translation are offering to translate CV19 guidance and related industry specific guidance and requirements **free** to businesses with non-English speaking workers to aid communication of the key messages and safety requirements in the sector. Translations are available in over 200 languages. <http://pabtranslation.co.uk/translation-en>

1000 flower bouquets donated to Lincolnshire NHS and care homes - Green Partners Production UK based in Spalding, saw our promotion of the [#FeedtheNation](#) campaign last week and whilst not directly linked to the food sector, wanted to donate flower bouquets to the vulnerable and care workers during these current challenges. 1000 bouquets are being donated with the first 500 going to a care home in Boston today for elderly residents and carers, and the second batch to the NHS United Lincoln Hospitals Trust next week. Our thanks to Green Partners for this kind and generous gesture. Look out for this story which will be promoted next week whilst highlighting the strategic connections between the Netherlands and South Lincolnshire in the food, horticultural and ornamental sectors.

Other priorities accelerated with government:-

- **Furloughed staff** - We continue to push for clarity on furloughed staff. Furloughed staff should be able to take up paid seasonal agricultural work whilst on furlough, in order to help to meet the shortages of staff in the food chain which are already present and expected to grow.
- **Key worker status** - We are asking for the introduction of a secure electronic system to identify food chain staff who are able to travel to keep the food chain operational. The advice on caring for livestock also needs to be separated from the advice for pet owners, as the two are different issues with very different requirements.
- **Pick for Britain** - This scheme has not yet been launched officially. The NFU are in talks with government to get this set up and operational as a matter of urgency,

Covid19 Business Support and Information

- Find out if your Lincolnshire or Rutland business is eligible for a grant, visit the Coronavirus funding page at [Business Lincolnshire](#)
- To arrange a call with a local business adviser call 01522 782189 or email businesslincolnshire@lincolnshire.gov.uk
- For the very latest information on Government support for your business visit <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk>
- Can your business offer support to the Coronavirus response? See <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business>
- Tell us about the impact on your business so we can help Government develop the right solutions, email gllepbusinessintelligence@lincolnshire.gov.uk