



ISSUE 15

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

18 January 2021

Sector Progress & Highlights

Please click on a link below to take you directly to the stories for quicker review.

- [Rising to the Challenge](#) - Introduction by LEP Food Board Chair
- [UK Agricultural Policy](#)
- [Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme \(SAWS\)](#)
- [EFRA Select Committee on Labour Availability](#)
- [New Investment in Boston](#)
- [International Year of Fruit and Vegetables](#)
- [Contained Technologies UK BlueRing™](#)
- [New Degree Level Apprenticeships in Agronomy](#)
- [Lincolnshire Agricultural Society Education Programme](#)
- [LEP Pipeline Projects](#)
- [Other Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Post Brexit Guidance](#) for Food & Drink Trade
- [Vaccination Programme](#)
- [Covid-19 Lockdown Support Schemes](#)
- [Great Taste Awards](#)

Click [here](#) to view the LEP e-newsletter review of 2020, and [here](#) to register to receive updates.

Rising to the Challenge, Sarah Louise Fairburn, Greater Lincolnshire Food Board Chair and Deputy Chair of Greater Lincolnshire LEP

I am sure none of us will be sorry to see the back of 2020, but the Greater Lincolnshire food chain can be rightly proud of the role it played last year. Whilst we know that Covid-19 will continue to impact us in 2021, by working together we can come out of the pandemic stronger by promoting Greater Lincolnshire's huge strength - keeping our nation fed.

Whilst the food service sector was of course impacted negatively by Covid-19, many parts of our food sector, from production to processing and retail saw growth driven by an unprecedented leap of innovation. Working with our Food Board we are developing an ambitious plan for further growth, by connecting the food industry with retailers, central government, and other stakeholders to support knowledge transfer and help strengthen and establish new supply chain relationships.

The LEP is determined that the food sector should be at the heart of Greater Lincolnshire's economic recovery alongside the growth of other priority sectors such as clean energy, so that we can deliver on the promise to *Build Back Better*. But, what does this mean in practice and how can the food sector be at the heart of our future economic prosperity?

As we report in this edition of our food newsletter, the speed of change is unrelenting with major national policy announcements in December alone on future UK Agricultural Policy, a new enlarged Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) and of course a post Brexit Trade Deal.

Our challenge has to be to look beyond policy announcements and support practical, business led projects which deliver real results. In this edition we highlight the investment in Boston by Plant and Bean to create a dedicated processing site - the largest in Europe), for plant proteins and the development of BlueRing™ to track food logistics chain in real time - a World's first pioneered in Lincolnshire. As reported in our last edition, 1st January 2021 also saw the Border Control Post at Freshline in Spalding go live to deliver post Brexit border checks.

Lincolnshire is not new to innovation in the food sector, from the World's first tractor in Grantham 125 years ago to the €9million investment secured by Lincoln based Saga Robotics in 2020, our agrifood and engineering expertise means we have always been a leader in food chain innovation.

2021 will of course be a difficult year for many as lockdowns and job losses cause real pain, but I think we can be optimistic about the food sector with the launch of our High Potential Opportunity (HPO) with DIT in spring 2021 set to showcase our industry cluster internationally.

I also believe there can be little doubt that 2021 will see more focus on low carbon supply chains, automation and efficiency, the link between diet and health and the protein transition. We will need new skills to deliver these areas and so we report on another first, the launch by NCFM of the UK's first higher apprenticeship in agronomy to ensure the industry has the BASIS qualified staff needed to advise farmers and growers as farming systems change. And we also report on the vital work of the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society to attract the next generation to our industry.

Finally, we know how busy everyone is but if you can feedback ideas on best practices or challenges you need help to address it will provide us with the evidence needed to make the case for support for the industry. In particular, we are keen to identify major capital projects in the food industry, to respond to the LEP call for pipeline projects which closes on the 15th February.

UK Agricultural Policy

On 30th November 2020 government published 'The Path to Sustainable Farming: An Agricultural Transition Plan 2021-2024', which sets out how the first half of the transition period (covering the current Parliament) will be delivered, and the areas they will target and support.

This represents a significant change in policy with a much sharper focus on payments for public goods, specifically on improved environmental performance, as well as supporting productivity growth and increased investment in skills, research and innovation.

Details on most of the new schemes will be developed through a consultation process starting in early 2021 and so the detailed implementation of the plan will become clearer during 2021. The report is available [here](#).

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) announcement 21st December 2020

On 21st December the Government released details of the 2021 Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS), which has increased numbers to 30,000 for up to 6 months each. This is still well short of the 75,000 the industry says it needs but a big increase on the 10,000 allowed in 2020. The announcement is available [here](#).

The SAWS announcement also stated that: *'From next year, farmers in England will be able to harness the power of on-farm technology and innovation through the **Farming Investment Fund**, which will open for applications next year. This fund will offer farmers grants for equipment, technology and infrastructure, supporting them to invest in their businesses and boost their productivity'*.

Greater Lincolnshire is keen to see its farmers put in good bids as soon as the scheme is available as previous experience suggests it will be heavily oversubscribed. We would suggest that you start thinking now about projects you may want to deliver with the support of this scheme.

EFRA Select Committee Report on Labour Availability 21st December 2020

Also on 21st December, the EFRA Select Committee released its [report](#) on access to labour which had been delayed by Covid-19.

Greater Lincolnshire LEP was the only LEP to submit evidence to this review, but was pleased to see many industry groups on the list of those who provided evidence.

The EFRA report concluded that; government will need to monitor closely the impact of new immigration rules on the food chain; more needs to be done to attract UK workers to the industry; and, that automation will not solve the problems of labour supply in the short term, but is critical in the medium to long term as we deal with labour supply constraints.

On automation it also called on DEFRA to publish a strategy within 6 months on how it will ‘work with technology providers and the food supply chain to ensure our farming and food production sectors can help develop and take advantage of the latest technological advancements.’ The LEP and University of Lincoln are engaging with DEFRA on these issues and will continue to advocate for further investment in automation in the industry.

New Investment in Boston

In December 2020 Plant and Bean, formerly the meat-free division of Brecks Foods, announced that they were developing a former Tulip site in Boston, covering 26.3 hectares, into a dedicated processing site for plant proteins focused on peas and beans. The site will have a capacity of 55,000tonnes per annum and is the largest of its kind in Europe. The company also announced new strategic partnerships with international Griffith Foods and Chinese company Gushen.

The Plant and Bean investment is a clear indication of the growth in interest in new types of protein food, both for direct human consumption and as sources of livestock feed. Greater Lincolnshire has ambitions to develop this sector and would be keen to hear from businesses who would like to work with it in this area.

International Year of Fruit and Vegetables

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN has designated 2021 as the Year of Fruit and Vegetables (IYFV 2021). Given how important Lincolnshire is to this sector in the UK in terms of both production and imports, we will be promoting this link to the FAO initiative in our HPO. The objectives of IYFV 2021 are; promoting the nutrition and health benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption; reducing losses and waste in fruit and vegetable food systems; and sharing best practice.

Further details are [here](#).

Contained Technologies UK BlueRing™

BlueRing™ and the linked Octosense™ provides a fully integrated, digital supply chain management system combining unique, industry leading software & hardware for freight transport, and has been launched and developed by Lincolnshire based FESA UK and Green Channel Solutions specifically to manage the transport documentation needs of food logistics.

The system provides end to end control for the movement of goods in the food supply chain including; digitising product manifest and supply chain documentation; providing cloud based data capture; utilising block chain technology; giving live location, condition updates and alerts; supporting data analysis and controlled data sharing; and adding value throughout the supply chain.

Fully integrated with HMRC and other government systems, it is believed to be the first system of its type and supports efficient international transport of goods in a post Brexit trading environment. More details are available [here](#).

National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM) - New Degree Level Apprenticeship at the University of Lincoln heralds a pipeline of future Agronomists and Professional Crop Advisors

Partnering with leading fresh produce, agri-chemical and environmental businesses, the University of Lincoln is leading the development of the first UK apprenticeship scheme to provide Agronomists and Professional Crop Advisors to the agricultural and horticultural sector.

The Level 6 Agriculture/Horticulture Professional Advisor Apprenticeship will provide a practical grounding in the crop and environmental sciences needed to become a BASIS qualified professional. Apprentices will study at the Lincoln Institute of Agrifood Technologies (LIAT) at the University's Riseholme Campus which has a long history of developing BASIS qualified Agronomists. They will also study the impact of growing on food manufacturers and consumers at the National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM), to understand the critical role Agronomists play in ensuring sustainable 'field to fork' food production.

Produce World and Burgess Farms' Chairman, William Burgess, commented as a grower, Chair of BASIS and a member of the LEP Food Board, 'Agronomists are critical to farming businesses but are in notable short supply. We are therefore delighted to be working with the University of Lincoln to deliver this much needed apprenticeship. The changing face of global agriculture is bringing many opportunities and it is an exciting time to be partnering to bring the next generation of Agronomists into our sector and foster the innovation needed to ensure British agriculture and food production is seen as global leading'.

Professor Sharon Green, Deputy Head at the NCFM said 'few young people understand this occupation and the launch of the apprenticeship will help to demystify the role, show a structured career path and the great opportunities and rewards that being an Agronomist can bring'.

For more information please contact Sharon Green: shgreen@lincoln.ac.uk on (07843) 658 937

Lincolnshire Agricultural Society (LAS) - Education Programme

In 2019-2020, LAS saw over 12,600 young people and 104 business representatives involved in their programmes, along with 60 teachers and 120 trainee teachers accessing CPD.

LAS is a charity that is passionate about agricultural education and countryside learning. The Society's **IMPACT Group** is a members group for young professionals, bringing together like-minded industry members to advance, promote and improve agriculture and horticultural industries. Given the current constraints on physical meetings and visits it is meeting virtually every two months.



Farmhouse Breakfast Week showcases the importance of healthy eating, supports young people with key life skills and shows how food production is an integral part of Lincolnshire. In 2021 breakfast workshops will be delivered virtually and help young people to develop their cooking skills and understanding of a healthy breakfast, whilst also developing their knowledge about where breakfast comes from and the journey it takes from farm to fork.

During January 2021, breakfast workshops will be delivered directly into the classroom through a mixture of live streaming and pre-recorded videos including cookery demonstrations and farm tours, providing schools with a fantastic learning resource. Each school involved will have a resource box delivered supplying the necessary teaching resources, including teacher's guide, activity instructions, along with all ingredients to replicate the breakfast cookery sessions. The aim is to provide the food, expertise and knowledge to reconnect young people with food and farming.

Careers in the Agri-Food Industry - LAS Education are committed to open young minds to facilitate lifelong learning about food, farming and the impact of agricultural technologies in shaping a sustainable future. LAS is taking the opportunity to adapt its careers provision and are seeking digital

solutions to delivery. They would love to work with more local businesses, so to see how you can get involved email Sarah Duxbury - sduxbury@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk and for more about the LAS Educational Programme visit www.lincolnshireshowground.co.uk/education

Funding Opportunities

LEP Pipeline Project Refresh

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Greater Lincolnshire Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan (SIDP) Working Group launched a combined call for pipeline projects on Monday 30th November 2020.

It is important that Greater Lincolnshire continues to secure investment from Government towards the delivery of local economic growth schemes. The Greater Lincolnshire LEP therefore wants to understand what schemes can be developed in partnership in the short and medium term across the area.

Capital only projects should be submitted with a minimum grant funding request of £500,000. We are looking for schemes that fall in to one of two categories:

Category A - Capital projects that can financially complete before March 2025 (short or medium term)

Category B - Capital projects that are still in development (long term) or concept stage

Both categories must demonstrate value for money and good deliverability; meet the Government's and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP's strategic growth aspirations, focusing on creating new jobs, training employees, building new homes, and delivering key infrastructure improvements; and directly contribute to the key priorities identified within the and LIS and Covid Recovery Plan.

Details on the call and outline business case forms with supporting guidance can be found [here](#) and we request that all business cases are submitted to greaterlincslep@lincolnshire.gov.uk **no later than midnight on Monday 15th February 2021**.

Other Funding Opportunities

The agri-tech research teams at the University of Lincoln are expert at working with industry to build practical solutions to productivity, transportation and growing challenges for food and farming. If you have a process, resource or technology challenge in your farm or food business, get in touch with LAR@lincoln.ac.uk or for Innovate UK enquiries at the University JBootmarshall@lincoln.ac.uk

New Programmes and Calls include:

- **The Digital Catapult made Smarter Technology Accelerator** - a national programme, set up to fast forward and shape the UK's technology adoption direct into industry and provides support to help larger companies accelerate their digital adoption. More details can be found [here](#).
- **National Physical Laboratory Measurement for Recovery (M4R) programme** helps organisations address a range of issues including design, manufacturing, production and processing, regulatory compliance and product development. It helps deliver innovation, uncovers efficiencies and brings confidence to decision making and investment. More details available [here](#).
- **Agrobo food call** - applications for funding up to £300K for SMEs wanting to lead a project to develop technologies applied to agricultural practice, process, livestock management, spraying. Technologies need to be at or approaching maturity level 8 (close to market ready or heading that way). The closing date is 20 January. More details available [here](#).

Post Brexit

Guidance on Food & Drink Trade Post Brexit

Updated guidance on food and drink trade is available at:

- **Importing or moving animals, animal products to the EU or Northern Ireland from 1 January 2021:** Guidance has been updated to explain new processes for importing or moving animals and animal products into the GB from the EU, non-EU countries and NI. For more information, click [here](#)
- **Export or move composite food products to the EU or Northern Ireland from 1 January 2021:** Guidance has been updated to show export rules for composite products from GB to the EU and NI. For more guidance, click [here](#)
- **Export or move live animals and animal products to the EU or Northern Ireland from 1 January 2021:** Guidance has been updated to show rules for exporting or moving live animals and animal products to the EU or Northern Ireland from 1 January 2021. For more information, click [here](#)
- **Food and drink labelling changes from 1 January 2021:** Guidance has been updated to include information on using organic logos. For more information, click [here](#)
- **Import fish from the EU from 1 January 2021:** Guidance on how to import fish for human consumption has been updated to include guidance around Northern Ireland movement. For more information, click [here](#)
- **Export or move fish to the EU or NI from 1 January 2021:** Guidance on exporting fish for human consumption has been updated to include guidance around Northern Ireland movement. For more information, click [here](#)
- **HMRC customs declarations webinars:** HMRC are running a live webinar on 11th January covering how to complete customs import declarations and explaining how to make import declarations when importing goods between the EU and Great Britain. To register, click [here](#)
- **UK Transition Period:** HSE and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) are hosting a webinar on Wednesday 20 January at 10am covering the actions businesses need to take in preparation for the end UK Transition on 1 January 2021 when independent GB chemical regimes will be in place. To register, and for more information, click [here](#)

Covid-19 & Vaccination Programme

Lincolnshire NHS leading the way with its first large vaccination centre

The Covid vaccination programme in Lincolnshire continues to successfully roll out, meaning the protection of the county's residents through vaccination is successfully continuing. Specifically, Lincolnshire has been:

- amongst the first in the country to start vaccinating on 8th December through our first hospital hub at Lincoln County Hospital
- amongst the first to start vaccinating through our GP-led primary care network model, with fifteen centres in operation
- amongst the first in the country to be offering the new AstraZeneca vaccination, from our latest hospital hub at Pilgrim Hospital in Boston

From today - 18th January 2021, Lincolnshire will be amongst the first in the country to open a large vaccination centre, which will be at the Princess Royal Sports Arena, Boston. The site at the Princess Royal Sports Arena will initially be the first and only one of its kind across the entire (East and West) Midlands area, meaning the NHS can offer many more local people their appointment sooner.

The large vaccination sites, including the one at the Princess Royal Sports Arena, will initially be vaccinating people in the key priority groups, starting with local residents over 80 who live within 45 minutes of the site. These people will be contacted and offered the centre as a choice for their vaccination appointment and local people are asked not to contact the NHS.

Visit the NHS FAQ area [here](#) for more information.

Lockdown Support Schemes

In relation to schemes for businesses that are required to close because of government policy, all local authorities are now making automated payments to businesses that they already have on their database. If you are a business which has had to close and have not yet made contact with your local authority, you should do so as a matter of urgency to ensure that the local authority has contact information.

The Government recently announced a top up payment of up to £9,000 for businesses closed due to the wave 3 lockdown. The guidance and funding for this scheme is not yet available but local authorities are working hard to ensure that they can make these payments to eligible businesses as soon as they are able to. It is expected that these payments will be made automatically to those businesses which are closed and who local authorities are already aware of, and they will be in contact with these businesses in due course. If your business has had to close and not yet made contact with your local authority, please do so as above.

For more information visit www.businesslincolnshire.com

Coming Soon..

Great Taste Awards 2021

Recognised as a reliable stamp of excellence among consumers, retailers and major food buyers alike, GreatTaste success can be the gateway to exciting opportunities for food and drink producers.

Opens 15th February 2021... entry information coming soon. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



Next Edition

If you have relevant news or information which you would like to be included, please let us know by sending an email to: kate.storey@lincolnshire.gov.uk To be added to the LRF economic & business updates distribution list click [here](#).

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP continues to work closely with businesses, facilitators, and government to address the impact of Covid19 on the food chain and support the food sector to continue feeding the nation and to plan the recovery phase and interventions. Please follow the latest updates on our website www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk and follow us on [@GreaterLincsLEP](#) and through [LinkedIn](#)

Covid-19

- Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#) for continued support to your business
- View the Government Covid-secure guidance by sector [here](#)
- Click [here](#) if you can provide Covid-19 testing capacity
- Feed business impacts into [Business Intelligence](#)