



GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

Latest news and updates

20th 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](#).

Summary Updates:

- Good progress has been made with DEFRA and the police on recognising the need for staff to travel together on occasions, with guidance issued and cascaded to clarify the rules; in summary, multiple occupancy vehicles taking people to and from work should be permitted to continue their journey without being impeded. Evidence of key worker status may be required. Visit the LEP [Food Chain Security](#) page for more information.
- We are pleased to see that the updated guidance which has been issued on furloughed staff does now facilitate these staff working in the food chain, even whilst furloughed by another employer.

However, we are receiving reports that many potential workers and food chain companies are not aware of this change and are therefore not yet using this provision. The key requirement to use this provision is that the original employer must agree to their staff working for another employer whilst on furlough. We would urge companies whose furloughed staff may have the skills needed by other companies to make this flexibility available to support the food supply chains.

For any employer that takes on a new employee, the new employer should ensure they complete the [starter checklist](#) form correctly. If the employee is furloughed from another employment, they should complete Statement C. Visit the government Covid Business Support website for more information with the furloughed update available [here](#).

- Engineering companies and agrifood end users are continuing to request support in following up on the potential to accelerate the development and deployment of robotics and automation to help address the challenges with labour supply in the industry. The University of Lincoln, LEP and local businesses are working with national partners to address this challenge and would welcome any

additional companies who want to be part of this programme to get in touch. If you would like to be involved in this programme please contact gllpbusinessintelligence@lincolnshire.gov.uk

- If a programme can be developed quickly to support this drive for automation, the indications from Lincolnshire based engineering companies and end users in agriculture and the food sector is that this has the potential to moderate the problems with labour supply in summer 2020 and to have a major impact on industry in 2021. However, it is urgent to take action now if changes are to be implemented in time for the 2020 peak season and we are actively pursuing this with government in partnership with the University of Lincoln.
- We believe the government should actively support the [Feed the Nation](#), 'Pick for Britain' (still to be launched) and [Deliver to the Nation](#) campaigns to attract additional workers to the food chain and are actively encouraging this. The success of the volunteers programme for the NHS needs to be matched with support to attract the extra staff the food chain needs. This is increasingly urgent as the demand increases rapidly as the UK harvest season begins.
- The DEFRA Access to Labour team are also developing a Best Practise Guide in conjunction with PHE for seasonal workers, transportation, accommodation and other related areas. This is in conjunction with the National Farmers Union, The Association of Labour Providers, AHDB, and G's Fresh and should be available imminently.
- We also expect DEFRA to announce further measures to match labour supply and demand in the agrifood sector in the next few days.

Latest Announcements:

On 17th April DEFRA announced:-

- a) A new £10m fund to support the fishing and aquaculture sector during the Covid-19 crisis, including help to assist with developing new local UK markets for products such as Hake, Scallops and Crabs which are normally sold primarily in food service and through the export trade. Details of the announcement are [here](#).
- b) The dairy industry will be supported to work together through Dairy UK and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) to identify spare processing capacity, how to stimulate demand and how production could be temporarily reduced. The aim is to try to address the problems with oversupply, such as the closure of food service, which have led to wasted milk and lower prices for many dairy farmers. Details can be found [here](#).

Tackle Childhood Obesity Fund

UK businesses promoting healthy eating for children can apply for financial and business support from a new £1.8 million Accelerator and growth Venture Fund. The Good Food Fund, created by Big Society Capital and Guys and St Thomas's Charity, will provide debt or equity to small and medium sized enterprises and start-up brands who want to tackle childhood obesity by bringing an increased number of healthier, affordable snacking products to the market. Focus will be on lower income communities and after-school snacking, and will also look at opportunities for healthier drinks, ready meals and frozen food, fast food and takeaway, and school catering. The Accelerator will be run by Mission Ventures who will provide a year of business support, free of charge. The deadline for applications is the 27th April 2020. [£1.8 million Fund to Help Businesses Tackle Childhood Obesity \(UK\)](#)

Covid19 Business Support and Information

- Find out what support is available for your Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland business. Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#)
- Arrange a call with a local business adviser. Contact 01522 782189 or email businesslincolnshire@lincolnshire.gov.uk
- Can your business help to provide masks, gowns or hand sanitiser? Visit <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