



ISSUE 7

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

Latest news and updates

22nd June 2020

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 as we move cautiously into the recovery phase. The schemes which are widely promoted and operating now are [Pick for Britain](#) and [Feed the Nation](#). Please follow the latest updates on our website www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk and follow us on [@GreaterLincsLEP](#) and through [LinkedIn](#) and on our new Instagram platform at GreaterLincsLEP created to target the Student Land Army campaign.

Agri-Food Industry-Relevant Announcements

1. DIT and DEFRA announcement on Food Trade support

A 'bounce back' plan of trade measures for the agriculture, food and drink industry has been announced today to help support businesses that have been impacted by coronavirus. The new strategic interventions jointly announced by the Department for International Trade (DIT) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will offer immediate support to help businesses in the industry grow their trade activity overseas.

The measures introduced will support producers, manufacturers and agri-tech companies across the food supply chain, from farm to fork as follows:-

- Package of measures designed to turbo charge UK food and drink as the world recovers from coronavirus
- The plan will provide unprecedented help for SMEs and allow them to capitalise on trade agreements being negotiated by DIT with Japan, US, Australia and New Zealand
- Designed in conjunction with business and the devolved administrations, the plan will be driven jointly by DEFRA and DIT

Read the press release [here](#) with more information to follow.

2. EFRA Select Committee Inquiry into Food Chain Labour Supply

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee in Parliament has re-opened their inquiry into Labour in the Food Supply Chain, following its suspension due to Covid-19 in March 2020. Further details and how to respond are set out [here](#)

The inquiry asks for responses on four questions:-

1. What impact will the Government's proposed points-based immigration system have on labour in the food supply chain? Which sectors will be most affected by a reduced ability to recruit from abroad?
2. Will investment in staff retention, productivity, technology and innovation compensate for the Government not implementing an immigration route for "lower skilled workers"?
3. What impact has the Seasonal Workers pilot scheme had on agriculture and horticulture? What should be the future of the scheme, including whether it should cover more, or different, agricultural and horticultural sectors?
4. How many seasonal workers are required in agriculture and horticulture each year, and how can this demand be reasonably met from 2021?

The deadline for responses is **Friday 3rd July 2020**. The Greater Lincolnshire LEP will be making a submission to this inquiry given how important it is to our local economy, but we would also encourage businesses to respond directly if this issue directly affects you or your supply chain.

We would be pleased to include your views in our response, but to enable us to do this, **we need your views by Friday 26th June to glllepbusinessintelligence@lincolnshire.gov.uk**

3. Information for farmers, landowners, and rural businesses

The latest information for farmers, landowners and rural businesses during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak is updated [here](#).

4. Guidance and exemptions for businesses at border arrivals

Advice for seasonal agricultural workers coming to England to work on farms and their employers can be found at [Coming to the UK for seasonal agricultural work on English farms](#)

[English border exemption guidance](#) details exemptions from new English border rules introduced due to coronavirus. The rules apply to travellers to the UK from 8 June 2020 and of note includes seasonal workers, drivers of goods vehicles or public transport, and health and care professionals and includes information on what those exempt need to show at the border to enter the UK.

5. Rural Payments Agency (RPA) Scheme

This update is for claimants of the Rural Payments Agency Scheme. For information on claims for the Countryside Stewardship, Environmental Stewardship and the Basic Payment Scheme, click [here](#).

Cross Industry Announcements

6. Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Update

From 1 July, employers can bring back to work employees that have previously been furloughed for any amount of time and any shift pattern, while still being able to claim the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant for their normal hours not worked. When claiming the grant for furloughed hours employers will need to report and claim for a minimum period of a week. Further guidance on flexible furloughing and how employers should calculate claims has been published and can be found [here](#).

7. Companies House COVID-19 Guidance

[Companies House COVID-19 guidance](#) highlights plans in place to maintain services for customers and protect the welfare of employees during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. As an emergency response to coronavirus (COVID-19), a temporary online service has been developed to

upload a number of completed forms and send them to Companies House digitally. Read the guidance to find out which documents you can upload using the new service [here](#) .

8. Transport and Travel

Changes have been made to the validity of **Driver CPC cards** held by lorry, bus and coach drivers. Driver CPC card enforcement relaxation has now been revoked. Click [here](#) for details.

The following guidance found [here](#) provides Information for people **using transport** or working in the transport sector during the coronavirus outbreak.

To support businesses with employees returning and **travelling to work** from the Monday 15th June, the Department for Transport has developed resources for employers, which you can find [here](#).

The above sets out some steps employers can take to help provide a safe return to work for employees on the transport network, including encouraging active travel, and travel outside peak hours.

9. Mental Health Support

Anyone can self-refer or contact their GP for a referral to steps2change talking therapies, which are run by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust offering telephone and video appointments, webinars as well as a range of online and self-help therapies by clicking [here](#).

The Lincolnshire Recovery College has designed free educational courses delivered by people with lived experience of mental ill health, qualified trainers and health professionals. Contact lpft.recovery.college@nhs.net, or visit [here](#) for more information.

Lincolnshire Here4You has launched a new confidential mental health and emotional wellbeing helpline for adults. Open 24/7 this highly trained and experienced team of support workers can be contacted by calling 0800 001 4331 and the LRSN - Lincolnshire Rural Support Network offers support to farming and rural people during periods of anxiety, stress and problems relating to their families and businesses. Visit [here](#).

Progress and Future Planning

Greater Lincolnshire LEP

The LEP has completed a first draft of an agri-food recovery plan which pulls together all the evidence and input you have fed in through the [Business Intelligence](#) platform and other channels and from which priority actions have been identified.

The document outlines the headline feedback on impacts, sets 10 priorities for industry and government, and specifies the actions we have already taken, alongside four suggested areas. More detail will follow in due course.

Pathways to Recovery: Hospitality and Tourism

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) published a report on Hospitality and Tourism on 12th June produced with UK Hospitality setting out a clear overview of the challenges in the visitor economy and food service sector and makes recommendations on the areas government needs to tackle to aid recovery of this sector. Click [here](#) to download a copy.

Food and Drink Campaign

A number of Midlands LEP's are taking forward an initiative to create a new national body for food and drink promotion, focused primarily on smaller producers with the intention of creating a national campaign to help British food and drink businesses survive the impact of Covid-19 in the short term and stimulate growth, both nationally and internationally.

News

Visit <https://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/whats-new/> for news stories and blogs or read two recent news stories here:-

- [Fresh Faces and a New Deputy Chair](#)
- [Lincoln tech company launches new social distancing bracelet](#)

Useful Links

Coronavirus

- Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#) or call 01522 782189 for continued support to your Greater Lincolnshire or Rutland business
- Guidance is available to support [retail businesses](#) to reopen and other industry sector guides to ensure COVID-secure workplaces can be found [here](#)
- The government wants help from businesses to increase COVID-19 testing capacity in the UK. Click [here](#) if you can help and to find out more.
- Visit [here](#) to submit your details if you can provide masks, gowns or hand sanitiser nationally or locally to [Lincolnshire Together](#)
- Feed business impacts into our [Business Intelligence](#) platform to help us continue to develop solutions with Government.