



## ISSUE 13

## GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

28 September 2020

### Sector Progress & Highlights

In this issue we cover the recent key sector highlights and announcements both locally and nationally. Please click on a link below to take you directly to the stories for quicker review.

- [Covid-19](#) and the Food Chain: Reflections 6 months on from Lockdown
- Grimsby [Seafood Cluster](#) Reviews EU Exit Impacts on the Seafood Sector
- Management Development Services ([MDS](#))
- [1-2-3-Food](#) from Roythornes Solicitors
- The [Digital Sandwich](#) - Digitised Food Supply Chain
- UK Fresh Produce Network Lincolnshire ([FPN](#))
- New LEP [Food Board](#) Members
- [Chancellor's Winter Economy](#) Statement Highlights
- [ATTACK](#) the Skills Incentives
- Get the [funding support](#) your business needs
- [Grant of the Week](#): Productivity Programme for Greater Lincolnshire

---

### **Covid-19 and the Food Chain: Reflections 6 months on from Lockdown**

*Sarah Louise Fairburn, Fairburn Eggs, Deputy Chair of Greater of Lincolnshire LEP and Chair of the Greater Lincolnshire Food Board*

It is sobering to reflect that we have just passed the 6 month mark from when lockdown was first imposed and I wanted to take the opportunity to pay tribute to the fantastic response we have seen from Greater Lincolnshire food chain companies. We have the largest food chain of any LEP area, with over 60,000 people employed in agriculture, food processing, and distribution, and our companies have been right at the forefront of the food chain's response to the pandemic.

I know it has not been easy, especially for those who were supplying the food service sector, and we have all had to implement lots of additional processes to keep our staff and customers safe. For many of those supplying food retailers, we have also seen unprecedented demand, with many businesses in the early stages of lockdown commenting to me that it was like trying to deliver Christmas every day but without any of the warning that normally comes from an annual event that we plan for months in advance. The fact that the vast majority of our supply chains continued to function well is testament to their resilience and the tenacity and hard work of everyone.

At the LEP we have worked hard to ensure we represent the industry with government, and to support the influence work and lobbying we know that many of you do directly, so that we address the issues which really matter, such as labour supply or trade. We have continued to push for more focus on innovation and in the summer were able to announce a further substantial investment in the [Holbeach Food Enterprise Zone](#) to support the growth of a technology cluster, at the heart of the UK Food Valley, as part of our recovery plan for the economy.

Given the news last week that Covid-19 measures were being tightened again, and may last for 6 months, I am sure we have not seen the end of disruption and change in the food chain. But I also know that our industry will respond well and continue to grow.

We are genuinely keen to understand the issues Covid-19, the end of the transition period or other changes are having on you, so that we work to help address the issues which matter to the industry. If you have feedback which you think would help focus our work to support the food chain, I am personally available to discuss and hear your suggestions for sector priorities on 07917 767755.

Thanks you and I look forward to hearing from you.



Sarah Louise Fairburn

### **Grimsby Seafood Cluster Reviews EU Exit Impacts on the Seafood Sector**

On 8<sup>th</sup> September the Grimsby Seafood Cluster hosted an online Forum to review EU Exit impacts on the seafood processing sector.

The Forum was hosted by Simon Dwyer on behalf of the cluster and Simon was joined by the London based ambassadors for Norway & Iceland, who represented the important supply of fresh and frozen seafood from their respective countries.

DEFRA and the Seafish Industry Authority gave presentations to over 45 attendees on post-January 2021 topics including the Northern Ireland protocol, border control posts, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing (IUU), tariff quotas, and import and export regulations.

Both ambassadors were then interviewed by Simon Dwyer and stressed the on-going importance of trade in seafood products to the Grimsby cluster. Between Iceland and Norway circa 100,000 tonnes of seafood is sent to Grimsby by air and sea for processing into products sold to retailers, food-service and fish & chip shops.

The next Forum will take place in late November with an emphasis on scenario planning for the transportation of seafood from Turkey, Norway, EU states and to Ireland. For further information on the seafood cluster or to join the next Forum please contact [Simon Dwyer](#)

To build on the opportunities in the seafood sector on 13<sup>th</sup> October Pat Doody, Chair of Greater Lincolnshire LEP, will be leading a senior delegation from the LEP and Lincolnshire County Council to meet with Simon Dwyer of Seafood Grimsby and Humber and Seafish Chief Executive Marcus Coleman to discuss how they can work together to grow the Humber's UK leading seafood industry. The next edition of the newsletter will report on this visit.

### **1-2-3-Food from Roythornes Solicitors**

Roythornes 1-2-3-Food column features the views of a wide range of food sector leaders from technology start-ups to established producers. The authors are asked to write about one business success, two challenges for the sector and three forecasts. It is published every two weeks and you can view the 10+ columns published to date [here](#).

If you would like to be notified when a new column is published and of the events Roythornes run relating to the food and drink sector (including their popular Food Business Breakfast), please send an e-mail to [Mark Dodds](#) at Roythornes.

### **Management Development Services (MDS)**

In the latest 1-2-3 article from Roythornes, Christine Tacon, Chair of not for profit industry body MDS, reports that they are seeing increased interest from graduates in joining the food industry given its relative success during the Covid-19 pandemic. Christine urges those who need new managers to get in touch to address the need for industry training places in response to an increased supply of new talent for the industry. Click [here](#) to view more.

### ***Is Food and Fresh Produce the new go to career for young Graduates?***

During 2020 there has been an exponential increase in the number of graduates applying for roles in the food and fresh produce industry. Whilst attracting those looking to start a career has become easier, how do you go about selecting the best person for your business needs and training them beyond the theory they have obtained in their education, whilst minimising risk and costs to your business?

For over 34 years, MDS has been providing the solutions to these questions. MDS sift through hundreds of applications each year selecting the best applicants with our specially designed recruitment process. Trainees are then placed on our unique graduate scheme, which provides them with a variety of experiences and industry specific training in leadership and management. At the end of their training, Members can select the Trainees who are the best fit for their business needs. Members also benefit from having Trainees complete secondments within their business where they get to see them in action before taking them on full time.

If you would like to find out more about MDS and how they could benefit you, contact them at [Info@mds-ltd.co.uk](mailto:Info@mds-ltd.co.uk) for a brochure or call (01733) 595123

### **The Digital Sandwich - Digitised Food Supply Chain, fusing IoT, Blockchain and AI data layers to improve productivity, traceability and reduce waste**

The Made Smarter Review (2017), for which the University of Lincoln and Greater Lincolnshire LEP helped lead work on the food strand, estimated the UK food and drink industry could realise £56bn in productivity growth and efficiency savings over a 10year period through the wide-spread adoption and integration of novel industrial digital technologies (IDTs).

Working with a large consortium of manufacturers, supply chain partners, industrial digital technology (IDTs) suppliers, the University of Lincoln and trade and governmental organisations, leading UK sandwich maker, Chelmsford based Raynor Foods Ltd, is working to develop a national open demonstrator of a digitalised food supply chain. The project has received a £3.9m UKRI grant.

Although the adoption of new IDT technologies such as Blockchain-DLT, integrated IoT platforms and AI analytics has occurred in large, international companies, there are an estimated 10,000 SME suppliers who can't afford/don't have access to these technologies. This project seeks to address this problem and develop digital solutions which can be applied across the entire food supply chain. Read more [here](#).

### **UK Fresh Produce Network Lincolnshire (FPN)**

The UK Fresh Produce Network Lincolnshire (FPN) is a proactive, member-led network run by Angie Stuart and supported by the Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce. Since its inception in 2019, it has quickly become a well-established, expanding organisation with a strong, highly supportive membership centred in and around South Lincolnshire. Its members have a combined annual turnover of around £1.6billion, operating out of 39 countries worldwide and supplying all the major supermarkets, foodservice businesses and wholesale markets. Members from across the supply chain support each other and work together, leading change through technology and innovation. It has established overseas links, with JAMPRO (Jamaica), its first international member, joining in September 2019.

In the year since its inception, FPN has become widely recognised as a meaningful body for positive change and transformation, working closely with councils, Boston College, University of Lincoln and much more. It is campaigning for better roads and 5G in South Lincolnshire, working with Boston Borough Council on the port regeneration initiative, and with Boston Port to import/export fresh produce through Boston Port

creating a direct link with Rotterdam, providing a slick supply chain and forming a gateway for growth. For further information please visit [here](#).

### New LEP Food Board Members

The LEP is delighted to welcome two new members to the [Food Board](#).

**Rhonda Thompson, NFU County Advisor.** Rhonda was formerly at the Royal Agricultural College and Bishop Burton College and leads locally for the NFU on arable and livestock. She is keen through her team at the NFU to explore the potential to promote local food in public procurement as well as promotional opportunities for local food to develop Lincolnshire's tourism offer. Rhonda is also very keen to drive a major programme of skills and KE support to transition the industry to a post subsidy World by setting up a scheme to address the acquisition of skills in areas such as: productivity; digital adoption; technical efficiency; supply chain and business succession.

**Neal Collishaw, Worldwide Fruit Operations Director.** Neal will bring a strong importer voice to the board to represent the high levels of food imports in the Greater Lincolnshire supply chain and the added value that is created by processing, wholesaling and distributing these imports to UK and international markets. Neal is a progressive business leader and Worldwide fruits are also leading on new technology adoption including robotics and 5G. Recently Neal spent 3 months in Japan studying lean manufacturing in the automotive sector and has begun to implement new productivity enhancements in the UK food chain. He has also been active in promoting student placements and the company has created over 40 opportunities for young people to gain experience in the food industry.

---

## Government Business Updates

### Chancellor's Winter Economy Statement Highlights

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak has outlined additional government support to provide certainty to businesses and workers impacted by coronavirus across the UK. The Chancellor announced a package of measures that will continue to protect jobs and help businesses through the uncertain months ahead as we continue to tackle the spread of the virus.

The package includes a new Jobs Support Scheme to protect millions of returning workers, extending the Self Employment Income Support Scheme and 15% VAT cut for the hospitality and tourism sectors, and help for businesses in repaying government-backed loans

### Chancellor's Support to Business in Summary

- From the 1<sup>st</sup> November and lasting for 6 months, the Job Support Scheme will open. It will protect viable jobs in businesses who are facing lower demand due to the pandemic. To be eligible employees must work a minimum of 33% of their hours. Employers will continue to pay the wages of staff for the hours they work, but for the hours not worked, the government and the employer will pay one third of their equivalent salary. All employers will be allowed to apply, even if they did not use the furlough scheme. **This will only apply to small and medium sized enterprises. Larger employers will only be covered if their turnover has gone down.**
- The Self Employment Income Support Scheme extension will support viable traders who are facing reduced demand over the winter months, covering 20% of average monthly trading profits via a government grant
- Businesses who have borrowed under the Bounce Back Loan Scheme will be offered the choice of more time and greater flexibility for their repayments.

- Lenders have been enabled to offer coronavirus business interruption loan schemes borrowers more time to make their repayments where needed. The application for all coronavirus loan schemes has extended to 30 November.
- Businesses who deferred their VAT will no longer have to pay a lump sum at the end of March 2021 and can instead split it into smaller interest free payments over the course of 11 months.
- The 15% VAT cut for the tourism and hospitality sectors has been extended to the end of March 2021.

---

## Webinars, grants and support programmes

### ATTACK the Skills Incentives

Discover how to make the most of the government's [Plan for Jobs](#) with EFSA's 'ATTACK the Skills' webinar series. Featuring advice from businesses who have used the incentives to their advantage, these short sessions will highlight the benefits of apprenticeships, T Levels, traineeships and more for your business.

[Tuesday 29th September](#)

[Wednesday 30th September](#)

[Thursday 1st October](#)

[Thursday 8th October](#)

[Friday 30th October](#)

### Get the funding support your business needs

Create a business plan investors can't say no to with Business Lincolnshire's two-part masterclass. Whether you're trying to gain support from banks, business angels, funding schemes or crowd funders, these two short sessions will show you how to get the funding you need! Sign up [here](#).

### Grant of the Week: Productivity Programme for Greater Lincolnshire

Maximise your business's productivity with the Productivity Programme for Greater Lincolnshire. Work with the University of Lincoln to implement a new process or diversify your product line, along with accessing a range of grant funding and business support opportunities from the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub. Click [here](#) to get involved.

For more information on how Business Lincolnshire can support your company, and to book an appointment with a Growth Hub advisor click [here](#).

---

## Next Edition:-

If you have other news which you think would be helpful for the Greater Lincolnshire food industry please let us know by sending an email to: [kate.storey@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](#)