



## ISSUE 6

### GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

#### Latest news and updates

3<sup>rd</sup> 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. 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](http://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.

### Industry-Relevant Announcements

#### Easing of Lockdown

Some retailers have begun cautious reopening as lockdown is gradually lifted with food service providers, pubs and hotels earmarked as possibly able to open from July 4 if the five key tests are met. Continue to visit [www.businesslincolnshire.com](http://www.businesslincolnshire.com) for regular updates and advice.

#### Changes to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Three changes to the job retention scheme have been announced. In summary:-

- From 1 July 2020, the scheme will be made more flexible to enable employers to bring previously furloughed employees back part time and still receive a grant for the time when they are not working.
- From 1 August 2020, employers will have to start contributing to the wage costs of paying their furloughed staff and this employer contribution will gradually increase in September and October.
- The scheme will close to new entrants from 30 June.

Click [here](#) for more information.

#### Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

The Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme is now live on [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) Employers with fewer than 250 employees can now claim for Coronavirus-related Statutory Sick Pay (SSP). The repayment will cover up to two weeks of the applicable rate of SSP. For information on eligibility and how to make a claim please visit [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK)

### Progress and Future Planning

## **Greater Lincolnshire LEP**

The LEP completed a review of the impact of Covid-19 on the horticulture and potato sector with South Holland District Council in early May. This sector is worth about £600m to the Greater Lincolnshire economy each year and parts of it, in particular the ornamental sector was very negatively impacted by Covid-19. The LEP Chair Pat Doody and Lord Porter, Leader of SHDC have jointly written to the government to set out short term needs in the sector and to ask for government to commit to working with Lincolnshire to develop the long term potential of this sector.

The LEP is now developing a detailed AgriFood Recovery Plan to develop the whole food chain post Covid-19. Whilst parts of the sector have seen increased demand, and we want to build on this, the food service sector and the businesses which supply it have been very badly impacted.

Following feedback from industry the LEP has also this week written to Ministers to raise concerns about the impact quarantine rules on travellers to the UK may have on business travel (for trade, audit and compliance purposes) and to argue for greater clarity on how Border Control (formerly Inspection) Posts will operate after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

## **Lincolnshire Institute of Agri-Tech (University of Lincoln) (LIAT)**

LIAT continues to partner with tech companies to develop agri-technology and state of the art glasshouse technology. Beeswax Dyson has announced that it will construct a six hectare glasshouse at Carrington near Boston to grow strawberries year round for the UK market and has joined forces with Berry Gardens, specifically using technology to minimise environmental impacts. Using heat and light generated by anaerobic digester to produce the fruit, the same digester will then convert farm waste into an organic fertiliser that provides nutrition for the glasshouse crops.

The University has also developed the world's first robotic fruit farm project at Riseholme and has recently attracted significant funding, with new projects being launched to develop this work.

With the LEP, NFU, Agri-EPI and Knowledge Transfer Network the University hosted a webinar with 85 participants in April to look at the potential to accelerate robotic deployment in the fresh produce sector. This has led to a number of bilateral follow up developments with companies and negotiations continue with government on how to accelerate automation in the sector.

## **National Centre for Food Manufacturing**

NCFM continues to run projects to support food sector start-ups and SMEs and report that they have been very busy responding to new demand from start-up food companies. This is helping to shape future interventions and support to the sector as we move into a recovery phase.

Projects include:

- The [University Enterprise Zone \(Research England\)](#) programme to provide business support and small grants to food companies;
- The [COTEMACO Interreg](#) project which is focused on helping food companies to adopt automation solutions, with a range of business support, demonstration and small grants.
- The [Greater Lincolnshire Agri-Food Innovation Platform](#) ERDF project in conjunction with LIAT and the FRPERC team at Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education, to help companies access the support needed to address food waste, security, provenance and safety, packaging and labelling, automation, and product and process innovation issues.

## #Student Land Army - Royal Endorsement

DEFRA has asked us to work with them to further promote the [Pick for Britain](#) campaign and to determine what other LEP's are doing to support the food sector across the wider region. This scheme was endorsed by HRH The Prince of Wales with DEFRA also announcing widespread coverage of their scheme in their media blog last week. Click [here](#) to view the Royal video message.

We continue to work locally and with DEFRA to raise awareness of Lincolnshire's important role in ensuring national food security, and to find solutions for bringing together willing workers with farmers adjusting to labour challenges due to Covid-19.

The LEP Deputy Chair and Marketing Director of Fairburn Eggs; Sarah Louise Fairburn has been interviewed by ITV Calendar for a positive news item on the importance of the sector locally and to promote the [Pick for Britain](#) scheme and is due to be broadcast this evening; 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 6pm on ITV Calendar East.

**Farming and food employers continue to be encouraged to register and upload their requirements to capture the huge interest generated.**

## Useful Links

### Coronavirus

- Visit [Business Lincolnshire](#) or call 01522 782189 for continued support to your Greater Lincolnshire or Rutland business
- Some businesses are being encouraged to cautiously reopen. Read the Government's plan for the next phase [here](#)
- Industry guides to support business owners to enable employees to work safely across a range of different sectors can be found [here](#)
- Feed business impacts into our [Business Intelligence](#) platform to help us continue to develop solutions with Government.
- Visit [here](#) to submit your details if you can provide masks, gowns or hand sanitiser nationally or locally to [Lincolnshire Together](#)