



ISSUE 12

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

7 September 2020

Sector Progress & Highlights

In this issue we cover the recent key highlights and announcements both locally and nationally. As these briefings grow in content, please click on a link below to take you directly to the stories for quicker review.

- [Saga Robotics](#) on the University of Lincoln Riseholme Campus Secures Investment
- Join the [Big Food Debate](#)
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Saga Robotics based at Riseholme Lincoln Campus Secures Investment

Norwegian and UK based Saga Robotics, which has a base at the University of Lincoln Riseholme Campus, has recently raised €9.5 million from international investors to support its comprehensive growth plans.

Saga's Thorvald robots are already operating on farms across the world, where they deliver UV light treatments to control mildew on strawberries and vines, drastically reducing the need for fungicides. Saga are also working with the University of Lincoln and fruit industry partners to develop autonomous strawberry pickers.

Future growth prospects for innovation of this kind is considered strong, particularly to manage labour availability and pressures to make production more sustainable and is a key focus for Lincoln Agri-Robotics based at Riseholme. Read more [here](#).

We are interviewing Saga and the University of Lincoln next week and will post links to this in the next edition.

Join the Big Food Debate

Sixteen members of the Greater Lincolnshire Food Board met under the leadership of new chair Sarah Louise Fairburn, Deputy Chair of the LEP and a Director of Alford based Fairburns Eggs on 13th August 2020. The Board were joined by two guest speakers, Nick Downing, Commercial Director at the IGD and Rick Bourne of Scriven Green Food Consultants.

The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on the food industry, in both the short and the long term, and to debate the actions which are needed to support industry growth. Feedback from members will be used to inform local projects and to engage with government and other sector bodies to make the case for the industry.

We'd like your feedback on prioritisation of future food chain issues and invite you to vote on the 10 priorities. Click [here](#) to vote and feedback via Survey Monkey.

Top 3 priorities - Question to Industry:

To respond to Covid-19, Brexit and other short and long term changes in the food industry what are your top 3 priorities for food industry growth and development?

Food Chain focus suggestions:

1. Productivity and profitability
2. Digital transition
3. Supply chain resilience
4. Consumer value
5. Skills and workforce
6. Health and diet (including food access for all)
7. Sustainability including Net Zero, energy, water and waste

Public Sector focus suggestions:

8. Trade deals which support UK food companies (including food standards)
9. Innovation support (skills, applied R&D and innovation)
10. Investment in physical infrastructure (roads, rail, ports, digital, affordable housing etc.)

Government Launches AgriFood Trade Advisory Group

Trade Advisory Groups have been launched for eleven industries, including one for Agri-Food, 'to provide the blend of strategic and technical expertise required to ensure the United Kingdom's trade negotiations are able to progress at pace'. Each Advisory Group will meet at least three times a year with the Department for International Trade (DIT) providing the secretariat. Details of the membership of the Agri-Food Trade Advisory Group is available to view [here](#).

Have your Say - Quarterly Economic Survey (QES)

The Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Economic Survey is open for feedback and we are encouraging as many businesses as possible to respond at this important time. The information we submit into British Chambers of Commerce is used at a national level to direct policy decisions at the Bank of England and No 10 and helps shape interventions and policy.

The QES is the main economic barometer we are using consistently across the area and forms one of the key measures within the Greater Lincolnshire (LEP) Recovery Plan. Click for the link to the survey [here](#).

Please share and promote with your networks across all channels. The closing date for responses is 16th September.

UK Food Valley' branding for Holbeach Food development

The Greater Lincolnshire food corridor could be branded the 'UK Food Valley' as part of marketing proposals for Holbeach's Food Enterprise Zone. Work has been progressing on phase one of the partnership investment for this transformational business park being created for food technology companies with the University of Lincoln's National Centre for Food Manufacturing team as anchor tenants.

Last month the FEZ received confirmation of funding from the government's Getting Building Fund which will fund the construction of a new Hub building to host businesses and events for the industry and an additional site service road to access the remaining eight development plots in phase 1. Read the full story [here](#).

Local business owner revealed as a 2020 finalist at the Black British Business Awards

Sandra Murphy, Managing Director of Equidiet (UK) Ltd and SRB Vending Co Ltd based in Nettleton, Market Rasen has been announced as a finalist for the prestigious BBBA awards in the luxury and Cosmetic category. The awards celebrate outstanding personal and professional achievements of black professionals and entrepreneurs in global, small and medium enterprises operating across Great Britain.

Sandra has worked tirelessly to expand her revolutionary brand using local suppliers and manufacturing in Lincolnshire, producing multiple hydration systems for horses which have gained high recognition within the equine industry. She is the first black female to have gained a European Patent in the UK for a horse feeding system. With the support of The Lincolnshire Business Growth Hub and East Midlands DIT, her products are distributed nation-wide and exported worldwide.

Key Future Focus Dates

SmartFood Conference: 10th September 2020

The online Smart Food Conference will explore the demand for complex data channels through the entire supply chain. The introduction of Blockchain, and Industry 4.0 in the food industry will accelerate accurate information supply, and businesses will need to adapt to face the challenges of pressures on world food production. Click to [register](#) your free place.

FPC Future: 17 March 2021 Lincolnshire Showground

Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology have teamed up with the Fresh Produce Consortium to deliver an exciting agri-tech event showcasing an insight to the world of agri-robotics sharing technological innovations and research in the horticulture and agriculture sector.

The one day event will include eight conference sessions including case studies from leading companies in the sector, the latest research and technology, an exhibition and working demonstrations and tours of the University of Lincoln's Riseholme Campus, the home of Lincoln Agri-Robotics.

This unique event brings together industry experts and academics to highlight the importance of agritech innovation and will cover themes such as pre and post farm robotics and automation, data driven technologies, plastics and packaging, supply chain waste, carbon supply chains, vertical farming and sustainability. FPC Future is co-located with FPC Careers and details are available at [Fresh Produce Events](#)

Mission to Gulfood 2021: 21st -25th February 2021

The Department for International Trade invites food and drink producers from across the Midlands to participate in this innovative two-part mission to prepare for and visit the world's largest food event - Gulfood 2021 in Dubai. More information can be found [here](#).

National Food Industry Updates

Multi-language Covid-19 Resources and Toolkits

Car Sharing

A series of information sheets has been produced and translated in relation to transport sharing for employees and workers. This is as a result of the recent outbreak in Newark. To date these have been circulated to a number of the larger employers in the Boston area. Please circulate and share with,

employers and networks, particularly to hard to reach groups. Visit [here](#) and scroll to the end for pdf's in English, Romanian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Bulgarian.

Covid-19 Resources for businesses from the LRF

Consider including basic key messages, such as those below, when communicating with customers via text messages, emails, receipts, Facebook etc, including automated messages such as booking confirmations and out of office messages. Other ways to communicate Covid safe practices include:

- Use [videos](#) and/or [graphics](#) on TV screens in reception areas, staff rooms, canteens, websites and social media. We are working with local GPs to develop some short videos which we hope to add soon
- Display [posters](#) in toilets, communal areas, noticeboards or include flyers in carrier bags/deliveries (again please note multiple folders)
- Include resources and/or key messages within newsletters or e-bulletins
- Consider pre-recorded telephone messages for voicemails or when customers are placed on hold.

Suggested messages examples:-

- *We love having you back but please help us to stay open. Got symptoms? Get tested. High temperature or new continuous cough or loss of taste or smell? Find out how to get a test and how long to isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119.*
- *Contact tracing is the most effective way of controlling the spread please help us by leaving your contact details. Find out more: nhs.uk/coronavirus*
- *To stop the spread of coronavirus, everyone has to play their part by isolating if symptomatic, booking a test as soon as you experience symptoms. Find out more: nhs.uk/coronavirus*
- *Self-isolate when alerted. If you're told you have been exposed to an infected person you must self-isolate for 14 days. Play your part. Protect your friends and family. Find out more at: nhs.uk/coronavirus*

Next Edition:-

- Watch the interview on Saga Robotics €9.5m investment in agri-tech
- DIT High Potential Opportunity (HPO) for Greater Lincolnshire Food Processing announcement coming soon
- Downing Street Officials Visit Lincolnshire Food and Tourism Sectors

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

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](#)