



ISSUE 14

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LEP FOOD SECURITY

26 November 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.

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Click here to view this months' LEP e-newsletter with a Spotlight on Supporting Business, and [here](#) to register to receive updates.

Food Board Report November 2020

The Greater Lincolnshire Food Board discussed the ambitious creation of a UK Food Valley programme for Greater Lincolnshire, bringing together the sector and supply chains to collaborate on sustainable growth and to showcase our world-class food and technology industry to the world. This exciting development dovetails with other welcome initiatives such as the DIT High Potential Opportunity, reported in our last newsletter and which will launch in spring 2021.

The Food Board also welcomed four new members this month; Neal Collishaw, Operations Director Worldwide Fruit; Mark Suthern, National Head of Agriculture Barclays; Richard Priestley, Redleaf Global Solutions Limited; and Rhonda Thompson, NFU Lincolnshire. Two speakers presented to the Board: Jake Pickering, Agriculture Manager at Waitrose discussed changes in the consumer market; and the National Food Strategy team at DEFRA presented an overview on the publication of stage 1 of the Strategy in summer 2020 and the plans for part 2 of the strategy in 2021.

UK Food Valley

The proposal to create a UK Food Valley programme to promote Greater Lincolnshire's food industry will create the largest in the UK. This concept hinges on the **triple helix** of **industry, government** and **innovation providers**, working harmoniously together to develop and promote our world-class food industry on a global platform. Key questions for consideration are:

- *What do we want Greater Lincolnshire's food sector to be known for?*
- *How to do we communicate a clarity of vision nationally and internationally to attract further investment and partnership opportunities to our food chain?*

The proposed vision is: **The UK Food Valley - Sustainable Food from Land & Sea**

The Food Board are additionally focused on key themes for the period to 2030 and how they can underpin our work to grow the sector locally:-

- **Feeding the World**
 - *We are a strong food production region and must promote our role in helping to feed the UK and wider World;*
- **Lean Food Chains**
 - *Commercial pressure and a desire for affordable food means we must embrace lean management principles to deliver efficient low waste food supply chains;*
- **Digital Food**
 - *Digital transition is impacting every link of the food chain from data to online sales and we must build on our world-class digital food chain research base to lead in this area;*
- **Protein Transition**
 - *Sustainable protein supply, both vegetable, fish proteins and new livestock diets, is a major challenge Lincolnshire must embrace;*
- **Naturally Healthy Food**
 - *As a major UK producer we must build on our naturally good-for-you-food products clusters in: fish; fresh produce; white meat; and, eggs;*
- **Low Carbon Food**
 - *Champion the delivery of low carbon food production systems in response to the multiple pressures to achieve net zero*

We encourage feedback on these themes and in presenting a coherent and positive message to the world on the strengths of Greater Lincolnshire's food chain. Please email your comments to [Kate Storey](#).

Mapping the Greater Lincolnshire Food Chain

The LEP has carried out a detailed analysis of the Greater Lincolnshire food industry workforce, to address issues raised by the Food Board that analysis needs to include the use of seasonal and contract labour. There is no reliable official local evidence on the split of contract labour which is used by food companies, but a combination of local intelligence and national reports have been used, and this suggests that the food chain employs at least 13,000 contract workers in addition to its full time staff.

The result is that the workforce in Greater Lincolnshire's food chain is now estimated at 117,000 employees of whom 72,000 work in commercial food production and distribution and 45,000 in the consumer facing food retail and catering sectors.

The data continues to be developed and includes data at district level for each stage of the food chain from farm to fork. The final report will be used to support the DIT High Potential Opportunity (HPO) presentation of the Greater Lincolnshire food industry and inform the development of the UK Food Valley programme.

The LEP welcomes reports on industry data and intelligence to help strengthen the evidence base on the industry. Please email any relevant reports or case studies of food chain investment to [Kate Storey](#).

Innovative solution to border control delays in Spalding

PML, the global perishable cargo specialist, is partnering with transport and logistics company FreshLinc to operate an HMRC / DEFRA approved Border Control Post (BCP) and ERT (bonded warehouse) facility

at FreshLinc's Spalding HQ, enabling a speedier movement of product from the ports and extending shelf life by up to 48 hours.

The BCP which has been in development for the last four months, will be effective from 1st January 2021 and represents a £400,000 investment. The decision to set up a BCP away from the ports is in direct response to the delays and queues which impede the onward movement of freight. This is amplified with temperature-controlled consignments, and the anticipated further disruptions likely to be caused after the EU Transition ends. Read the full story [here](#).

Government Business Updates

Chancellor's Spending Review

Growth and Economic Projections

- Forecasts show that the economy will contract by 11.3% this year representing the largest annual decline in over 300 years.
- The figures are broadly as expected, particularly following the second lockdown and a partial economic recovery through the summer.
- The OBR forecasts a return to growth in 2021, but the economy is not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2022.
- Within the forecast it also stated that the unemployment rate will reach 7.5% (2.6m people) by next summer.

Departmental Spending and policy

- Next year government will allocate:
 - £18bn to Covid response
 - £3bn to NHS for recovery
 - £2bn on transport
 - £3bn to Local Authorities
 - £250m to end rough sleeping
- A DWP led 3 year restart **programme for the unemployed** who have been unable to find employment for over 12 months' worth £2.7bn.
- A small increase to the **national living wage**, rising to £8.91 an hour and extend to those aged 23 or over.
- A **public sector pay freeze** apart from NHS workers and those who earn below £24k in other public sector roles.
- The **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** - the fund intended to replace the funding we currently get through the EU, will be introduced and the Chancellor committed to matching the EU contributions of around £1.5bn per year.
- Next year there will be funding available to **communities to pilot programmes** and new approaches. In the most recent programme (2014-2020) Greater Lincolnshire has received over €143m in European Funding.
- The Core **NHS Health Budget** will grow by £6.6bn and the previous commitment made on building 40 new hospitals remains.
- Flexibility is given for council tax and **adult social care precept** to provide an extra £1bn to fund social care.

The chancellor continued his theme of **infrastructure growth** as a lever for recovery, with the launch of the [National Infrastructure Strategy](#) - £100bn of capital spend next year including new roads, cycle schemes and zero emission buses. This includes confirmation of the **Newark bypass improvements and flood schemes** along the **Lincolnshire coast** as well as commitment to progress the **North Hykeham Relief Road**.

Government also announced is a £15bn package for **Research and Development**; part of a multi-year settlement; and the launch of a new **£4bn levelling up fund** which will enable local areas to bid directly for funding for local projects.

More detail to follow at www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk

Policy Announcements

Three very significant announcements have been made by Government on the future regulation and support of agriculture and the food sector:

- The Agriculture Bill
- New rules to protect rainforests
- The Fisheries Bill

Agriculture Bill

The Agriculture Bill represents the largest change in UK agricultural policy in a generation and will have impacts on how agriculture functions in the future, thus also potentially impacting on the crops and livestock produced in the UK. It states:-

- The Bill will empower farmers and land managers, and make sure that we can reward them properly for the good work that they do. The Bill will help farmers stay competitive, increase productivity, invest in new technology and seek a fairer return from the marketplace. Beginning next year, farmers will have a seven year transition period to adapt to a new agricultural system

The Agriculture Bill sets out how farmers and land managers in England will be rewarded in the future with public money for “public goods” - such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, or measures to reduce flooding and tackle the effects of climate change, under the Environmental Land Management scheme. These incentives will provide a powerful vehicle for achieving the goals of the government’s 25 Year Environment Plan and our commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

The Bill also includes measures designed to support farmers and land managers to boost their productivity, and ultimately maximise the potential of our land to produce high quality food in a more sustainable way. The full announcement is available [here](#).

Measures to Protect Rainforests

The Environment Bill plans to make it illegal for larger businesses to use products unless they comply with local laws to protect natural areas and coincides with the publication of a new report setting out Government’s approach to tackling deforestation linked to UK demand for products such as cocoa, rubber, soya, and palm oil. 80% of deforestation is linked to the expansion of agriculture and the UK imports over half of the food it consumes.

The package of measures will ensure that greater resilience, traceability and sustainability are built into the UK’s supply chains by working in partnership with other countries and supporting farmers to transition to more sustainable food and land use systems.

The new policy responds to the recommendations from the independent [Global Resource Initiative Taskforce Partnership for Forests](#) Full details are set out [here](#).

Fisheries Bill

Last week, the UK’s first major domestic fisheries legislation in nearly 40 years passed into law. The Fisheries Act 2020 gives the UK full control of its fishing waters for the first time since 1973 and will enable the UK to control who fishes in our waters through a new foreign vessel licencing regime and ends the current automatic rights for EU vessels to fish in UK waters.

Greater Lincolnshire processes 70% of the UK's fish and directly employs 5,900 staff, rising to 10,000 with those in the supply chain, and sells fish products worth over £1.5bn per year. This processing cluster is the largest in the UK.

Underpinning everything in the Act is a commitment to sustainability, ensuring healthy seas for future generations of fishermen. The UK will now develop new fisheries management plans to benefit the fishing industry and the marine environment and places the UK on a firm legal footing as the Transition Period ends, with the ability to protect our offshore marine protected areas and boost the government's Blue Belt of marine protection around England's coast. Read more [here](#).

Support for Speciality Foods

November has seen two announcements which are important for the regional and speciality foods sector. A new group, Food from England, has been established by a group of regional food groups, with Greater Lincolnshire LEP and the Lincolnshire Showground both supporting this initiative.

November has also seen the unveiling of new British food logos to replace the EU logos for foods with protected designations of origin or production process.



Food from England has been created from more than 30 regional groups representing over 43,000 businesses. It will specifically support SME businesses by providing a unified platform from which to communicate the industry's needs to relevant government departments and will also highlight the impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit, and identify ways to help the industry navigate its way through both, whilst encouraging consumers to keep supporting their local food and drink producers.

One of the founding Food from England members John Farrand, Managing Director of the Guild of Fine Food, organisers of Great Taste, said:

"Consumers across the country are now realising the importance of connections across the food and drink supply chain, between makers, retailers and consumers - connections that have suddenly become more urgent, closer, simpler and friendly as a result of coronavirus."

Food from England will develop strategies for producers and artisans to help increase sales through independent retailers and agri-food tourism and will be enhanced by linking directly to appropriate agencies and public bodies for access to business intelligence that will benefit micro and small producers. More details on this initiative, with a reach to thousands of local food producers, is available [here](#).

Protecting British Food and Drink



Three new UK Geographic Indicator logos have been developed covering :

- Protected designation of origin (PDO)
- Protected geographical indication (PGI)
- Traditional speciality guaranteed (TSG)

The UK schemes will replace the EU's schemes on 1 January 2021 as the Transition Period ends. Registered producers of British food, drink and agricultural GI

products that are required to use the logos will have until 1 January 2024 to change packaging to display the new UK logos. Click [here](#) to find out more.

Plating Up Progress Report, the Food Foundation

The Food Foundation has published their Plating Up Progress report which assesses supermarkets, major food service suppliers, and large restaurant chains on their progress on a number of key sustainability metrics. Whilst still showing plenty of room for improvement, the assessment of supermarkets was more favourable than the food service sector, which probably reflects the greater transparency on food sourcing found in the food retail sector. The assessment includes ratings for the following 10 factors:

1. Nutritious products & services
2. Encouraging healthy diets
3. Climate change
4. Biodiversity
5. Sustainable food production
6. Water
7. Food waste & loss
8. Plastics
9. Animal welfare & antibiotics
10. Human rights

The full report is available to read [here](#).

Free Trade Deals

In November, the government announced that the Trade and Agriculture Commission (TAC) was being placed onto a full statutory footing, giving farmers a stronger voice in UK trade policy.

The TAC will produce a report for each trade deal on the impact on animal welfare and agriculture, with each report submitted to Parliament to help with decision making on Free Trade Deals.

The commission will also advise on a variety of related areas, including trade policies the Government should adopt for farmers to ensure that animal welfare, food production and environmental standards are maintained, and to identify new export opportunities; and developing trade policies which open up new export opportunities for the UK agricultural industry. The full announcement is available [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunities in Agri-tech and Food, supported by the University of Lincoln

If you are working in agriculture, farming or food production then these funds may help. The agri-tech and food research teams at the University of Lincoln are expert at working with industry to build practical solutions to productivity, transportation and growing challenges for food and farming.

If you have a process, resource or technology challenge inside your farm or food business, then please get in touch. Contact Lincoln Agri-Robotics lar@lincoln.ac.uk or JBootmarshall@lincoln.ac.uk (Innovate UK enquiries at the University of Lincoln). Current opportunities include:

BBSRC Horticultural Quality and Food Loss Network

The proposed work must be within the scope of the network which is to address improvements in fresh horticultural and potato crop quality and reductions in postharvest food loss through research. Visit: [BBSRC Horticultural Quality and Food Loss Network](#)

ISCF Future Plastic Packaging Solutions

UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to £2 million for early-stage projects in smart and sustainable plastic packaging as part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. The Smart Sustainable Plastic Packaging (SSPP) Challenge aims to establish the UK as a leading innovator in smart and sustainable plastic packaging for consumer products. Its goals are to deliver cleaner growth across the supply chain, with a dramatic reduction in plastic waste entering the environment by 2025. Visit: [ISCF Future Plastic Packaging Solutions](#)

Transforming Food Production: Series A Investors Partnerships for SMEs

UK registered SMEs that are transforming food production towards net zero can apply for a share of up to £5 million in grant support which must be aligned with a series A investment. The grant funding is from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. Visit: [SMEs transforming food production: series A investor partnership](#)

Prevent and Detect Food and Beverage Fraud

The European Space Agency offers support to companies for business case assessment and development of space enabled services for the prevention, the detection and the fight of food and beverage fraud. Visit: [Prevent and Detect Food and Beverage Fraud](#)

The Productivity Programme for Greater Lincolnshire

The Productivity Programme, funded by the European Regional Development Fund, is designed to enable micro, small and medium businesses to do things differently through grant funding, business support and collaboration with the academic capacity of the University. To find out more, please visit the Productivity Programme website at:

<https://productivityprogramme.co.uk/>

Business support for food sector extended into 2021

The University of Lincoln's National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM) is extending its research and innovation support provision into the early months of 2021 and is encouraging more SME's to take advantage of the fully funded services available.

Food businesses can benefit by joining the Greater Lincolnshire Agri-Food Innovation Platform which is funded by the European Regional Development Fund. This programme is set up to help sector businesses to innovate and grow through scientific support and knowledge sharing. It can provide support with new product development, nutritional analysis, food safety, food waste reduction, security, provenance, microbiology, chemistry, packaging and labelling. NCFM can also help with projects involving robotics and automation.

To find out more and to check eligibility for your business contact Programme Manager; David Thorpe at dthorpe@lincoln.ac.uk / 07866 137947.

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.

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. We want to support the food sector to continue feeding the nation, plan the recovery phase and to make future investment. 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](#)