

WHY WE NEED TO PRODUCE MORE FOOD MORE SUSTAINABLY

This month the UK Food Valley talks to Rhonda Thompson, NFU County Adviser for Lincolnshire, and a member of the Greater Lincolnshire Food Board – leading and shaping the UK Food Valley. Rhonda talks to us here about the importance of sustainability across our food chains and her hopes for the future against a troubling backdrop:

The last two years have taught us a lot about the need to make the UK food chain more resilient as Covid and Brexit both impacted on our ability to import and led to short term challenges with the supply of workers and key ingredients. These challenges came at the same time as the industry was focused on reducing its environmental footprint and carbon emissions and responding to long term trends for consumers to buy more online. This month's newsletter includes stories on all these important themes and demonstrates how the UK Food Valley businesses and organisations are rising to these challenges.

However, of course we now face another potentially even more significant challenge, with the war in Ukraine. First and foremost, this is of course a tragic humanitarian and security crisis and has been all the more shocking as until February most people, in Ukraine and elsewhere, thought it would not happen in 21st-century Europe.

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We know that many farmers and organisations in the industry are helping by contributing to humanitarian relief and we must all do everything we can to help stop the war and to address the impacts it is having.

But the impacts are not confined to Ukraine and are being felt worldwide, with resource shortages and rapid price rises now all too common. At some stage, stability will return, and the costs being borne by farmers, the food industry and consumers will moderate, but the crisis is now leading to a rapid re-assessment of the resilience of our food supply chains. With wheat doubling in price in the last year, fertiliser rising by over 400% and many energy costs up by 200%, the challenges are very real and here now. We also have reports that the supply of key ingredients such as sunflower oil are likely to run out.

Some politicians argue that this is not a major issue for UK food security because as a rich nation we can import food, but to me this misses two important factors.

Firstly, if we choose not to respond we make the crisis in other countries greater with all the moral implications this carries, because according to the UN even before the Ukrainian crisis global hunger was rising and 3 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet.

Secondly, evidence shows that even before the latest price rises in food and energy, many of the poorest in UK society were struggling to survive financially. Charities are warning that many UK families are now having to make a real choice between heat and food.

For decades we have assumed we can import to make up for any shortfall in domestic production and that the peace dividend of reduced defence spending could be invested in new ways. Both assumptions are suddenly out-dated as we face the harsh realities of this watershed moment.

The UK Food Valley is the most concentrated food production area in the UK and with that comes enormous possibilities but also huge responsibility. The pressures created by the changes we are now seeing globally are very real.

But as we have seen through the pandemic, our farmers and food chain are remarkably resilient and adaptable. The UK Food Valley themes remain highly relevant as we expect the focus of the local and global response to focus on productivity, low carbon and the supply of healthy food.

Farming and food businesses need to adopt technologies which enable the industry to be more productive and sustainable. From the precision use of fertilisers, to reduced waste, lower energy use and more efficient use of our existing workforce, a sharpened focus on productivity is essential.

Here at NFU Lincolnshire we are running a pilot with global agritech business Alltech, from their UK and European base in Stamford, to address farm carbon emissions. The aim is to help farmers adopt innovative ways in which production can be sustained while lowering their carbon footprint. Low carbon transition in the food chain is equally critical - not only for environmental reasons, but to help us address rapid increases in energy costs.

Some have argued that we must abandon our renewable energy ambitions given the pressures we are facing, but industry tells us that they want to do even more to embrace low carbon technologies, such as wind, solar, AD, bio-methane, green hydrogen and biomass, which can both reduce carbon emissions and moderate energy prices. Many farmers have of course already invested in renewable energy, and we expect many more to do so. The NFU and our members look forward to playing a key role in the new energy strategy we expect the government to announce this month.

The NFU and our members stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine and at the same time, here in the UK, we must ensure that our response recognises the critical and growing role that our farmers and food producers play in ensuring a resilient food supply in the UK.

Rhonda Thompson



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UK Food Valley response:

Thank you to Rhonda for setting out the thoughts of the NFU on the major challenges we are all facing. The focus on productivity and low carbon supply chains will remain at the core of the UK Food Valley agenda, alongside a commitment to naturally good for you food and protein transition. As the national leader in seafood and vegetable, salad and fruit supply chains, alongside a rapid growth in plant protein production, Greater Lincolnshire is well placed to deliver healthy, nutritious and low carbon foods.

We are already developing major strategic responses to new realities and know that UK Food Valley businesses have the potential to contribute strongly to the challenging global situation we face. We remain open to hear from you about the areas you think we should focus on, to build on the areas we are already seeking to address.

The LEP is exploring collaborations with partners to facilitate businesses wanting to help refugees arriving locally who are seeking employment opportunities – so please watch this space as the model is developed.

We will be bringing forward proposals to accelerate the transition in the way we fuel our food freight transport systems and are looking at other areas including energy use in food production and fertilisers.

We also continue to see new investment in the industry with a strong and growing pipeline of projects. We are working hard to maintain and accelerate plans to build our food infrastructure faster than ever, so that the UK Food Valley can help meet some of the supply chain gaps created by the changes we are seeing in global supply chains.

The UK Food Valley Team

YOUR NEWS

ONS REPORT ON RECENT CHALLENGES FACED BY FOOD AND DRINK BUSINESSES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PRICES

On 4th April the Office for National Statistics (ONS) published a short report showing that supply chain challenges, increasing costs and labour shortages have all played a part in increasing the UK's food and beverage prices. They looked at the different issues reported by businesses within the industry and how consumers are responding.

Compared to businesses in all sectors, those in the food and drink sector were more likely to report problems with rising costs for:

- **Energy** - throughout March 2022, 60% report being affected by the rise in energy prices, compared with 38% across all sectors.
- **Transport and imports** - results suggest that food and beverage businesses were more likely to have incurred extra costs due to the end of the EU transition period compared with all businesses:
 - 47% had seen higher transport costs compared to 23% of all businesses
 - 34% had seen increased costs due to red tape compared to 15% of all businesses
 - 21% had seen the costs of their imported goods rise compared to 12% of all businesses
- In March 2022, more than two-thirds of businesses in the food and beverage sector reported an increase in the prices of **materials, goods, or services** bought compared with half of businesses across all sectors.
- Businesses were asked in which ways their business had been affected by any price rises they had experienced, with 58% of food and beverage businesses reporting that they had to **pass on price increases to customers** in March 2022, compared with 37% across all businesses.

Other key findings include:

- Over half of food and drink businesses (55%) were using more UK suppliers, 37% were increasing diversity in suppliers, and 25% were expanding into different modes of freight.
- Worker shortages are being reflected in higher labour costs. In February 2022, 29% of food and beverage businesses reported paying higher wages for existing employees and 30% for new employees compared with normal expectations for this time of year.

The UK Food Valley is committed to increasing food chain productivity and energy efficiency and recognises the challenges facing food and drink companies. It would be helpful to receive examples of the cost challenges you are seeing in industry; please pass any information you are willing to share to

UKFoodValley@lincolnshire.co.uk

The ONS report can be viewed in full [here](#).

YOUR NEWS

LEP BOARD MEETING WITH SEAFOOD SECTOR



Above: The board is chaired by Simon Smith (left), CEO of Young's Seafood, aided by Simon Dwyer of Seafox Management Consultants (right) who is key to delivering the group's strategic objectives and stakeholder engagement.

On 25th March the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Board was given a briefing by Simon Smith, CEO of Youngs Seafood and Chair of the Seafood Grimsby and Humber Alliance, and Simon Dwyer who manages the Alliance and is a member of the Greater Lincolnshire Food Board.

Simon Smith outlined the strong growth potential in the seafood sector in the UK and the leading role that the Grimsby cluster delivers for the industry as a globally leading centre for fish processing. The potential to develop the aquaculture sector was also outlined, as the world supply of fish is now more than 50% farmed fish.

In the autumn of 2021, the UK Food Valley produced a brochure on the potential for growth in the seafood processing and aquaculture sector which can be viewed [here](#).

The seafood sector is currently benefitting from the UK Food Valley Community Renewal Fund (CRF) pilot project run by Simon Dwyer and the National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM).

The LEP Board have agreed with the seafood sector to continue to focus on growth of the sector, through a strategic investment plan to develop both the seafood processing sector and the aquaculture sector which will increasingly underpin the supply of fish.

YOUR NEWS

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF SEAFISH 2021

Seafish, the national public body which supports the seafood sector, is headquartered in Grimsby and has recently published a report on its future strategy based on feedback from its recent strategic review. Over the last 18 months the Seafish Board, in collaboration with the four UK Government administrations, carried out a review into the future of Seafish informed by extensive consultation with the seafood industry. The review includes recommendations on:

- **Function** - 'What' Seafish will deliver based on industry priorities
- **Form** - 'How' Seafish will deliver its priorities, engage with stakeholders across the UK and ensure it has the right governance arrangements in place
- **Funding** - Ensuring Seafish is financially viable into the future

The seafood industry recognised that given resource constraints Seafish must focus on key priorities and the review recommends Seafish focuses on six areas where it can have most impact:

- **Workforce issues** - seafood businesses want help to access and support a safe and skilled workforce.
- **Reputation** - the seafood industry is increasingly responding to a range of societal and environmental challenges, including the impacts of fishing on the marine environment, marine pollution, microplastics, human rights and ethical issues, animal welfare issues and the environmental credentials of seafood. The industry need help to manage these challenges.
- **Climate change** - industry needs help to support them in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change and, where possible, reduce the industry's carbon footprint.
- **International trade** - the industry is looking

for support in helping to address trading challenges including navigating regulatory changes, exploring new markets and fostering good relations between trading countries.

- **Insight and innovation** - industry value the data, analysis, research and advice provided by Seafish to support them in making good business decisions.
- **Fisheries management** - industry values the work Seafish does in facilitating collaboration between industry, government and scientists to improve fisheries management.

For more details, watch a video of [Marcus Coleman, Seafish CEO](#), explain the outcome of the review.



The UK Food Valley welcomes the outcomes of the review and looks forward to working with the industry and Seafish to help implement the six themes, which align well with the ambitions of the UK Food Valley.

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SEAFOOD INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

The government has launched the UK Seafood Fund, with at least £65 million in grant funding available through the Infrastructure Scheme [UK Seafood Fund](#). The scheme will fund projects that build capability across the UK seafood sector supply chain through investment in improved capability at ports, harbours, processing facilities and aquaculture sites, and the social and economic welfare of coastal communities.

This is a competitive scheme and funding is secured via a grant bid. Each successful applicant will be awarded a minimum of £250,000 and a maximum of £5 million.

Applicants need to provide match funding for their project and the level of match funding depends on organisation type. The maximum level of funding from the Infrastructure Scheme as a percentage of

total project cost is:

- 75% for public bodies and public charities
- 50% for private SMEs
- 30% for private non-SME
- 75% for private, fisherman's associations
- 75% for private, producer organisations
- 50% for private charitable foundations

To see full details and apply for funding please visit the website [here](#).

CALL FOR PROJECTS – LABOUR MARKET SUPPORT FUND

The number of job vacancies across Greater Lincolnshire is at an all-time high, across a whole range of different sectors, occupations, and salary levels.

Employers across all sectors are experiencing labour shortages with the greatest volume in caring roles, and driver occupations, in addition to significant demand for machine operatives and a range of occupations within the hospitality sector and the food manufacturing sector. Recruitment challenges are not new, but the combined impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, a reduction in migrant labour from EU, and in some cases the desire for better work-life balance, has exacerbated the situation.

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP has re-evaluated its existing funding and through this call for projects

seeks to address Greater Lincolnshire's immediate labour market challenges. This call asks for projects ideas that will address labour market issues and align to our [Economic Plan for Growth 2021](#) and [Local Skills Report](#) contributing to economic revival. Click [here](#) for more information. Closing date for expressions of interest is 29th April 2022.



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LEVELLING UP TASKFORCE AT NCFM, 29TH MARCH 2022

On 29th March the University of Lincoln led a visit by the Levelling Up Taskforce to its Holbeach National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM) campus and South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ).

The visit, which included a tour of both the NCFM and FEZ, was attended by a wide range of representatives of industry, the not-for-profit sector and local government to discuss how the 12 missions in the spring 2022 [Levelling Up White Paper](#) are being addressed across Lincolnshire.

Many local leaders played a strong role in advocating for the [UK Food Valley](#) and Lincolnshire and articulating both the challenges and opportunities in levelling up.

A wide-ranging discussion on the UK Food Valley was informed through presentations by Professor Val Braybrooks and Professor Sharon Green of NCFM focusing on skills and education provision, David May of the Lincolnshire Institute of AgriFood Technology (LIAT) on the role of innovation, and Martin Collison who explained the scale and concept behind the UK Food Valley and its ambition.

Discussions focused on the way in which the UK Food Valley's focus on investment and technology led growth can help deliver higher productivity, more highly skilled and better paid careers, directly addressing issues at the heart of Levelling Up.

The UK Food Valley team will be following up with the Levelling Up Taskforce to explore how Greater Lincolnshire's food sector can play a larger role in delivering the ambitions in the White Paper.



Above: Members of the Levelling Up Taskforce and regional government representatives being briefed on the Sensory Suite in the Centre of Excellence at NCFM by Professor Sharon Green (centre) - the suite is used to test new food products with consumers.

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LINCOLNSHIRE FULFILMENT FIRM SET FOR GROWTH FOLLOWING ACQUISITION

Rookery Farm in Holbeach St Johns, a specialist picking and packing firm for the horticulture industry, has been acquired by Sarah Raven Ltd as part of the business' growth plan and in response to increased demand.

Previously an arable farm in the Robinson family for over 100 years, Rookery Farm is renowned for its growing, packing and despatching services to the horticultural industry.

David and Elaine Robinson have built up the family-owned business over the past 20 years and, now with a team of over 50 permanent staff, will continue to run the business for the Sarah Raven Group.

The Sarah Raven brand was first established in 1999 and is now a market leader in the consumer gardening industry, providing a comprehensive range of seeds, seedlings, plants, bulbs, and gardening and floristry kit.

Lou Farman, CEO at Sarah Raven, said: "We are excited to cement our long-standing partnership with Rookery Farm who has been our principal plant grower and handled our plant fulfilment for many years. This acquisition gives us the ability to increase capacity and will enable us to achieve our longer-term growth plans. The excellent Rookery Farm team will continue to manage the day-to-day business, and we look forward to continuing our successful partnership."

The acquisition of Rookery Farm comes as the Sarah Raven brand has seen significant growth in the previous two years. Bringing Rookery Farm under its operation will allow the brand to continue to grow and maximise the opportunity a growing market presents.

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To accommodate this anticipated expansion, Sarah Raven has plans to increase the size of the workforce at Rookery Farm and expand its operational site in due course.

David Robinson, previous owner of Rookery Farm, commented: "We are delighted to have the opportunity to be part of the Sarah Raven Group, who we have worked so closely with over the last 13 years. This will allow us to continue to expand, both in terms of growing and fulfilment, and also as a key employer in the Spalding area.

"Our focus has been to raise and despatch plants with a continued emphasis on sustainability, reducing waste and recycling our water. We are looking forward to more opportunities in the future. Rookery Farm will continue with its policy of working with local suppliers, having spent over £3m with local companies in 2021."

Councillor Nick Worth, South Holland District Council deputy leader and portfolio holder for people, places, economy, said: "This is a great move for everyone involved, and for the wider district of South Holland, and should bring significant investment into the area whilst seeing one of our many thriving horticultural businesses continue to grow.

"We have worked closely with Rookery Farm for many years now, to support them and provide help and advice as they have developed as a business. I look forward to us continuing this partnership as they move into this exciting new chapter with the Sarah Raven Group, helping to put some of the great work that takes place in South Holland on the map."

LIAT WELCOMES PROFESSOR LOUISE MANNING

The Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT) is pleased to announce that Professor Louise Manning will soon be joining the University of Lincoln as Professor of Sustainable Agri-Food Systems.

Louise joins from the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester and has more than 35 years' experience of working within the food industry. Prior to being an academic she ran her own consultancy, offering professional advice and guidance to regulators, food and farming businesses. Louise is also involved in the family farming business, a livestock farm in Herefordshire.

Although Louise is interested in all things related to food, her passion is food sustainability.

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Looking at all parts of the food supply chain, from field to fork, seeing where changes can be made such as how waste can be reduced, food safety can be assured, and actions can be taken that results in affordable food are all essential aspects of a secure, safe and resilient food supply chain.

Louise believes that effective communications should be at the heart of all aspects of the food industry, enabling both producers and consumers to make informed choices as they seek to meet a range of challenges, from providing healthy food options through to playing their part in improving sustainability in food supply chains. Smart-technology has a greater role to play within the food industry, in supporting safe food, waste reduction and informed choice with innovations such as phone applications and QR codes providing a way for customers to find out everything they need to know about food products in shops, or when they buy online.

Professor Louise Manning said: "I'm passionate about all things food and will bring that passion along with a lifetime of experience to my new role

at the University of Lincoln.

"I want to encourage businesses and students to visualise the social side of the food supply chain as well as the production and the technical. The culture in which we produce, manufacture and sell food is so important. I want to see how we can look at opportunities with technology, and how we can share information ethically and more effectively so we can use it to reduce the inequalities around food and address food insecurity and food waste.

"Riseholme Campus looks like a fantastic place to work, and I'm looking forward to getting started."

Louise is very active on social media and has more than 4,000 people in her social media networks from Twitter, through blogs to LinkedIn. You can follow her on Twitter @foodsafetyljm and @thefoodconverse

She starts her role with LIAT in April 2022 and will be based at the University of Lincoln's Riseholme Campus.

FOOD AND DRINK MEMBERSHIP LAUNCHES



LINCOLNSHIRE
FOOD&DRINK

[Lincolnshire Food and Drink](#), formally known as Select Lincolnshire, is a newly launched membership scheme with a strong vision to grow a collaborative group of businesses, supporting the growth and success of the Lincolnshire food and drink industry locally, nationally, and internationally and aligned to the UK Food Valley.

The membership boasts a host of benefits across the Supporter and Growth platforms which have been designed to help businesses make vital connections within the county, and to gain and share expert knowledge, have access to promotional platforms, profile products and have access to tools and support for international trade.

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Alex Bavin of Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce, who is managing the membership, said: “The food and drink industry here in the county is one of Lincolnshire’s strongest sectors, and I am delighted to be supporting our members and working alongside key stakeholders who all share the same vision. Lincolnshire is an amazing county with a vibrant mix of food and drink producers, all who are passionate about what they do and the area they live. The membership has been carefully considered to support growth and to drive forward the sector on an international level through our connections with overseas Chambers.”

Providing knowledge-based benefits, including an industry specific webinar programme, networking events, access to training courses and discounted Chamber events, the membership aims to provide upskilling opportunities and quality conversations, and members have access to a free cyber security health check by Business Savings Partner, Custodia, free HR support services, health and safety and legal advice as well as AA Roadside Assist.

Alex concluded: “There is so much potential for Lincolnshire’s food and drink industry and we already have many businesses already shining a light on the county through their fantastic products. We want to build a community and support and help them to achieve their business goals and take them further.”

If you are interested in hearing more about Lincolnshire Food and Drink, its members and goals, contact Alex Bavin on LFandD@lincs-chamber.co.uk.

BARCLAYS EAGLE LAB LAUNCH REPORT ON NET ZERO FOOD PRODUCTION

Barclays Eagle Lab have released [a new report which highlights the challenges with reaching net zero food production](#). The Eagle Farm Lab team, based at Riseholme Campus, were involved in producing the report which focuses on the role of agri-tech in reaching net zero food production in the agricultural sector.

The Barclays team spoke to experts across the industry to look at the changes that need to take place to help the UK meet its net zero ambition by 2050. The report also features case studies of businesses who are leading the transition, through innovation and new business practices, to explore how agri-tech solutions could play a key role in helping to reach these sustainability targets.



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HUMBERHEAD LEVELS EVENT, DONCASTER

On 31st March, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust hosted a symposium to report back on findings from the Humberhead Levels Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) Test and Trials. This project is part of the DEFRA sponsored ELMS Test and Trial programme, to help shape the future of ELMS funding.

The Humberhead Levels project focuses on new ways of addressing water resource management across the area to deliver multiple benefits such as flood protection, clean water for human use and nature, and protecting important sites for biodiversity and for carbon storage within the peats.

The Humberhead Levels test has engaged with land managers to identify the public goods that could be delivered in the area, and identify any priorities, issues and potential solutions to enable the delivery of public goods.

The test outcomes the project is looking to deliver are:

- Achieve consensus on priority public goods to be delivered in HHL with 100+ land managers.
- 30 land management plans based on site visits in three clusters; peri-urban, buffering the nature reserves and open farmland.
- HHL landscape scale costed assessment arrived at from consensus of priority goods and Land Management Plans and discussions with other sectors to engage interest in buying goods.
- Foundation for an integrated landscape-scale strategy for the HHL, where methods will have been designed with the land management sector and other stakeholders.

The Humberhead Levels partnership is supporting delivery of the test with a wide range of stakeholders working together. Technical advisers for the Test include the [Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre](#) and the [University of Lincoln](#) through the Lincoln Institute of Agri-food Technology (LIAT).

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The Trust has appointed two ELMs Test Land Management Officers to undertake the tests; one for the Humberhead Levels and another for a similar project in South Lincolnshire, with the tests due to run from 4th January 2021 to 31st July 2022.

Martin Collison of the UK Food Valley team spoke at the event on the 31st March on agrifood and how recent pressures on the supply of food, including Covid and the war in Ukraine, have changed the industry. Welcoming the focus on environmental land management, he also outlined the need to ensure that environmental land management projects co-exist with food production to avoid the risk that reduced food production in one area simply moves the environmental impact to another location, in the UK or overseas. In a lively final question and answer session the symposium discussed what this means in practice and how we can simultaneously deliver food and an enhanced environment.

For more information please visit: [Humberhead Levels ELMS test | Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust](#)

LINCOLNSHIRE ECONOMIC FORUM, MARCH 2022

On 31st March, Team Lincolnshire and Business Insider teamed up to hold the Lincolnshire Economic Forum 2022 at the Lincolnshire Showground.



The event focused on how Lincolnshire is leading the way in sustainability, efficient food production and green energy. This Insider Breakfast event looked at the opportunities within the region, the investment needed in transport and how to benefit your business and sell Lincolnshire to the world.

Based around two panel sessions, the event included discussions on the potential from the agrifood technology sector and how this will help the UK Food Valley meet its ambitions. This panel featured Janet Bellamy, University of Lincoln's

Associate Professor in food robotics, Martin Collison, agri-tech specialist from the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and the UK Food Valley, Ruth Hoban, Head of Sustainability at New England Seafood, and Halvard Grimstad, Head of Deployment at Saga Robotics.

The second panel discussed how the Greater Lincolnshire economy can grow with a focus on skills, the transition to green energy and the construction sector. This panel featured Professor Duncan Botting, Chief Executive at Global Smart Transformation and Chair of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Energy Council, Helen Molloy, Partner at Shakespeare Martineau, Jenna Frudd, Relationship Manager at Willmott Dixon, and Ruth Carver, Chief Executive of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP.

[A video stream of the event is available to watch here.](#)

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DEFRA REGIONAL FOOD AND DRINK SUMMIT

On 2nd March, a Lincolnshire delegation attended the DEFRA Food Summit in Birmingham, which was focused on how to grow the UK's regional food and drink economy. Starting with an address by DEFRA Minister Victoria Prentis MP, the summit featured a series of industry case studies, discussions and a marketplace to showcase organisations working to support regional food and drink producers.



The event focused on four key opportunities for growth:

1. **New routes to market (direct to consumer)** - focusing on the growing opportunities within direct to consumer sales, and the benefits of shorter supply chains.
2. **Regional and local promotion** - looking at the benefits of developing a strong regional or local food identity to grow the local food economy.

3. **Building export capability** - examining the opportunities for SMEs in markets across the world, and how they can overcome barriers to exporting.
4. **Accessing public sector procurement** - looking at the different routes to accessing public sector procurement, including how SMEs can be part of the supply chain, and how the market is evolving.

Linked to the same theme, DEFRA have worked with SMEs, regional food groups and others to produce how-to guides sharing practical tips, case studies and advice on the four business growth opportunities. These guides include a best practice case study on Lincolnshire based Glenthams Farming Company in the public procurement brochure.

The guides will evolve further to reflect best practice and new opportunities, and are available here:

- [Direct to Consumer sales](#)
- [Exporting](#)
- [Regional and Local Food and Drink Promotion](#)
- [Public Sector Food and Catering](#)

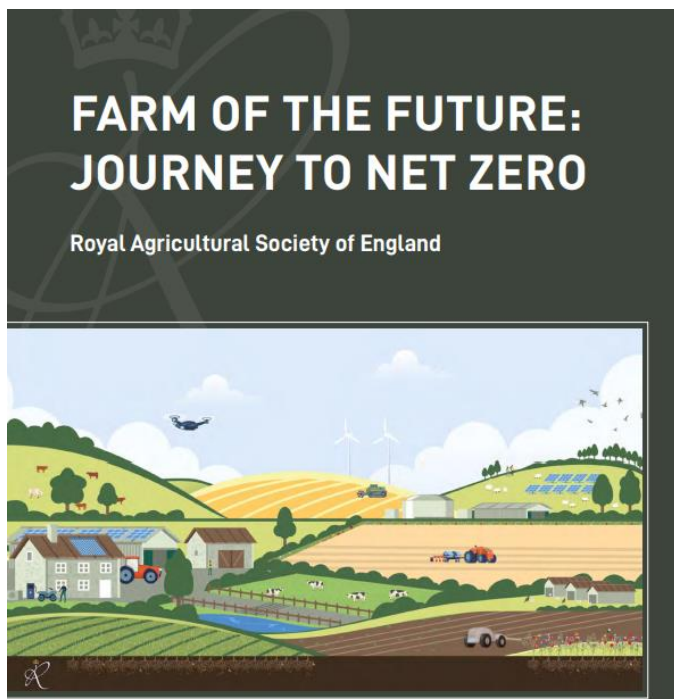


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RASE LAUNCHES FARM OF THE FUTURE: JOURNEY TO NET ZERO REPORT

The Royal Agricultural Society of England's report [Farm of the Future: Journey to Net Zero](#) was launched on 8th March at the Low Carbon Agricultural Show and builds on a [COP26 policy brief](#) published in October 2021.

The report's strong emphasis on the responsibility of rural decarbonisation lying in the hands of farmers outlines how interlinked factors will determine the rate of progress - such as accurate economic valuation of natural capital, technology and investment, plus knowledge exchange and, crucially, a modernising overhaul of rural digital connectivity.



Lord Deben, Chairman of the UK's Climate Change Committee, said: "The 'net' bit of net zero is therefore vitally important and crucially it's largely in the hands of farmers," adding that farmers need help and direction if they are to shoulder this essential task. "By 2050, fossil fuels will have no place on our farms, and to that end every year, serious reductions must be made."

The Farm of the Future report was commissioned by RASE to collate the latest science and its on-farm application, showing what farmers can realistically achieve to identify practical steps they can take to decarbonise the farming industry, and has a strong emphasis on improving soil health through investment in natural capital. Farmers and land managers have a key role to play in developing a more circular, resource-efficient rural economy. Many farmers need help, advice, and support if they are to embrace transformational change, adopt new ideas and technologies, while make fundamental adjustments to the way that they farm.

Commenting on the report Phillip Gready, Chairman of RASE, said: "British farmers can play a pivotal role in developing sustainable land use which meets the objectives of feeding the population, while sequestering more carbon than we emit and improving soil health, water quality and biodiversity."

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The report is practical in its guidance, highlighting the emissions reduction options available to farmers and growers, including improved resource management, renewable energy generation, use of low emission farm vehicles, replacement of fossil fuels and adoption of digital technologies.

Mr Gready added: "For transformation to happen, farmers need practical guidance on the decarbonisation options based on currently available and emerging technologies, along with independent advice and technology demonstration sites. To improve carbon capture, they need access to farm-level emissions accounting and benchmarking tools."

The Farm of the Future report along with other specialist papers outlining enterprise journeys [can be found here](#).

DIARY DATES

The **Lincolnshire Show** returns in 2022 and will be held on 22nd and 23rd June at the Lincolnshire Showground at Grange-de-Lings, Lincoln, LN2 2NA.

Future editions of the newsletter will include more information on the show, but for now we urge you to put the date in your diary as we welcome back one of the region's biggest business and social events after a break of two years due to the pandemic.

To book tickets or enter competitions at the show please visit [The Lincolnshire Show 2022](#)

The **Humber Business Week** takes place from 5th – 10th June 2022 with a series of events taking place this year on the South Bank. On 9th June the Lincolnshire International Business School is hosting its Connect 2022 event at the new Scunthorpe campus on a day focused on the food sector and covering business growth, innovation and carbon net zero. More information to follow.



FUNDING

AGRI-TECH 'HOT FUNDING' LIST – A REGULAR LIST OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRI-TECH

Working in agriculture, farming or food production? Then these funds may help.

UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN AGRI-TECH TEAM SUPPORT

The agri-tech 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 with us at LAR@lincoln.ac.uk; or for Innovate UK enquiries at the University of Lincoln: mvals@lincoln.ac.uk

FARMING FUTURES – UKRI / DEFRA

The Farming Futures R&D competition is for ambitious research projects that could benefit farmers in England. Each competition has a different theme. You'll need to collaborate with at least one other business or research organisation.

- Climate smart farming (theme one): opens TBC
- Sustainable proteins (theme two): opens summer 2022

Projects can last up to four years and need to cost between £3 million and £6 million. [Click here for more information](#)

DISCOVERY FELLOWSHIP, BIOTECHNOLOGY & BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council invites applications for its discovery fellowship. This enables researchers to gain leadership skills by undertaking independent research in any area of science within the council's remit, which includes research on plants, microbes, animals, and tools and technology underpinning biological research.

Closing date 5th May 2022. [Click here for more information.](#)

FUNDING

PRODUCTIVITY HUBS PROGRAMME



The Productivity HUBs programme is a University of Lincoln initiative, funded by the ERDF. The Programme is aimed at helping businesses in Scunthorpe, Boston and Grimsby to develop, grow and thrive. Eligible businesses will be provided with either or both of the following:

- **Business Development:** Access to a business development manager who will work with you to identify key challenges and opportunities and help you to develop a plan to drive your business forwards to increased productivity and profitability.
- **Business Acceleration:** Aimed at ambitious start-ups that are committed to accelerating the growth of their business. Eligible businesses will get a package of intensive support designed to improve performance and drive growth, and an opportunity to pitch for seed-funding grants of up to £10,000.

[More information here](#). Contact Gary Mumby, Business Advisor: GMumby@lincoln.ac.uk | 07989 868 969





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