

## INNOVATION IS THE ANSWER – SEIZE THE POTENTIAL NOW!

In our Christmas edition we welcome Nigel Jenney, Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC), with his take on the current position of the UK food sector and his strategies for solutions, followed by an end of year message from the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Chair Pat Doody.

Looking back on 2022, the disruption of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic may well have subsided, but a plethora of new and ongoing challenges have created further problems for the fresh produce industry.

Our sector has been in turmoil for several years now, and recent industry data suggests that things remain increasingly challenging. The conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated long-term difficulties, including the cost and supply of labour, raw materials and energy.

Added to that, this year we have experienced drought, unprecedented supply chain cost increases, and the aftermath of the government's mini-budget, all of which is having a profound effect on fresh produce production and distribution.

These are all serious issues. And the UK needs serious solutions. The fresh produce industry must wake up and take a fresh look at how to truly tackle the several challenges it faces. At the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC), we strongly believe that innovation is the answer.

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# INNOVATION IS THE ANSWER – SEIZE THE POTENTIAL NOW!



## *Continued...*

Our industry has always been dynamic and adaptable. However, the cumulative impact of inadequate labour supply puts the whole sector at risk. Ultimately the produce sector is the ingredient powerhouse of the whole of the UK food manufacturing industry.

We must seize this moment and move towards the rapid development and adoption of agritech innovation right across our supply chain. We cannot afford to be complacent. We must be proactive and grasp these opportunities to evolve and grow.

The produce industry can tackle both its short and long-term issues through the incorporation of technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, robotics and automation, along with the development of new growing systems and practices like vertical farming.

By making agriculture smarter we can dramatically enhance productivity and improve efficiencies; we can reduce the high demand for labour; and we can make our sector more attractive to a new generation of talent. Beyond that, agritech can help with energy consumption, new product development, sustainability, recycled plastics, waste reduction, and more.

FPC has an important role to play in working together with the industry to support this innovation. We are here to drive forward these necessary changes, and we are working with our members to develop new solutions for the industry too.

What's more, the UK Food Valley in Greater Lincolnshire is focusing on naturally good-for-you foods, including a major focus on fresh produce, as well as automation, digitalisation and the journey to low-carbon food chains - three areas which are very well aligned with FPC.

We have the chance now to truly tap into the potential of our sector because, let's not forget, the fresh produce business is fundamental to the success of the whole food industry in feeding the nation. The good news is that the technologies which can help us are emerging.

The bad news is that there isn't enough education for the produce industry about the application of these technologies. And there need to be more financially-viable routes available to support its adoption.

FPC believes in educating the industry about how both agriculture and horticulture can be made smarter to safeguard the future of our food supply. Equally, FPC has been looking at new ways to bridge the disconnect between the next generation of workers and the perception of our industry. And we believe we've found some vital solutions!

That's why FPC has developed a ground-breaking, two-in-one event – FPC Future and FPC Careers – to showcase the latest agritech innovation, and to discover the next generation of talent. We believe this free-to-attend dual exhibition and expert speaker conference, together with its live robotics displays, will propel the fresh produce and horticultural sectors confidently into the future.

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# INNOVATION IS THE ANSWER – SEIZE THE POTENTIAL NOW!



## *Continued...*

Launched last year, FPC Future and FPC Careers enjoyed both huge attendance and critical acclaim. The next edition will be held at the East of England Arena and Events Centre in Peterborough on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Don't miss your chance to see at first hand the agritech and recruitment possibilities that are becoming rapidly available.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and here's to a successful 2023!

**Nigel Jenney**

**Chief Executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC)**

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## UK FOOD VALLEY RESPONSE AND COMMENT

Our thanks to Nigel for fronting this month's edition. The UK Food Valley agrees that innovation has to be the answer to driving sustainable growth in the industry and is poised to really drive this forward by working with partners to deliver this in 2023.

Since 2016 over £80m has been invested in new skills, innovation and business start-up facilities in the UK Food Valley to support the agrifood industry. New programme funding of over £75m has been secured from government and industry match funding to deliver innovation projects. The established National Centre for Food Manufacturing (NCFM) has been joined by the Lincoln Institute for AgriFood Technology (LIAT), Barclays Eagle Farm Lab, new Bishop Burton Showground Campus, the Lincoln Institute of Technology and a Centre for Food and Fresh Produce Logistics in Boston, all of which work very closely together. 2022 has also seen the first major project in Grimsby to support the seafood sector with more investment in this cluster planned. As reported later in this newsletter we also announced the creation of the Agricultural Growth Zone (AG Zone) at the LEP conference in November 2022 and look forward to announcing additional investments in innovation and skills projects for the agriculture and food sector in 2023.

Click [here](#) to view Christmas vlog messages from the LEP Board Directors and Chief Executive.

We wish all of our stakeholders and partners a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year!



# END OF YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



A year ago we launched our UK Food Valley, and I want to thank my Deputy Chair Sarah Louise Fairburn and the LEP team for leading the activity across this important programme during 2022. The UK Food Valley was designed to assist the growth of the industry through supporting investment in food production, skills, innovation, low-carbon transition and technology, but little could prepare us in November 2021 for the challenges the industry and wider economy would face this year.

As we near the close of 2022, I would like to share my reflections and impacts on the year with this important sector. On 24<sup>th</sup> February Russia invaded Ukraine and little did we know what global impacts this would unleash. Notwithstanding the dreadful loss of life, the shock waves have led to major challenges for households and every economic sector, with intensified impacts for the food chain.

The food chain is a major energy user and we have seen prices spike to unprecedented levels, with fertilisers and raw material prices at every stage of the chain impacted. We have also seen record prices for many food commodities, and by November 2022 food inflation rose to over 12% with most industry experts expecting it to rise further in early 2023, leading to major challenges domestically, environmentally, commercially and politically.

This all impacts on how our food is sourced, produced and distributed, but we remain focused on the core elements of the UK Food Valley to deliver world-class leadership to steer and adapt the industry to the challenges faced.

Perhaps as never before, innovation and skills will be critical, and supported by the many investments made in recent years by the Greater Lincolnshire



LEP, our food industry, the University of Lincoln, and investments in our colleges, all stand us in a position of real strength. But we must continue to work together to actively drive further investment as we collaboratively move our industry closer to a Global Top 10 Food Cluster.

In brighter news, I am very pleased to report that investment inquiries in the food sector have remained buoyant and in the last five years we have seen over £2 billion invested and 7,000 jobs created in the Greater Lincolnshire food chain.

Our leadership on automation led by the Lincoln Institute of Agri Tech team is now recognised as world-leading by government, and at the recent CBI November conference the Prime Minister cited the University of Lincoln as a leading centre for automation for its work on fruit robotics. Our rising profile and recognition is testament to the extremely focused work of so many over many years as we have developed leadership in automation and digitalisation of the food chain.

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## END OF YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



### *Continued...*

We all know that we must do more to address both energy cost and speed the transition to low-carbon forms of energy. This is the next big challenge for our food industry and while we are already seeing businesses and our innovation base responding, I want to encourage everyone to do more. For me, investing in energy efficiency and greener energy supplies is no longer a choice. We must deliver on these agendas now for the benefit of the planet as well as to increase our competitiveness, and the LEP Food Board is actively working closely with the Greater Lincolnshire Energy Council to ensure that we develop our food chain and clean energy themes in parallel.

The world's largest offshore wind farm developments are located off our coast, we have more anaerobic digestion plants than other counties, and the Humber decarbonisation projects are leading UK thinking on energy transition in some of our most energy-intensive sectors. We are extremely fortunate to have a fantastic and dynamic food chain in Greater Lincolnshire, which also aligns naturally with the growth in the green energy transition in the UK, and this gives us a unique competitive advantage.

No-one can know what 2023 will bring and, after the experience of the last three years, I am not going to make any predictions. What I do believe is that if we continue to lead the way in our collaborations, we will continue to see impactful growth across our game changing and priority sectors, with the food chain remaining at the core of our growth ambitions.

I wish your industry workers a very well earned break over the festive period and urge you to return reinvigorated in January to join together in driving this fantastic sector forward.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas.

**Pat Doody**

**Chair, Greater Lincolnshire LEP**



# OUR NEWS



## AGRICULTURAL GROWTH ZONE LAUNCHED AT LEP CONFERENCE



*The Agrifood Panel at the LEP Conference 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022, left to right: Ben Wills, founder of 360 Rural, Jonathan Oldfield, Head of Complex at Moy Park, Sarah Louise Fairburn, Deputy LEP Chair and Chair of Greater Lincolnshire Food Board, Prof Val Braybrooks, Dean of the National Centre for Food Manufacturing.*

A collaborative AG Zone was announced at the LEP annual conference to continue the growth of collaborative research which has attracted over £60m of investment to the area since 2016 and supported the establishment of new agritech businesses such as Fruitcast and Agaricus Robots, both created at Riseholme in 2021.

It will create a centre to support agriculture and a skills pipeline to attract the next generation into the industry, from engagement with schools through further and higher education and on to postgraduate education and continuing professional development for the farming industry.

The AG Zone will unite the work at Bishop Burton College's Showground Campus, the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society, the Lincoln Institute of Agricultural Technology (LIAT), Barclays Eagle Farm Lab and the cluster of agritech companies now being established on the Riseholme Campus to link the emerging cluster of skills, innovation, and business support to a network of commercial demonstration farms across Lincolnshire to trial new technologies.

Click [here](#) to read the announcement and listen to the live launch at the conference on YouTube at [UK Food Valley Unpacked](#)



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# OUR NEWS

## *Continued...*

The launch of the Ag Zone has been warmly welcomed in the media:

- [Support for Lincolnshire farming from new Agricultural Growth Zone – The Lincolnite](#)
- ['Ag Zone' celebrates farming's worth – Farmers Guardian \(fginsight.com\)](#)
- [Agricultural Growth Zone created to support Lincolnshire and Rutland – East Midlands Business Link](#)
- ['Ag zone' created in Lincolnshire and Rutland to boost farming sector – fpcfreshtalkdaily.co.uk](#)
- [Support for farming from new Agricultural Growth Zone – West Lindsey District Council \(west-lindsey.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Agricultural Growth Zone created to support Lincolnshire and Rutland – Business Link Magazine \(blmforum.net\)](#)
- ['Ag zone' created in Lincolnshire and Rutland to boost farming sector – FarmingUK News](#)
- [Support for Farming from New Agricultural Growth Zone in the UK – Farming News](#)

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## CAREERS AND TRAINING PROGRESS

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP has been building strong connections across schools and businesses this year to shape the right education and training to support local employment and business. This year we launched our [Labour Market Support Fund](#) and our Careers Hub, now in its second year, is busy supporting 122 secondary schools and colleges across Greater Lincolnshire. We are also delighted to have welcomed our [100th Enterprise Adviser](#)!

Meanwhile a number of capital schemes opened this year in [Boston, Lincoln, Scunthorpe, Stamford](#), and most recently, a new Energy Centre in [Grantham](#) and ELITE in Grimsby. We have also been working at pace with Lincolnshire County Council, the Department for Education, and our colleges and training providers to develop a series of Skills Bootcamps for adults. Intended as short, flexible, training programmes, they will lead to new jobs or additional responsibilities within the workplace. More Skills Bootcamp news coming soon!

This month we are proud to have launched our first edition of a brand new newsletter focused on the Greater Lincolnshire Careers Hub. To view this new publication packed full of careers education information, advice, and guidance (CEIAG) activity across our region, and as a celebration of the contributions of our business volunteers, click [here](#) to preview, and to register to subscribe to this publication from January 2023 visit [here](#).

# YOUR NEWS



## AGRITECH ACCELERATOR LAUNCHES TO DRIVE GROWTH AND INNOVATION IN BRITISH FARMING

Earlier this month the University of Lincoln, in partnership with Barclays Eagle Labs, launched recruitment for another 10-week business accelerator designed to help early-stage agricultural technology businesses to drive innovation in the UK's agriculture sector.

[Applications are now open](#) to entrepreneurs in the agritech sector with a promising business plan or early stage (0-3 years) agritech businesses with the desire to grow. The fully funded accelerator will include a series of half-day workshops focused on business skills, including developing a business model, financing a business and planning a route to market. Although most workshops will be delivered virtually, the first workshop will be face-to-face to enable participants to get to know each other.



In addition, each individual business will have access to tailored support and resources via a specialist mentor and a series of unique masterclasses tailored to the sector's needs. Topics could range from sales and partnership working to developing new technology and artificial intelligence in farming. Participants will also gain access to the facilities and services of the Barclays Eagle Lab Farm, based at the University of Lincoln's Riseholme campus, as well as the opportunity to collaborate with the research teams within the university including:

- Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology ([LIAT](#))
- Lincoln Centre for Autonomous Systems ([LCAS](#))
- Lincoln Agri-Robotics ([LAR](#)), a £6.4m project funded by the Expanding Excellence in England fund via Research England.

The lab offers access to cutting-edge agritech resources, including a dedicated robotics lab, a food handling pack-house, scaled down industry standard strawberry farm and a refrigeration research centre, available for businesses to develop and prototype their products. Participants will also gain access to the UK-wide Eagle Labs network and exclusive access to community events.

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# YOUR NEWS

## Continued...

Adam White, National Head of Agriculture at Barclays, said: *"Barclays has a long history of supporting UK agricultural and in a further partnership with the University of Lincoln, we want to drive the sort of innovation that will put UK farming at the forefront globally. I urge any early-stage agritech entrepreneur to [go online and find out more](#) – I can't wait to see what kind of businesses sign up."*

Simon Pearson, Director of the Lincoln Institute of Agri-Food Technology, commented: *"Agriculture has been at the heart of Lincolnshire's economy for decades and the Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology is here to ensure that farming and food production make the most of the technological advances on offer. The partnership of LIAT with Barclays Eagle Labs offers early stage agritech businesses with unparalleled access to business support, expertise, facilities, research and knowhow and we can't wait to get started."*



 UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN



For more information, or to apply for the programme, visit [here](#).



# YOUR NEWS



## MIDLANDS ENGINE LAUNCHES NEW REPORTS ON THE FOOD CHAIN

The Midlands Engine has launched two new reports on the scale, breadth and growth potential of the region's agrifood sector. The full report identifies that:

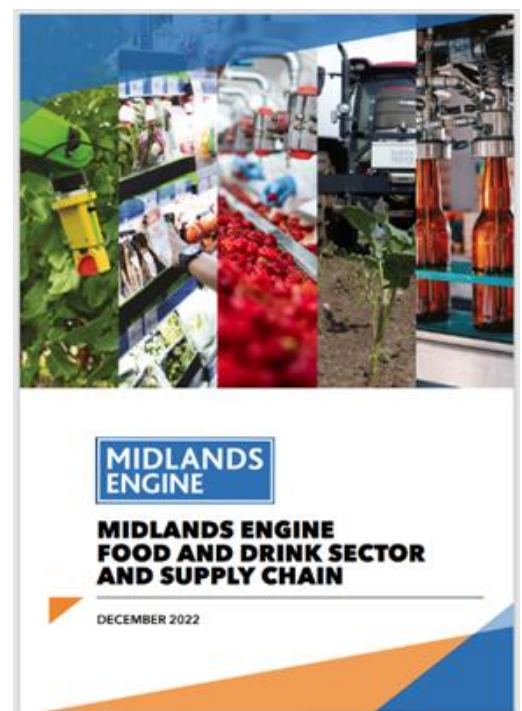
- the Midlands has 857,000 jobs in the farm to fork supply chain in 66,000 businesses
- of these, 373,000 jobs are in agriculture, food processing, distribution and technical and professional services and 485,000 in food retail and hospitality
- the Midlands farm-to-fork supply chain created £32billion of GVA
- of this economic output, over £20 billion is in agriculture, food processing, distribution and technical and professional services and £12 billion in food retail and hospitality

The full report can be read [here](#).

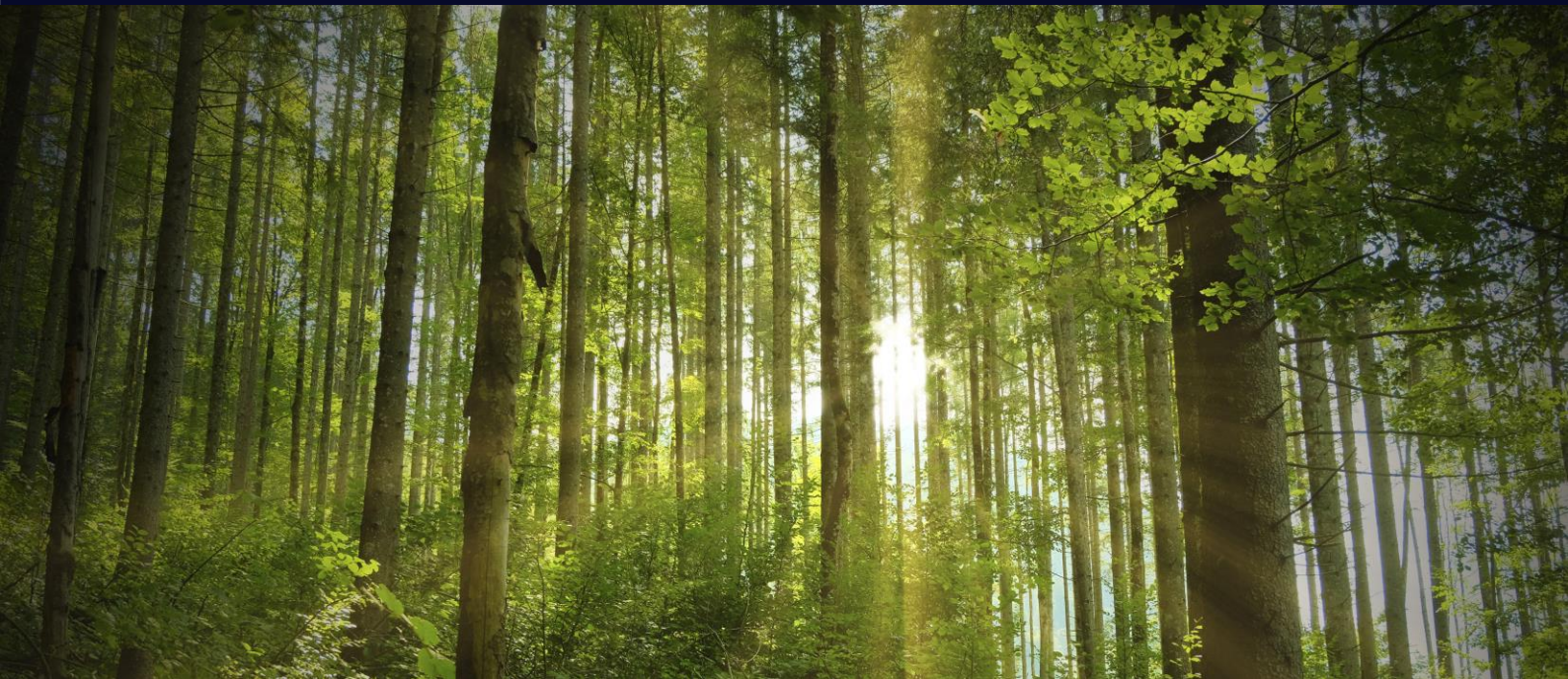
A shorter document is also available setting out opportunities for growth in the sector. This highlights five headline opportunities for investment covering:

- clean growth to deliver Net Zero through energy transition and new practices
- diet and health to exploit consumer trends through new product development
- trade, import substitution and inward investment to support global Britain
- automation and digitalisation to create high-value jobs through increased productivity and digital supply chain technology
- supply chain reconfiguration to exploit the Midlands' position as the UK's distribution hub

Click for the [Opportunities brochure](#).



# YOUR NEWS



## UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN WINS NATIONAL TREE PRODUCTION INNOVATION FUNDING

With government planning to increase tree planting from 10,000 to 30,000 hectares per year and farmers being encouraged to help meet this target as part of greening agriculture, a new award of funding for innovation at the Lincoln Institute of Agri-Food Technology (LIAT) has been welcomed.

The project aims to address labour shortages in the forest nursery sector by developing intelligent robotics solutions for plant processing. LIAT's award of almost £300,000 is part of the Tree Production Innovation Fund, which aims to support new technologies and ways of working to enhance the quantity, quality, and diversity of the tree planting stock in England.

Marcello Calisti, Associate Professor in Agri Robotics at LIAT, said *"Our team at the University of Lincoln is excited to work with the long-term objective of contributing to the climate crisis response, and this funding will help us to build a responsible, innovative and world-leading robotic solution for plant processing."*

*"It addresses societal challenges such as the labour crisis that impairs the growth and sustainability of forest nurseries, and at the same time it contributes to fundamental understanding of how robots perceive and interact with the world."*

Read the full story [here](#).



# YOUR NEWS



## LINCOLNSHIRE RECOGNISED AS A KEY DESTINATION FOR FOOD CHAIN FDI

The Global Britain, Global Counties publication has ranked Lincolnshire sixth overall out of 36 counties for total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) deals in 2018-21.

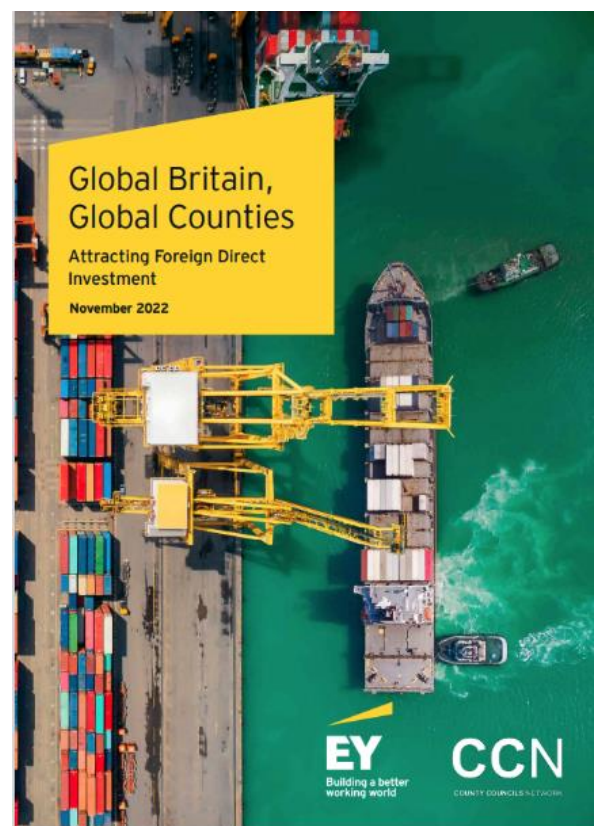
Greater Lincolnshire was the only area in the top 10 in which the leading sector for FDI was food and drink. This shows the importance of programmes such as the UK Food Valley in bringing together partners to focus on the opportunities in key sectors.

Team Lincolnshire commented: *“This is very positive news for Lincolnshire which shows that the region is ideally placed to attract both emerging industries while supporting manufacturing and food economies within agrifood, agritech and food chain investment.”*

*“We work closely with the Department for International Trade and bring together key stakeholders to help businesses discover our region and provide everything that is needed to make an informed decision about investing here.”*

Lincolnshire has a proactive programme to maintain engagement with over 100 internationally owned businesses in Greater Lincolnshire, many in agrifood production, and guides investors and organisations through every step.

To find out more about our investment opportunities visit our [investment pages](#) or contact the team at [investment@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:investment@lincolnshire.gov.uk)





# YOUR NEWS



## FISHING MINISTER VISITS GRIMSBY

The Fisheries Minister, Mark Spencer, visited Grimsby on 24<sup>th</sup> November and made an announcement on two Seafood Infrastructure Fund grant successes for Grimsby-based businesses.

In a meeting hosted by the UK's largest fish processor Youngs, the Minister also met with representatives of the Seafood Grimsby and Humber Alliance and Professor Val Braybrooks of the University of Lincoln whose team have recently finished the first phase of delivery of the UK Food Valley Community Renewal Fund (CRF) Seafood Pilot.

While in Grimsby the Minister also visited HSH Cold stores, one of the successful grant recipients, and Patrick Salmon who runs Alfred Enderby which has the PGI for traditionally smoked haddock. The two successful bids for the Seafood Infrastructure Fund are:

[HSH Cold Stores](#), Grimsby which won £5m in funding for cold store expansion funding as part of a £33million, 32,700 pallet-space cold storage and logistics investment and will enable a 70% reduction of the energy per pallet space of existing cold storage facilities and directly provide over 60 new full-time high-quality jobs and enable expansion of the seafood processing sector.

JCS Fish Limited, Grimsby which won £2,414,750 to develop a state-of-the-art 2,000m<sup>2</sup> fish processing factory with integrated smokehouse to expand capability from its current 10 tonnes to 20 tonnes per day, creating an estimated 32 direct jobs and 80 indirect jobs and making energy savings in the region of 30% despite it being a larger site.

All the grants awarded in round one are detailed [here](#). The Minister also announced the launch of Round 2 of the Seafood Infrastructure Fund, with £30m available, and with bids due to be submitted by 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023. Seafood businesses which are keen to invest can find full details of the fund by clicking the link [here](#).

Read the story [here](#).





# YOUR NEWS

## INDUSTRY-FIRST POULTRY BnB SCHEME LAUNCHED BY FAIRBURN'S EGGS TO HELP PRODUCERS

Lincolnshire-based Fairburn's Eggs, which supplies millions of eggs to supermarkets across the UK every week, is launching an industry-first poultry 'bed and breakfast' scheme to give egg producers a much needed helping hand.

A decade ago, Fairburn's made the decision to stop supplying through a major global brand and go it alone. Its young team invested strategically in land, equipment and livestock, and quickly built personal relationships with leading retailers. It now produces 15 million eggs a week, has secured contracts with six leading supermarkets, has launched innovative product ranges including its British Blue, and built its own network of producers.

As the sector faces devastating conditions of rising energy, increased feed costs, and avian influenza, this innovative package will ensure producers receive a guaranteed return on their investment as Fairburn's will pay them to raise flocks on its behalf, supplying them with pullets and feed.

Daniel Fairburn, CEO of Fairburn's Eggs, said: *"We know as farmers ourselves that our industry is going through a very tough time, so we felt this was the right way to provide reassurance for producers. We pledge to pay loyal producers a fair fee for looking after birds to our welfare standards, taking away as many risks as we can of rising costs and insecurities in the market."*

*"A similar model has worked well in the pig sector,*

*and we have developed ours for egg producers. We are confident it will provide a much-needed boost for the industry at a time when it needs it most. The demand is there for eggs and the aim of this new initiative is to take the jeopardy out of the process."*

This holistic field-to-fridge approach means the family-owned firm rears its own birds, mills and develops feeds, produces, packs and delivers eggs, manages relationships with leading UK retailers, and has a wealth of experience that other producers will be able to tap into.

Fairburn's Eggs is renowned for being a 'breakout' firm in a relatively static and conservative farming sector. Over the past decade it has overcome financial challenges to become one of the largest egg producers and packers in the country, winning many awards and City plaudits along the way. Retailers welcome its hands-on, flexible, 'can do' attitude and one-stop-shop approach - complete control from day-old chick to fridge. It continues to invest in new technology and high animal welfare standards, while always ensuring the business is sustainable for future generations of the Fairburn family.

Interested producers should get in touch with John Holt, National Production Manager at Fairburn's Eggs, at [john@fairburnseggs.co.uk](mailto:john@fairburnseggs.co.uk).



# YOUR NEWS

## INNOVATION IN THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN UNLOCKING AGRITECH FOR NET ZERO

A new report on how the food supply chain can unlock the potential of agritech to help deliver Net Zero has been published.

The report drew heavily on a series of roundtables chaired by Professor Simon Pearson, Director of the Lincoln Institute of AgriFood Technology (LIAT), who commented that he was “*delighted to support the Public Policy Project report on the future and need for world leading UK agritech. The report demonstrates how technology can drive agricultural economic and environmental sustainability. However, technology alone will not solve these urgent needs; the report suggests how an enabling policy environment is critical for scaled on farm adoption.*”

The UK Food Valley welcomes this report and supports Professor Pearson’s conclusions that the delivery of Net Zero food chains is a complex problem which will require new technology alongside skills development at every level of the industry and enabling policy environment.

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



# YOUR NEWS



## UKRI LAUNCH NEW COMPETITION FOR BIO-MANUFACTURING

UKRI has launched a new feasibility study competition to develop and improve sustainable biomanufacturing in the UK. Biomanufacturing offers vast potential for the UK and can play a critical role in achieving the UK's ambition to reduce all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050.

The new feasibility competition supports the development, design and delivery of new and disruptive sustainable biomanufacturing products. It forms part of a wider sustainable bio-based materials and manufacture programme being developed by Innovate UK, BBSRC and EPSRC.

In spring 2023, a further collaborative research and development competition will be launched as part of the programme and will support industrial-scale research. With up to £14 million investment, this cross-council programme will seek to make the UK more globally competitive by supporting feasibility studies with collaborative development across different industries and sectors.

The [sustainable bio-based materials and manufacture competition](#) offers [UK organisations](#) a share of up to £2 million for feasibility studies to develop and improve sustainable biomanufacturing in the UK and promotes collaboration between businesses and academic researchers to develop more sustainable bio-based products, biotechnology processes and innovations.

Proposals will address the challenge of developing innovations in sustainable biomanufacturing processes by:

- Increasing the use of bio-based feedstocks
- Developing alternative bio-based chemical replacements
- Enhancing the sustainability profile of biotechnology processes
- Making innovative use and re-use of renewable feedstocks
- Developing biotechnology-based manufacture processes for sustainable and circular products

To ensure funding supports a variety of projects across different technologies, themes and markets, a [portfolio approach](#) will be adopted when assessing competition proposals.

The closing date for competition proposals is 1st February 2023. For more details on the scope, timescales and opportunity please visit [here](#).

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP is developing a Circular Economy Strategy which fits this call very well. At the recent 100% Fish Utilisation workshop in Grimsby, over 80 delegates heard about how the Icelandic seafood cluster is now making a wide range of products from fish co- and by-products including fish leather, packaging materials and health products. The UK Food Valley would encourage the food chain to embrace the potential in this sector.



# YOUR NEWS



## VIDEOS LAUNCHED TO PROMOTE THE HUB AND THE SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE FOOD ENTERPRISE ZONE (FEZ)

A number of videos promoting The Hub and South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone are now live on Team Lincolnshire's YouTube channel [here](#).

- The Hub - [Virtual tour](#)
- The Hub - [Supporting growth and inward investment](#)
- The Hub and South Lincs FEZ - [Intelligent choice for agrifood and agritech businesses](#)
- The Hub - [Supporting businesses to prosper and grow](#)
- The Hub - [Supporting agrifood and agritech investment](#)

For further enquiries contact Jasper Caudwell at Pygott & Crone on 0330 1280939 or email [commercial@pygott-crone.com](mailto:commercial@pygott-crone.com)



# YOUR NEWS

## FIRST TENANT MOVES INTO THE HUB AT THE SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE FOOD ENTERPRISE ZONE

Moving into new office space was a well calculated decision for local accountant Tim Burrows of Station One Accountants. Tim owns and runs the accountancy firm, whose main client base is agricultural and food businesses, making the South Lincolnshire Food Enterprise Zone the perfect location for his new office.

Cllr Colin Davie, Executive Councillor for Economy and Place at Lincolnshire County Council, said: *"The Hub building is a great new space for established, growing and start-up businesses. I'm delighted that an existing local business has chosen to relocate here as the first of many new tenants and wish Tim every success. All businesses who locate at the Hub will benefit from being at the forefront of new developments and innovation in agri-tech and in turn, will add their own expertise to support the sector."*

Tim Burrows enthused: *"To have my own office with high-tech spec and the support of The Hub staff, but with the opportunity to hire a meeting room as and when I needed one, was just what I was looking for, and I am not disappointed. When the café is open on the ground floor, it will be even more attractive for client visits in a more informal, but professional environment. There is plenty of parking on site, with EV charging points too. The building has been well thought out, with a shower room for example, if you cycle to work."*

*"I am looking forward to the opportunity of working alongside other companies to offer advice where I can use my experience of working as an accountant within the food industry to help their business flourish."*







# YOUR NEWS

## PROJECT BUTTERFLY

UKRI has announced the winners of £14m for projects focused on sustainable smart factories including Project Butterfly in which Lincolnshire's Moy Park site and the Lincoln Institute of AgriFood Technology are partners.

The £4m Project Butterfly is led by GKN Aerospace Services Limited and brings together a consortium of UK manufacturing organisations, solution providers and research organisations, working across several UK sectors. They plan to share best practice and demonstrate the power of industry 4.0 to deliver near-term impact on the road to net zero manufacturing.

Small changes can have a big impact, and this is known as the butterfly effect. It is this principle that Project Butterfly looks to use to accelerate progress to Net Zero. The project has a specific focus on improving efficiency in the use of materials and energy by using manufacturing data to optimise processes, increase right-first-time yield, and provide visibility of information to everyone in the factory. This can be achieved using data to update the schedule to deliver the most efficient use of energy and to improve the process by making it more efficient or increase the right-first-time yield.

Moy Park's Anwick poultry processing plant near Sleaford is a leading UK food processing site which employs over 2,000 staff and will work alongside other industries on Project Butterfly, learning from other sectors at the same time as sharing insights from its own operations.

Details of all the successful projects are available [here](#).





# YOUR NEWS

## INNOVATE UK AND BBSRC ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Innovate UK and BBSRC are partnering to invest over £50 million in strategic innovation programmes to help UK businesses collaborate with the UK research base. The aim is to jointly invest in a range of new strategic innovation programmes to accelerate the translation of bioscience and biotechnology research into commercial products, processes and services that improve lives and livelihoods through helping to address national and global societal and environmental challenges.

A new series of joint programmes will be announced over the coming weeks and months, built on a successful partnership between BBSRC and Innovate UK. The partnership has invested millions of pounds to support hundreds of businesses and academic researchers in collaborating with each other across diverse areas including agritech.

The creation of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) has strengthened this partnership and collaborative working, helping to build a thriving, inclusive research and innovation system.

Programme commitments are published as [strategic delivery plans](#) and will help to support innovation in UK bioscience, build connections across the innovation ecosystem and stimulate private sector investment in R&D, and will span research and innovation that will focus on a multitude of areas, including improved diet, nutrition and health and more sustainable food production systems, including novel proteins.

To read the full announcement click [here](#) and look out for the new series of [funding opportunities](#) by signing up to the [UKRI newsletter](#) and [Innovate UK newsletter](#).

**The UK Food Valley welcomes this renewed commitment to the food chain and biosciences and in particular the focus on working with industry to deliver innovation with real impact.**

**As we are seeing in the Food Valley, innovation has the power to drive efficiency and growth and deliver new products and services at the same time as reducing environment impact. Innovation is and will remain at the centre of our plans for the industry.**

# Innovate UK







# YOUR NEWS

## DEFRA TO LAUNCH £12.5M FOR INNOVATION PROJECTS ON AGRI-FOOD AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS

DEFRA will invest up to £12.5 million in innovation projects focused on automation and robotics as part of its Farming Innovation Programme, delivered in partnership with UKRI's Transforming Food Production Challenge. The aim of this competition is to fund collaborative development projects with ambitious solutions for robotics and automation in agriculture and horticulture to:

- Support specific recommendations for automation innovation funding from recent Defra reviews and the [Government Food Strategy](#)
- Address key issues affecting the sector, where automation and robotics can mitigate labour challenges and increase productivity.

Your proposal must be able to demonstrate how the project will benefit farmers or growers in England and is split into two strands:

- Strand 1 - Farming Futures: automation and robotics industrial research; accelerating collaborative R&D with the UK's world-leading research base, agri-tech businesses, SMEs and the UK agricultural sector to develop innovations in agriculture and horticulture
- [Strand 2](#) - Farming Futures: automation and robotics experimental development; accelerating the deployment and uptake of innovation for robotics and automation in agriculture and horticulture that is almost at commercial stage

Total costs must be between £500,000 and £1 million. The competition opens on 9<sup>th</sup> January and closes on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023. [Click here to apply.](#)



# EVENTS



## HIGH PROFILE AGRI-FOOD CAREERS EVENT AT LINCOLNSHIRE SHOWGROUND

On 7th February 2023, a major event to showcase the careers in the agrifood supply chain will be held at the Lincolnshire Showground. For both employers and young people this event will provide an opportunity to meet and discuss the many fantastic career opportunities in a sector which employs 75,000 people in the UK Food Valley.

To register or find out more contact  
[rcrust@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk](mailto:rcrust@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk)



## LINCOLNSHIRE FARMING CONFERENCE AT LINCOLNSHIRE SHOWGROUND

On 9th February 2023, the Lincolnshire Farming Conference is being held at Lincolnshire Showground. The conference will feature talks from a number of captivating speakers, case studies and one to one sessions with industry experts.

Click here to find out more  
[Lincolnshire Farming Conference | Thu 9 Feb](https://lincolnshireshowground.co.uk/lincolnshire-farming-conference-thu-9-feb)  
([lincolnshireshowground.co.uk](https://lincolnshireshowground.co.uk))

Or contact [sduxbury@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk](mailto:sduxbury@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk) for exhibitor information.











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