

# Lincoln Food Partnership

For fairer healthier greener food

## Welcome to the June 2020 Edition of the Lincoln Food Partnership Newsletter

Still with Covid 19 very much on our minds, this month we feature three more schemes that are addressing local food needs in the county, but we are also now looking forward to more strategic food issues of importance to a post Covid 19 world.

Lincoln Russet, a beef farm in Elkington near Louth has been providing ready meals for staff at the Louth Hospital. The Priory Hotel, also in Louth, has developed a collective called the Serendipity Project - with the Auction House, the Woolpack and the Boar's Head – to distribute food in the community.

On the growing side of things, the County Local Enterprise Partnership has put out a call for students and others to help with this year's harvest – a Student Land Army.

At the National level, the UK Agriculture Bill got its third reading in the Commons in May on its way to the Lords. This is to replace the European Common Agricultural Policy, but some are

concerned about its impacts on international trade. In the same week there was a major report calling to integrate the food system through food procurement, from the Dynamic Food Procurement National Advisory Board.



Bigger still, the Open Food Network is a global collective that brings producers, retailers and communities together to create resilient local food economies. Is this the future of food?

Please do contact us if you would like to share your news stories about any aspect of local food – whether it is a growing project, local produce-making and sale, cooking communities or tackling food waste. We would be pleased to showcase your work, no matter how small, in this newsletter.

Our email address is: [lincolnfoodpartnership@gmail.com](mailto:lincolnfoodpartnership@gmail.com)

If you are happy to continue to receive this newsletter and therefore be considered a member of the Lincoln Food Partnership community of interest, you need to do nothing.

If on the other hand you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, just email us. Many thanks for your interest

Nigel Curry,

Co-chair Lincoln Food Partnership

## Meeting food need straight from the farm

Amy Jobe and her family run a beef farm in Elkington near Louth under the Lincoln Russet brand. With the closure of restaurants and hotels, their sales have dipped considerably since the beginning of the Covid 19 lockdown.

With a five-star hygiene rated kitchen, a large quantity of exceptional quality beef, and considerable on-site cooking skills, Lincoln Russet resolved to help front line NHS staff. From that decision, staff at Louth Hospital have been able to take home a cottage pie for their tea after their hospital shift, home-made from top quality, grass-fed, local beef. As Amy puts it:

“A time-saving, belly-filling, heart-warming Thank You!”



This hasn't all been easy, taking place on top of running the farm, home educating two children, and delivering meat boxes. But new situations often present new possibilities.

If you are interested in contacting Amy, [Lincoln Russet](#) has its own web site.

## Serendipity at the Priory Hotel in Louth

Paul Hugill from the Priory Hotel in Louth has repurposed his restaurant kitchen to provide two nourishing and delicious meals a day, free, to local people who are struggling to feed themselves or their families. This initially ran under the title 'The Serendipity Project'.



*the Serendipity Initiative*

Since the beginning of lockdown, though, the volume of deliveries has increased so much that the Priory is now working in partnership with three other local restaurants, the Auction House, Boars Head and Woolpack in order to keep up with demand.

As a result, the project has been renamed *the Neighbours Kitchen - a Serendipity Initiative project*.

Under the Project, the Hotel is also working as a redistribution centre, sharing food donations with a number of food banks and community feeding programmes in the Louth area. Lincoln Russet, for example, contributes to this scheme. Paul comments:

“It's important that we stand together to look after each other as neighbours. There are many older and isolated people in the area who may have mental health or financial problems, for example”.

If you are in the Louth area, struggling to feed yourself or your family, or feel that you can help with the project, do contact Paul:

[paul@serendipityinitiative.co.uk](mailto:paul@serendipityinitiative.co.uk) or call 01507 602930

and donate:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/neighbourskitchen>

## The Student Land Army.

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP is calling students to support national food security through local food supply chains to work on British farms due to the Covid-19



pandemic. The British summer harvest is about to begin, and help is needed to bring in the harvest and to help keep the nation fed.

The UK is rapidly approaching the peak harvest season and 80,000 seasonal workers are needed to help bring it in. The LEP is targeting 6<sup>th</sup> formers and further and higher education students to join the national push.

A Student Land Army can have a significant impact on the national effort to overcome the pandemic emergency, whilst earning an income with peers, and learning a bit about how to grow food!

Join the #StudentLandArmy today!

Do contact the LEP on [Twitter @GreaterLincsLEP](#) and [Instagram @GreaterLincsLEP](#)

## Agriculture Bill Third reading 13 May 2020

This Bill is as significant as it is complex. To oversimplify, farmers will lose their Basic Payments (paid against how much land they own) and be paid (much less) only for 'non-market impacts' – flood prevention and the environment. Currently about half a farmer's income comes from Basic Payments. The Bill will 'encourage' (no details yet) farmers to reduce their costs, retire as appropriate, and facilitate new entrants.

A main concern is vulnerability to cheap imports with lower food standards (chlorinated chicken, intensive livestock): the Bill does not cover these, leaving them to individual trade agreements. Increased food self-sufficiency also is not in the Bill.

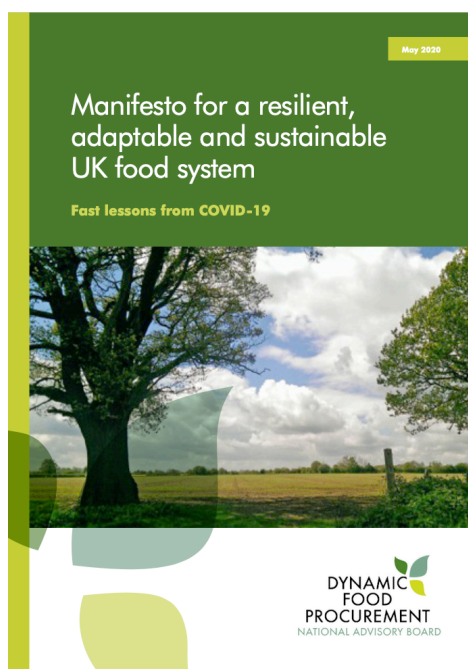
Government prefers to rely on the trickle-down effect. As George Eustice (Secretary of State at Defra) says: “If you increase farm profitability then these things (self-sufficiency) will take care of themselves.”

But there are two more fundamental flaws in the Bill. Food is still treated as a market commodity (Eustice: “the Bill has the purpose of ensuring farm profitability and growing export markets”) and not a basic human need and, secondly, agriculture remains divorced from the rest of the food system (processing, distribution, consumption).

Until a more holistic food policy embraces food as a human need within a whole food system, the big ‘non-market impacts’ of food, particularly food waste, obesity and food poverty, will never be properly addressed. The Bill now passes to the House of Lords. The Bill now passes to the House of Lords without key amendments that could have helped protect farmers, the environment and food security.



## Should the public sector buy local food?



The Dynamic Food Procurement National Advisory Board (a mouthful in itself!) has the aim to divert a third of all public sector spending on food and drink, to fresh local produce from sustainable local SMEs producers. It seeks to achieve this within three years.

It is a Board not without influence: it contains members from Government Departments, Local Authorities, the Soil Association and Sustain. They published, in March 2020:

*A Manifesto for a resilient, adaptable and sustainable UK food system*  
*Fast lessons from COVID-19, calling for:*

- Local food procurement by schools, hospitals, care homes, prisons and the armed services across the UK;
- Certainty, to allow local food provision planning;
- Supply made conditional upon sustainable production methods;
- Short 'food miles' across production, processing and consumption;
- Identification of public sector food demands and wide publicity.

These are radical ideas that suggest considerable change in local food supply chains. The full report can be read [here](#).

## The Open Food Network

Now here's a good idea. [Open Food Network](#) - is an online community that puts food producers (of all types) in touch with wholesalers, food shops communities. Currently there are over 1,200 producers in the scheme and over 600 shops in the UK, but it is a growing global movement.



It works collectively rather than competitively through online shops, buying groups, regional networks, food collectives and food hubs.

Individual communities can bring together producers

and shoppers into an online 'farmers' market' to create a resilient local food economy. The Network offers training and experiences exchanges so that all can develop within the system.

Currently there are only 4 members in the County (they have a location map on the web site). It would be great if these numbers were to increase. You can find out more about how to start selling produce through OFN [here](#).

## Tell a Friend...

If you know of other people or organisations who would like to be involved in the Lincoln Food Partnership, please help to spread the word. Why not start by forwarding this newsletter to them?

If this has been forwarded to you, you can sign up to receive our newsletter directly to your inbox next month [here](#)

Thank you!

[Active buttons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram](#)

## Keep an eye out for our next newsletter in July

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You can ask us for a copy of your details at any time. Please let us know if any of them change or if you no longer want us to hold them.

**Our registered address is** 12 Mint Lane, LN1 1UD. **Our mailing address is** [lincolnfoodpartnership@gmail.com](mailto:lincolnfoodpartnership@gmail.com)

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