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Kent Economic Board hosted this event in partnership with
NFU, CLA, Hadlow College and KCC



www.kent.gov.uk/business.aspx



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KEB Food Production, Horticulture & Agriculture Business Growth Consultation Event – 19th January 2011

Event Report

The Kent Economic Board (KEB) hosted this event at the East Malling Research Conference Centre, in partnership with Kent County Council, the National Farmers Union, Countryside and Landowners Association and Hadlow Further Education College.

Publicity for the event started in mid December 2010, with email contacts to 127 businesses. The response was very positive with 103 positive responses. On the day 122 people attended and it was encouraging to see that 85% of these were Kent rural businesses.

Selected from the Kent Economic Boards Business Advisory Board, Jon Regan agreed to be the Business Champion for this sector. Jon is a Director of Hugh Lowe Farms Ltd and Weald Granary Ltd. Jon's background is in information technology within the Financial services sector. He held senior roles in software and services start up companies based in rural Kent and therefore has personal experience of the difficulties and opportunities these companies face. Jon has been a director of Hugh Lowe Farms for over 12 years and responsible for the day to day operations since 2006. He is also a member of the Kent, Greater Essex and East Sussex Local Enterprise Partnership Interim Board.

The Speakers were Paul Carter, leader of Kent County Council, William White, regional director of the NFU in the South East, Nick Holmes, specialist accountant and tax advisor in Agriculture, Horticulture and Estates, Chaverneys, Oliver Doubleday, Managing Director, GH Dean & Co Ltd – with concluding remarks from Kevin Lynes, KCC Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development.

Speakers' Headline Points

Paul Carter

Paul emphasised the importance he placed on the programme of business consultations – this being the first in the series – and the priority he places on growing the rural economy.

He explained that these events are an integral element of the County Councils approach to support the Kent economy; they follow through on the commitment in the Kent Regeneration Framework to create a new relationship with business, and the first ambition in Bold Steps for Kent which is "Growing the Kent economy".

He encouraged delegates during the workshop session to be solutions orientated – stating that the hoped for outcome from these events is a limited number of grounded, deliverable, intelligent and common sense actions - that when acted on will be able to significantly help the growth of the sector.

He ran through his top ten drivers for change – over-regulation, employment law/flexible workforces, planning issues, broadband connectivity, skills, transport infrastructure, bank lending policies to SMEs, local procurement, communication & marketing – and asked delegates to identify theirs.

William White

Outlined the strategic importance of the sector – value to the UK economy – and some key stats for Kent eg 2,200 farms, 13,000 employees, 12.4% of GVA – in addition farming is a primary industry with complex multipliers in the local economy.

William highlighted some of the current economic challenges in terms of – farm income – differential yield across sectors (wheat versus livestock) – and the volatility of commodity prices impacting on input costs.

He quoted the work of Professor John Beddington's "perfect storm" forecast re food security becoming an increasing issue for national security in the face of rising population, finite land resource, diminishing water supplies and increased population pressure etc.

81% of fruit and vegetables is imported – this is a global market, governed by global patterns of supply and demand and price differentiation.

Growth in the market will be achieved via increasing competitiveness-via increased research and development to improve productivity, attracting skilled entrants to the sector - an estimated 60,000 new employees required nationally, and retaining and developing research capacity.

William particularly made the point that planning is widely seen by this sector as not being consistent or supportive re accommodating the needs of modern farming, or fast enough to respond to needs – in addition there is growing concern that localism will result in more planning delays and failed applications.

Williams's key priorities for the LEP were:-

- A long term vision for the sector
- Increasing productive capacity
- Import substitution
- Foreign direct investment
- New product development for export

Nick Holmes

Nick argued strongly for the strategic importance of this sector to be better recognised and appreciated. Food production in the face of rising population figures, locally, nationally and globally can only become increasingly important – and recent rises in commodity prices and food price inflation demonstrate the importance of the sector in terms of food security and economic contribution/influence.

He classified agriculture and horticulture as a "primary" industry because of its significant multiplier effect in the economy – stating that some 14,202 people employed in agriculture in the county with 85,000 people employed overall with some involvement in the food chain.

He advocated that Kent has particular market strength in horticulture which it should deliberately be exploiting for growth, given that it also enjoys the location advantages of relatively close proximity to London and UK markets and of course near Europe.

Nick identified that there are a range of means to exploit this strength including more collaboration with the supply chain, (lateral economic development) maintain and strengthening research and development capacity and tapping into the global market for food production technologies and production processes that are being sought in response to rising population, climate change and increasing input prices.

His recommendations included:-

- Creating a better statistical evidence base for the sector – the production of an annual report – which would help support investment
- Formulating a strategic plan for long term food and supply chain security
- Developing the research and development base and promotion of centres of excellence

Oliver Doubleday

Oliver started his presentation with a quote from Socrates:-

“Nobody is qualified to become a statesman who is entirely ignorant of the problems of wheat”

He also spoke about the global market context giving this strategically important sector added significance as concerns about food security become an increasing reality – quoting a number of recent incidents around the world where food shortages were sparking civil unrest and political change.

A responsible response to the emerging market dynamic in food – which is subject to price inflation due to increased demand from rising populations, climate change and extreme weather events and volatile commodity prices – is to adopt a strategy that relies less on imports – but rather focuses on increasing production.

He suggested that given the global nature of the challenge there is a real and urgent need to raise productive capacity and quoted the 2009 Royal Society report “Reaping the Benefits” – which called for action to increase research into sustainable intensification.

He cited East Malling as key exponent of the development of sustainable intensification – exploiting wildlife solutions to control pests, better managing of water resources through effective irrigation scheduling and developing plant strains that require less chemical pesticides or fertilizers as they are adapted to local climate and geology.

The full presentations can be viewed on the KEB website at <http://www.keb.org.uk/news-and-events/article/kent-economic-board-sector-meetings/>

Table discussions

Following the presentations delegates were invited to discuss the following four questions on their tables. A thought leader on each table made notes, and a summary of this follows.

1. What does the future look like - and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?

2. The speakers identify research and development, skills, planning, and water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10?
3. If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector - what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?
4. To address the concerns about planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support horticulture and agricultural business in the county?

In addition to the comments gathered by the table leaders we received additional written submissions from 20 individuals. We also invited written comments from a detailed feedback questionnaire, and these were returned from 32 individuals. Post event we received an additional 10 general comments on the value of the event and the discussion it had stimulated. This high level of participation from attendees has provided a rich contribution to setting the priorities for business growth for this sector.

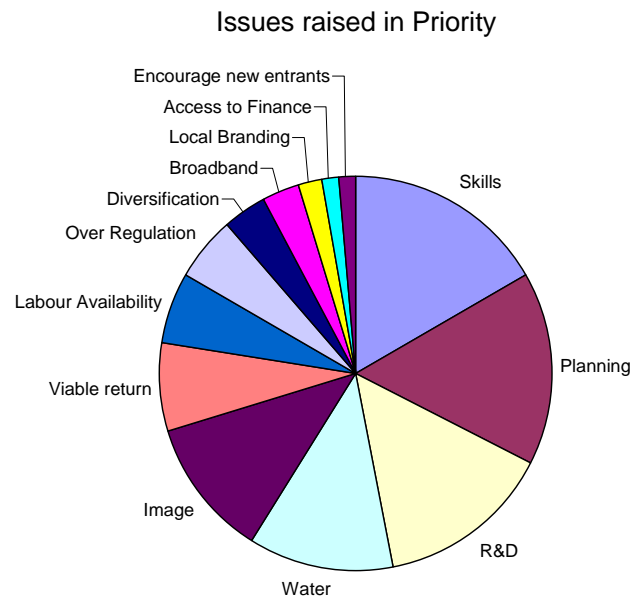
Delegates feedback

1. What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?

- Successful future – more employed, more skills, enhanced reputation, less permanent development in the landscape. If we fail, there will be fewer people employed in farming and fewer rural residents will work on the land, skills will be lost.
- More horticulture (as a result of climate change) less reliance on livestock. Production of bio fuels for power and electricity. Divergence into tourism adding value to bottom line, but less food production.
- There is a sense that there are opportunities in all areas of the industry and that entrepreneurs should be identifying and exploiting these. The industry needs to obtain a fairer share of the revenue stream to increase profit margins from the supermarkets.
- Horticulture and top fruit production was seen by many as having real growth potential – but to increase productive capacity farm units are likely to need to become bigger either through merger or acquisition in order to achieve economies of scale and derive financial benefit from technology and an investment in intensification.
- Strong promotion of the sector was thought by many to be the key to securing the future and encouraging growth – increasing demand for locally produced and procured food, investment in R&D, and ultimately increased employment opportunities.

2. The Speakers identify Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10?

Each top ten was slightly different in order – so using an algorithm they have been prioritized (note there are more than 10 as some new ideas were added).



3. If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector - what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?

- Encourage more of 3,000 “14-16” potential NEETS and school leavers to continue into this sector related courses, in particular, higher technology skills. There is a general lack of understand of the high level of skills the industry now demands.
- Address the current mismatch of provision and needs – less emphasis on provision of management skills and more on technical skills and manual skills labour
- Creation of a world class academy for food production, agriculture and horticulture in Kent
- The sandwich courses no longer appear to be operated, in the past these have been very successful what the 3000 students in agriculture and horticulture require is a range of mixed practical skills. Kent requires a “New generation of gardeners of England”.¹
- Stronger links between schools, colleges and careers advisors to improve understanding of academic, vocational and professional needs of the sector.

¹ Oliver Doubleday

4. To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?

- Combating nibbi's with some consistent clear policies to support this strategically important sector.
- Recognition of commercialisation – industry scale businesses being restricted by village scale planning politics/policies. Consistent planning policy across LEP would be a good objective.
- Replacement of Agricultural Building Policy.
- Allowances for housing/tied cottages & social new builds in rural areas.
- We need to engage positively with the CAP reform process. HSBC have produced stats, which show that over the last 12 years UK agriculture has made a loss and has only remained viable due to CAP payments.

Finally some 23 delegates indicated that they would like to be actively involved in follow-up activities from the event.

A full copy of the questions and feedback is available in appendix 1 and 2

Plenary discussion

In the plenary discussion the following issues were picked up by the delegates for further discussion

- Concerns about planning becoming less accommodating to farm development as an increased focus on localism will encourage opposition – regardless of the economic and strategic importance of the sector.
- A sense that the image and profile of agriculture and horticulture needs to be raised in order for its role and contribution to be understood – to encourage investment – and to attract new entrants to the workforce.
- Water scarcity, management and storage – was also mentioned as a key concern.
- Some felt that the skills base for the industry needs strengthening – and greater efforts should be made to expose the range of occupational and technical skills that the sector offers for young people.

The conclusions that have been drawn from the event and the submissions received will be informing the KEB and KCC Business Growth Programme and the LEP priorities.

Summing Up

Kevin Lynes

Kevin said the importance of the sector and the critical role it plays in the Kent economy is recognised – the Kent food chain is estimated to be worth £2.6 billion per annum and accounts for 15% of the county's workforce.

KCC has established a Food Sector Advisory Group – who are helping develop a Food Sector Strategy for Kent which aims to:

- Champion the strategic importance of food production in Kent
- Create an enabling policy environment for the future development of the sector
- Identify a range of key actions – around infrastructure, research and labour force issues – to unlock future growth.

He also mentioned the Produced in Kent initiative and the efforts that are underway to secure greater investment in superfast broadband infrastructure that would significantly benefit rural businesses and communities.

Feedback questionnaires

Delegates were asked to complete a feedback questionnaire. The questions were designed to enable us to gauge feeling on wider issues that affect all businesses and to focus on specific 'rural' issues.

A copy of the questionnaire and a full copy of the feedback are available at appendix 3 and 4.

There were 3 questions requiring written responses, and 2 in which delegates were asked to rank criteria. Below are the written responses, followed by the rankings which have been displayed as pie charts.

1. What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities?

- To bring to the public's attention the fact that the days of cheap imported food as a right are rapidly coming to an end; our lack of skills and weak food production will prove a costly mistake.
- Management Skills. "Attractiveness" of the sector to (the 'best') young people and attitude to work in indigenous population.
- Enabling agriculture to flourish and feed the nation whilst competing with alternative land uses and priorities.
- Production continuing to increase as land pressure increases – more demands for housing, food, energy. There will come a time when this can no longer remain achievable.
- Lack of degree level new entrants into the industry. We need lots of high quality, energetic young people coming into our industry. To ensure that there is a comprehensive mechanism in place to encourage young people into the industry.
- Sustainable R & D provided regionally to underpin priorities.
- Critical to ensure the grower achieves a larger slice of the return from what they produce on the farm.
- Providing all of the infrastructure that will facilitate that step change - transport, utilities, planning land etc.

- Need to continually educate future generations to inspire them into thinking about a future in farming and associated industries. This can be done by interactive displays, on farm experiences and going into schools.
- Education at younger stage and encourage local skills.
- Food supply in 2030!

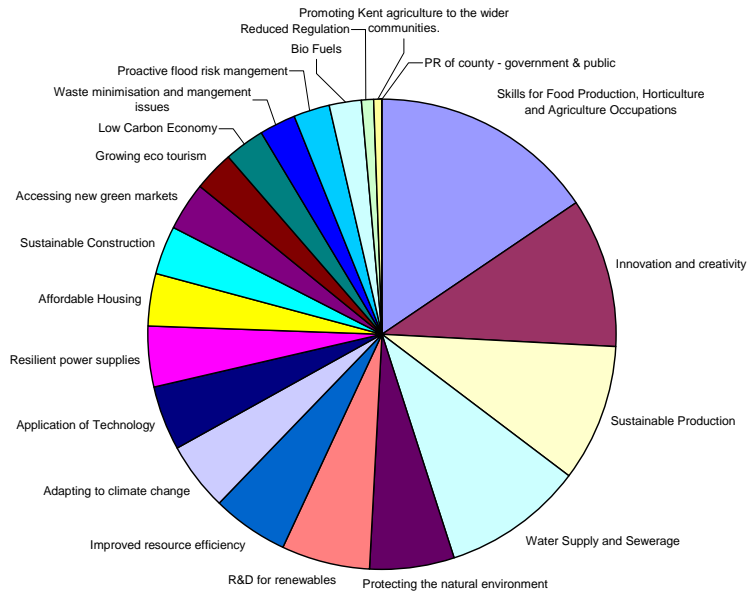
2. Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?

- Huge need to communicate with the public, to introduce and educate parents of young children to the highly technical industry of food production. To dispel the "hay seed" image of those working with the land. To bring trained youth into the industry with the help of FE schools and older experienced workers acting as mentors.
- A positive communication strategy to make the industry attractive to the best young people.
- Application of IT projects into farming and sustainable energy sources.
- Relax planning constraints in the rural area for new farm buildings and barn/farmyard conversion enabling social and shared equity housing.
- Increase publicity of importance of farming.
- More realistic view of problems & solutions by policy makers and national and local government officers.
- Make sure that the policy signals are clearer and enabling not disabling.
- Planning officer education.
- Inform careers advisors of the true nature of agriculture & horticulture jobs market - the technical challenges and financial rewards, leading to more full time education places in specialist courses for young and new entrants to the industry.

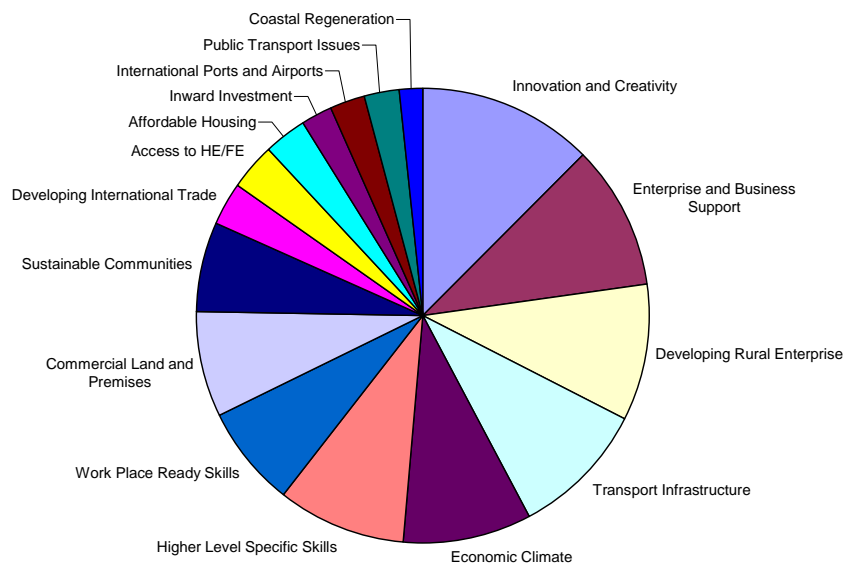
3. What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?

- A broad perspective of the cash/finance issues facing those in the agricultural/horticultural sector.
- As chartered surveyors and property consultants, promote land and opportunity to all types of farm/residential development including renewable energy opportunities.
- Greater source of discussions between buyers and sellers, knowing where our products go.
- Champion the fruit industry - the opportunities for careers etc.
- Provide advice & provision of services to KEB & the industry as a whole.
- We could offer apprenticeships for young people if given incentives.
- A website already exists www.wfminkent.co.uk that may be used to start the process of improving public knowledge about the sector.
- Working on educating the public on the importance of food and farming in Kent.
- Assist (and where necessary) lead the debate around the issues involved in the support and direction of research.

To help capture your views re priorities, please identify the top six most important issues which you would like to see KEB/LEP engage with?



More broadly to help KEB with its planning. What do you think are the most important factors in delivering prosperity, business growth and well-being in Kent over the next 10-15 years?



In addition we received a number of other written comments which can be found at appendix 5

General conclusions leading to potential actions for Kent Economic Board

Skills

There was general agreement that there was a shortage of technician level skills at level 3, and higher level skills in research and development. More should be done to influence providers to assist here, and with parents and teachers to raise the profile of the industry.

Perceptions

Need to change the public perception of the food industry:

- Now its high tech
- Opportunities for young graduates
- Not all about early starts and 'mucking out'

There are issues of public perception / worries over large lorries down narrow country lanes which are adversely affecting the industry's perception.

Food security

Need to increase food production to reduce dependency on sources from outside the UK which may be / have been badly affected by natural disasters, political upheaval etc. The frequency of such interference may be increasing at climate changes.

Planning

Needs to be a significant change in attitude by planning authorities re:

- Affordable housing for employees
- Agricultural building
- Land usage
- Access

General

There seem to be a large body of people involved in food production that have the same or similar issues, who found the conference useful to 'air' their views, something that should be repeated.

Fisheries should be added to the invitees another time to increase effective reach into the food sector.

Appendix 1



KEB Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture Business Growth Consultation – 19 January 2011

Questions for the Table Discussions

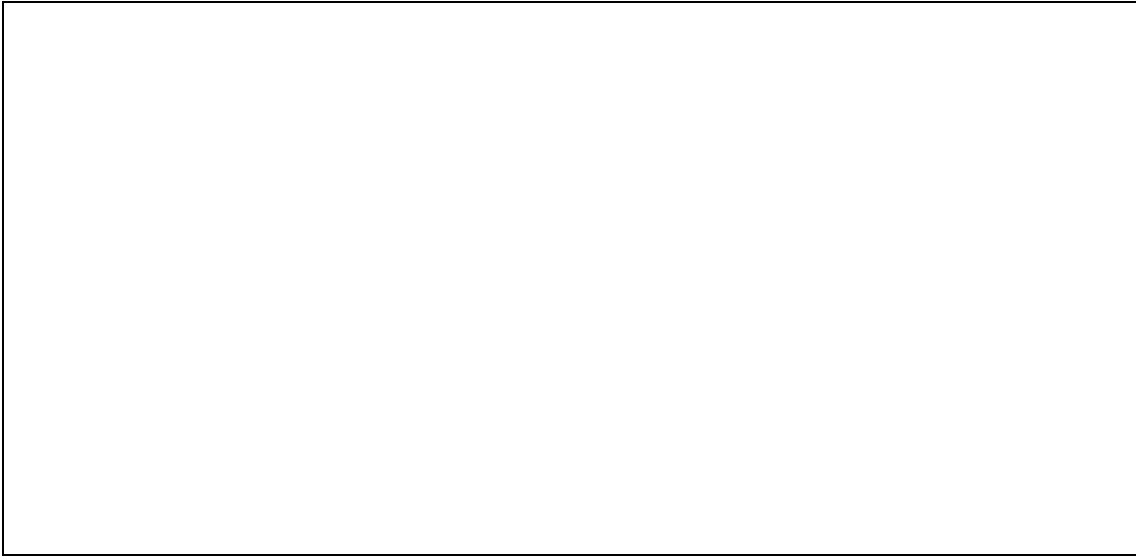
The purpose of this event is to examine with delegates what are the key things that will stimulate business growth for this sector – as an outcome we want to be informed via the consultation of a limited number of actions/activities which KEB and the LEP could pursue that would be considered to make a tangible difference to business growth.

What does the future look like - and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?

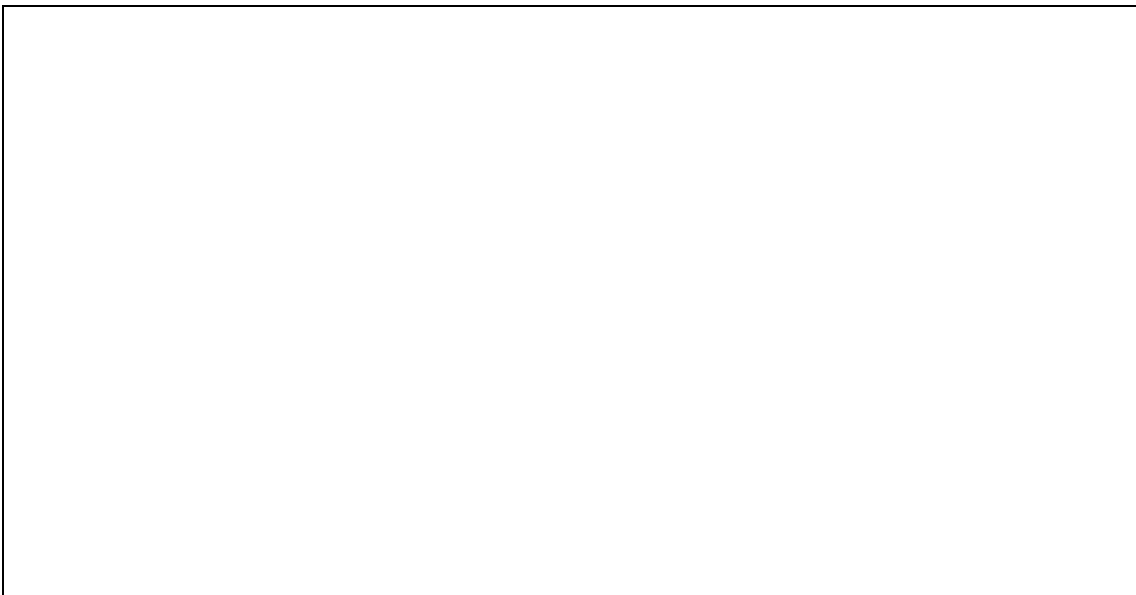
The speakers identify Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10?

1
2
3
4
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9
10

If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector - what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?



To address the concerns about planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support horticulture and agricultural business in the county?



Name: _____ Table : _____

Appendix 2

KEB Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture Business Growth Consultation Wednesday 19th January, East Malling Research Centre

Table Discussions

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identify Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
Import Substitution, Evolution into new crops, production, storage, distribution. More evidence of local procurement by public authorities.		Encourage more of 3,000 “14-16” years old to continue into sector related courses. Need more provision of – in particular, higher technology skills. CPD Programmes for existing farm staff. Develop provision Hadlow College plus others e.g. Brogdale FAST service. “The New Gardeners of England”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levelling up of helpfulness of planning officer • Proportionality of process • Building local awareness that reducing green miles and increasing food security means evolution & Development of rural business.
<p><u>20 years time</u></p> <p>1. Landscape is the most obvious “indicator” of what Kent will look like. Alone amongst industry in the UK, farming is the most visible in rural areas – obviously. So, if farming fall into decline, farms will be sold: either divided up into small parcels increasing development pressure & dereliction <u>OR</u> absorbed into larger unites. Either way this will devalue the landscape.</p> <p>2. If we fail, there will be fewer people employed in farming and fewer rural residents will work on the land, skills will be lost.</p> <p>3. Successful future – more employed, more skills, enhanced reputation, less permanent development in the landscape.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Image 2. Labour availability 3. viable returns 4. water 5. R & D 6. Skills 7. Planning 8. Local branding 9. Over regulation 	<p>Cropping.</p> <p>Not enough going into core production.</p> <p>Research Skills, Science band</p> <p>Introducing Skills</p> <p>Crop Protection</p> <p>Plant Physiology</p> <p>Water.</p>	
Better quality – added value. Research, which exploit the skills we have. Reinvalidate Kent’s reputation for research and training to be marketed across the world. Exploit areas of strength – top fruit etc. Make much more of		Better training for migrant workers.	

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identity Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
Produced in Kent.			
<p><u>20 years time</u> More horticulture (climate change) less livestock. 'Parcelled up' land leading to houses/horses. Production of fuel, electricity. Tourism and adding value.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water 2. Labour 3. Viable returns 4. Image 5. R & D – New varieties + pesticides 6. Skills 7. Planning to be fair + balanced 8. Over regulation. 	Coppicing for renewable fuel. How to get graduates vocational – MDS. Skilled manual labours – tractors, irrigation. High level research top class scientists. School farms.	Need county or national legislation to combat the nimbyism, which is growing.
More towards more top fruits/soft fruits. Small farm in danger of going. Larger farms bigger business. Subsidised landscape. More energy production	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skills 2. Labour 3. Image 4. Balance national/Local Planning. 		
Agriculture – optimistic – farms have got smaller/larger. Horticulture – grower is always at the bottom far in return cannot afford to expand? Going into schools secondary + primary.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marketing, PR makeover. 2. Attaching young blood, succession, family handing document. 3. Training – education – more students onto farms. 4. Diversify + initiative. 5. Communication? Face to face. 6. Higher calibre of students going into agriculture/horticulture. 7. Industry not attractive to young people – hours + rewards. 8. Planning – education of planners – do not adjust quick enough. 9. NFU & CLA work alongside. Pressure from the public (NIMBY). 10. Money there for targeted R & D. KCC working with Districts Councils. 	Better skills / training. More full time specialist places at specialist colleges. Extending the appendice system. More practical / training on the job. Not university – apprenticeships. Capital allowances! Building C.A. taken away will stop new building.	Polytunnels – catered for in strategic policy. A level playing field. Farming is evolving! Hope gardeners were mystified. A means to accommodate change – P.V farms are coming along. Education – moved out of agriculture into housing. People leaving the city!! Too many chiefs. The Big Society.
Import substitution. Adoption of new technologies in existing crops, e.g. precision. Adding value to farm produce – processing; local.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. R & D 2. Skills Supply 3. Planning 4. Continuing diversification 	Sandwich year courses no longer operated – why? 3000 students agriculture+horticulture. Practical skills. Kent requires a “New Generation of Gardeners of England”. PR Hook.	Onerous system. Consistency. Simplification.
In the Top Fruit Sector, there is a capability to double VK production and Kent is the main provider. All tree fruit has potential to increase production.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skills : more graduates with science degrees 2. R & D 3. Planning: more empathy with applications 	More science graduates. Specific fruit courses.	Polytunnels.

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identity Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
	4. Increase local procurement 5. Better communication with non-farming Water: priority for agriculture / members of the community. 7. Localism bill: causes potential alarm.		
<p><u>Renewable Energy</u> – Power & Fuel but technology exist <u>not</u> to use food production land for fuel/technology products.</p> <p><u>Technology change</u> – energy & food production affects all sectors (mobile phone example).</p> <p><u>Global food pressure</u> – is an opportunity for growth & as commodity price increases.</p> <p><u>Correct water</u> management/use will be an opportunity for production & growth in the sector combined with skills/Entrants = export. PR. Feed & water.</p> <p>Global water, strategic issues as a threat but if not plentiful also a significant opportunity is that inefficient UK water & good water management can enhance production & growth in the area combined with <u>Global Food Pressure</u>. An opportunity for growth as food & commodity prices increase. R & D investment in <u>Technology</u> sustainable leading to <u>Technology change</u> & further growth. Cooperative PR – marketing better in commercial sectors i.e. soft fruits – this should be built on to improve PR & marketing of Agri food business within the LEP to service the UK & global food marketing opportunity. New Entrants & Skilled staff in the sector to improve profitabilities, to grow the sector we need to grow the employment opportunities. Location, location, location – close to market, importance of infrastructure.</p>	1. Planning 2. Water 3. Technology 4. R & D 5. PR & Marketing – large 6. Skills 7. Reduce red tape 8. Transport	Support for educational establishments.	Recognition of commercialisation – industry scale businesses being restricted by village scale planning politics/policies. Consistent planning policy across LEP. Levelling up of helpful
Bigger units. Renewables – all types. Close to labour and close to user. KCC to buy from `Kent` – local? Image – “the new gardeners of England”.	1. Marketing & PR 2. Younger intake 3. Education – more targeted themes 4. Diversification 5. Communication (this is excellent)	Disconnection – use school forms? Skills mismatch – Technical versus management. Promote to young people – how?	Planning – need to understand sector <u>water</u> . Population needs to understand issues.

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identity Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
	6. Industry makeover 7. Planning (educate the planner) 8. R & D		
Bigger units – Institution purchase. Good rewards for young people. Energy provision; tidal, wind, solar, ground source, bio mass. Close to end user. Reasonable to good productive ability – soil types. Labour pool (local).	1. AWB abolition + Employment Law.. Labour costs 2. Audits & our regulation + utilities 3. Planning & localism 4. Water storage. Lack of fossil fuels + resources 5. Skills 6. Research & Development by primary producer. Pest & disease controls 7. Bank loans – finance 8. Broadband 9. Local procurement, marketing through multiples @ 30-40% margins		Localism a danger. County wide policy building structures & the need for modern agriculture & for change of use particularly by minority group quoting human rights.
Buying local + responding to public demand. Health agenda – local food. Increasing fruit / vegetable consumption. Increase share of home produced fruit.	1. Public services to procure local food e.g. KCC/health/prisons etc. 2. Education about health 3. Lobby about orchard taxation 4. Analysis of division of income i.e. supply chain i.e. farmer's supermarket. 5. Better communication from producers to buyers. 6. using/reinforcing “the garden of England” to promote local produce. 7. KCC to meet with Supermarket buyers + ask about views & Kent – identify obstacles. PINK to get closer to growers/food miles seasonality.	Skills mismatch of Hadlow v/s needs – less management and more practical/technical Skills. Need to attract young people into sector – need to update image.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localism – dangers to rural planning/could encourage nimbyism. Where will rural feature in national planning statement. Housing for seasonal workers KEB link in feeding into localism bill. Need to take account of economics of applications. Need evidence base – promoting agriculture/horticulture.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy local (internal) buy Kent (external) “Garden of England”. Training “New Europe in farming?” Local procurement centralised. – Hammer London Market from the Garden of England Kent supermarket / farm shop chain – London based. 	1. Planning (now) (including KCC highways) 2. Regulations & Red Tape 3. Housing in Rural Areas (cost & provision) 4. IT/Skills/Broadband (short 2 years) 5. Water sustainability 6. Energy/Fuel sustainable 7. Skills 7 Young People Retention	Post – 16 Training (vocational) (related transport issues (public)). Return to some form of world-class academy for Food/Agriculture/Horticulture is a must for Kent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement of Agricultural Building Policy Housing/tied cottages & social new builds in rural areas.

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identity Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality R & D Planning Skills Staffing & Skills Energy & Water costs IT and Broadband Housing Procurement 	8. Research & Development (medium 5+ years) 9. Global warming & broader environmental issues 10. Export gap (10+ years)		
Low-grade land using well for pv etc; other renewables. Institutional buyers Larger units Well placed as a County Tourism & added value Parcelled –up land Local procurement by public sector	1. Image monitoring & PR (poor) 2. Innovation 3. Water 4. Labour 5. R & D 6. Skills 7. Planning to join + balanced 8. Over-regulations 9. Education 10. Planning consistency / proportionality	Topping skills Skilled manual labour – Tractors High level research	Consistency/proportionality Understanding sector Impact of localism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was a sense that there are opportunities in all areas of the industry and that entrepreneurs should be identifying and exploiting these. The industry needs to obtain a fairer share of the revenue stream to increase profit margins. The top fruit and horticultural sectors are close to the end user and as a result enjoy greater profit margins. However, other sectors are not in this position. Many farmers are producing raw commodities which are traded globally and they are therefore price takers with little opportunity to influence. Getting product closer to the consumer is crucial in the future. Currently there are too many layers in-between the producer and the consumer. Perhaps KCC could investigate ways of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat agriculture as an industry. Look at creating support for R & D at a regional level as is the case in some European countries. Planning – needs to be simplified and have a greater consistency of approach. Water – there needs to be a more coherent strategy for water. Provision of reservoirs, recycling, levels of usage and sustainability all need to be addressed. Skills development for new entrants to the industry and initiatives to encourage young people to remain in rural areas and develop careers in the land-based sector. Support entrepreneurs to engage in the industry and develop commercial opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There needs to be strong links between schools, colleges and career advisors to ensure the profile of the land-based sector is raised and to ensure that students understand what is on offer to them from an academic, vocational and professional standpoint There seems to be a lack of communications between these groups at present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation –KCC need to produce a clear policy statement regarding the importance of lorry movements to farms and processors. We need to engage positively with the CAP reform process. HSBC have produced stats, which show that over the last 12 years UK agriculture has made a loss and has only remained viable due to CAP payments.

What does the future look like – and where do you think the key opportunities for growth for this sector lie?	The Speakers identity Research & Development, Skills, Planning, Water amongst the issues that need to be addressed to unlock potential – what can we do to help, what would be your top 10	If you could influence skills provision – to better support this sector – what would be the key areas of technical, certificated and practical skills you would like to see more of?	To address the concerns about Planning – what are the key policy areas that there needs to be some consistency on to support Horticulture and Agricultural business in the County?
achieving this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers need to co-operate on a much larger scale than is currently the case. 			

Other Comments received by email

1. Agricultural trade on our table included:
 - Medium sized Kent farm – 800 acres arable, 400 acres grass, commercial lettings in converted dairy buildings.
 - 350 acres hop + fruit farm, additional share farming, commercial lettings of buildings.
 - Agronomist combinable crops and vegetables.
 - Medium size Kent soft fruit farm, 600 acres, substantial packhouse and cold stores, quite substantial commercial lettings of buildings.
 - 800 acres salads + 400 acres cereals employing 110 people supplying the catering market.
 - East Sussex NFU Chairman , dairy, sheep and beef.
 - Small fruit farmer – 35 acres top fruit + 15 acres other.
2. Small producers' margin eroded by wholesale and retail customers. No future. Profits inadequate to expand to the larger size now required for long term viability.
3. This provoked discussion about the difficulty for new entrants trying to establish new farm businesses.
4. On a broad view the scope of the market for produce is good – the world population is increasing. But the margins on production are low. Reference was made to the recent sudden increase in wheat price, counterbalanced by a matching rise in growing input costs – the latter having been left at surprisingly low levels for some years. A sudden adjustment on both sides of the equation that does not lead to sufficiently encouraging margins. The price paid for produce is a problem.
5. On the production side, the soil, topography and climate of Kent makes it favoured for niche horticultural crops, but not as favoured as the most efficient and profitable large field, good water supply, arable production in, say, Cambridgeshire. The Garden of England tag remains a good description of Kent's best production suitability.

6. Downstream from production, there is growth, and growth in profitability, in adding value to produce by way of processing, distribution and manufacturing (I add the comment that the same thing applies to retail and catering). Kent has a share of that downstream activity and might look to its further potential.
7. Introducing new blood to the industry is key. The problem of financing farm start-ups is already mentioned. The group was concerned at the increasing age of both those in the agricultural and horticultural advisory services, and of the farmers and their farming workforce. How can we attract new entrants to these essential activities?
8. A number of solutions were mooted:

Marketing:

- A plea for more help with marketing in order to achieve a better profit margin for produce.

Skills:

- Adoption in Kent of the East Sussex scheme for placing school students from the age of 14 in vocational training in farming and land based skills at Plumpton Agricultural College – in Kent's case it would be Hadlow College.
- Encourage the Agricultural Colleges to explore ways to generate an output of more high grade entrants to the industry – as an addition, not to the exclusion of those equipped with technical skills who may not have the same potential.
- Strong support (some on the table were unaware of the progress already made) for the recent successes in attracting significantly more agricultural and horticultural students to courses at the agricultural colleges, notably Hadlow and Plumpton. The Colleges are extremely important to the industry.
- Extend apprenticeships to farms.

Finance:

- Lobby for restoration of capital allowances, especially on farm buildings. There is simply not enough profit margin on production to enable proper modern buildings to be financed.

Planning:

- Educate the public on the need for farm development.
- Educate Planning Officers similarly.
- The planning system must enable development necessary to the evolution of farming, such as polytunnels, to be provided or the ability of farming to care for the countryside and landscape in the long term will be prejudiced, as will the production sector and the very substantial added value sector that is derived from it. The need for the land to be farmed in modern, not nostalgic, terms needs to be explained and accepted.

On a separate note, I have received several comments complimenting and welcoming the Consultation event.

- Food prices are perceived to be high, but are certainly no higher than they need to be to enable farmers to make profits. The problem is that the comparison is being made with a long period of static and unrealistically low commodity prices. Indeed, despite increases in, for instance, the beef and lamb sector, the only profitability is in the single payment subsidy.
- The other problem is that suppliers to the industry are opportunistic. As soon as prices rise, input costs rise, thereby reducing margin.
- At the end of the day it is all about price. Farmers have to have prices that are high enough to generate profitability at a level sufficient to enable investment.
- The supermarkets are a real problem in the horticultural sector. They are adept at paying farmers no more than farmers need to trade at modest profits. Farmers are notorious at thinking “it will be better next year” and therefore stay with it.
- Small growers are particularly vulnerable as their profits are always constrained due to size and they are suffocated by regulation.
- Accordingly, it is essential to encourage the general public to buy local food.
- Our table therefore saw promotion of Kent’s rural sector on a positive basis as the most important single objective. We believe this could be achieved by way of an interactive website, constantly reporting on what is going on in Kent’s farming industry, innovation, farming events, character profiles, links with other sectors, renewables and so on. If such a facility could be set up, it would probably best be run by Hadlow College with investment from the private sector. KCC should use its unique position as the education authority to require schools to spend 10 or 15 minutes a month on this as part of the curriculum. If well presented, children would enjoy the features, and in turn promote it to their parents.
- We liked Nick Holmes’ idea of Kent Farming or Kent Rural Plc with an annual report. Why not link this into the facility mentioned above and promote Rural Kent as a vibrant forward-looking entity.
- Of course, environmental issues lend themselves very well to this sort of publicity and farmers are now making a huge contribution to the environment via Stewardship Schemes.
- So far as agricultural research and development/education is concerned, it is important to try to coordinate this with the general industrial sector.
- On planning we need to promote a unified policy for agriculture over the whole of the area of the LEP. Localism is going to be a serious problem.

- At present planning is totally unpredictable from district to district. It is also expensive and farmers need to operate against a policy background which provides them with the confidence to make applications when they know that their cases fit with policy. At present rules are flouted simply because farmers have no faith in the system and it is very often easier to obtain a retrospective permission, than to go through the current tortuous process.
- All district planning authorities appear to be advised by one firm. That firm is notoriously negative as was readily apparent from comment in the room.
- Expansion of Broadband is crucial. It is not only vital to businesses, but also in the context of diversification. Farmers cannot let their business units unless Broadband is available. New tenants for residential property require Broadband and even tenants of holiday lets require Broadband. The lack of availability of Broadband in many areas is therefore having significant negative economic affect.
- It is accepted that there has to be some regulation particularly in relation to areas of health and safety, but it is the realistic and practical application of regulation that is required, not blind imposition of regulations without consideration of consequences.
- We talked about the need for more water storage, and how facilities could serve not only private consumers but also agriculture. The weather of the last week was a clear indication of the inadequacy of current facilities, with water pouring out to sea and no apparent policy in place for its future capture.
- We talked about coastal defences and the need to maintain coastal defence of such areas as Romney Marsh, which is one of the most important agricultural districts in Southern England. There are also tens of thousands of acres on the North Kent Marshes, which should not be abandoned, bearing in mind future needs for food.
- Rural crime is a big issue not only in relation to security of farm premises, but also in relation to trespass and abuse of public rights of way.
- At the end of the day, the health of agriculture and its ability to invest and fund research and development etc depends on viable commodity prices. The public have to be educated that this is a committed hard working industry producing food of the highest quality in the World context. Kent is as good an example as anywhere of the depth of British agriculture, and the range of production enterprises.



Appendix 3

**KEB Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture
Business Growth Consultation**

Wednesday 19th January 2011

3pm – 6pm

East Malling Research Conference Centre

Thank you for your attendance at the KEB Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture Business Growth Consultation - we would now appreciate your feedback.

Please confirm your details below:
Name:
Job Title:
Organisation:
Address:
Phone Number:
Email:

To help us capture your views re priorities and opportunities please identify the top six (1 is most important - 6 is least important) which you would like to see KEB/LEP engage with.

Low Carbon economy		Resilient power supplies	
Water Supply and Sewerage		R&D for renewables.....	
Adapting to climate change		Sustainable Production	
Skills for Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture occupations		Sustainable Construction	
Proactive flood risk management....		Application of technology	
Improved resource efficiency		Bio Fuels	
Innovation and creativity		Affordable Housing	
Protecting the natural environment....		Waste minimisation and management issues.....	
Accessing new green markets		Other suggestions	
Growing eco tourism			

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities?

Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?

What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?

*More broadly to help the Kent Economic Board with its planning and future events, please tell us what you think are the most important factors in delivering prosperity, business growth and well-being in Kent over the next ten to fifteen years? Rank your **top six priorities** amongst the suggestions below in order of importance (where 1 is the most important and 6 is the least important) and then add any suggestions of your own.*

Transport Infrastructure		Affordable Housing	
Innovation and creativity		Commercial Land and Premises ...	
Work Place Ready Skills		Enterprise and Business Support	
Higher Level Specific Skills		Sustainable Communities	
International Ports and Airports....		Developing Rural Enterprise	
Economic Climate		Access to HE/FE	
Public Transport Issues.....		Inward Investment	
Developing International Trade.....		Your suggestions	
Coastal Regeneration			

Are you willing to assist KEB?

Y

N

Many thanks for your time and contribution to this afternoons event.

Please hand to a staff member before you leave, or post to:

Sylvana Jones, Administration Officer, Kent Economic Board, 2nd Floor, Invicta House,
County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX

**KEB Food Production, Horticulture & Agriculture
Business Growth Consultation
Wednesday 19th January 2011
East Malling Research Conference Centre**

Feedback Forms

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
<p>To bring to the public's attention the fact that the days of cheap imported food as a right for British people are rapidly coming to an end and our lack of skills and food production will prove a costly mistake. Enterprise and Business Support. We must underpin business in the "mine field" areas of legislation in health and Safety, employment law etc with expert advice at the cost of the Tax payer!! No man is an island - and the burden of ever changing</p>	<p>Communicate with the public. To introduce and educate parents of young children to the highly technical industry of food production. To dispel the "hay seed" image of those working with the land. To bring trained youth into the industry with the help of FE schools and older experienced workers acting as mentors. To build bridges with the public, improve relationships by listening to their beliefs and fears. Transport Infrastructure. To provide depots adjoining A roads, motorways</p>			<p>In my opinion this was a very well organised meeting which generated a lot of useful debate.</p>

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
legislation can be the final straw for business. I know help is out there but a lot of people do not know how to ask.	for juggernauts to be serviced by smaller vehicles collecting produce from farms and pack houses which are very often situated on B roads and country lanes, which causes distress to residents and others and gives the farming industry bad press.			
(1) Management Skills. "Attractiveness" of the sector to (the `best') young people. (2) Attitude to work in indigenous population.	A positive communication strategy to make the industry attractive to the best young people.	A broad perspective of the cash/finance issues facing those in the Agricultural/horticultural sector.	Y	
The priorities of farming are inconsistent with the priorities of public.	Application of IT projects into farming and sustainable energy sources.	Our recent acceptance of planning permission for a wind turbine will need to be communicated in a good way to the public. My son tells me that we should go "viral". This could put Maidstone on the sustainable map.	Y	

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
Enabling agriculture to flourish and feed the nation whilst competing with alternative land uses and priorities. Protect the landscape whilst increasing efficiency and yield and using better catchment and storage of water including desalination.	Relax planning constraints in the rural area for new form buildings and barn/farmyard conversion enabling social and shared equity housing. Better transport on A21 Tonbridge - Pembury bypass construction create Leeds - Langley bypass and A21/M26/M25 new junction. Improve IT and communications i.e. Broadband for all.	Act as a catalyst for change and development as a stakeholder and enabler. Being a part of the big conversation.	Y	
Rural Marketing / PR.	Increase publicity of importance of farming.	Publicising farming industry + local produce.	Y	
Planning hurdles, free up system. Concern localism will hinder rather than improve.	LDF clearer and quicker handling. Greater delegated authority.	As chartered surveyors and property consultants, promote land and opportunity to all types of farm/residential development including renewable energy opportunities.	Y	
1) Reservoir capacity; planning policy signals. 2) Further & higher education opportunities. 3) New nuclear at Dungeness or from France. 4) Manpower & other resource availability. 5) Freer use of demolition waste in building & infrastructure. 6) Research work from further & higher education.	1) More realistic view of problems & solutions by policy makers and national and local government officers. 2) Make sure that the policy signals are clearer and enabling not disabling.	We are a law firm providing advice and assistance to farmers, growers and landholders. We provide a considerable amount of advice and assistance to our clients on a pro bono basis.	Y	

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
Production continuing as land pressure increases - housing, food, energy. Use of fuel, water + logistics to consumer along the supply chain.	Education of public, which will mean greater transparency and contact with the public. We are not able to sit in our tractors and ignore our customers, as we are primary producers.	Greater source of discussions between buyers and sellers, knowing where our products go. Beef to MacDonalds, lamb often to France - value added by processors - how meat cuts can be cheaper.	Y	
		Lobby on local and national rural issues.	Y	
		Lobbying, PR, awareness.	Y	
The public face of parking needs to be improved greatly.	Produce a report for Kent Agriculture Ltd & roll it out.	Management input. R & D, Apprenticeships, education.	Y	
Planning consistency across LEP.	Planning officer education.	Whatever you would like! We grow and develop rural business across the LEP.	Y	
Lack of degree level new entrants into the industry.	Inform careers advisors of the true nature of agriculture & horticulture jobs market - the technical challenges and financial rewards. Support for private training initiatives. Support for private R&D initiatives.	Champion the fruit industry - the opportunities for careers etc.	Y	
	KCC & all relevant bodies writing in approach - strategy.			

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
Sustainable R & D provided regionally to underpin the above priorities.	Providing a more sustainable funding strategy for agricultural/horticultural R & D that can provide a wide range of expertise.	Provide advice & provision of services to KEB & the industry as a whole.		
Lots of high quality, energetic young people coming into our industry.	More full time education places in specialist courses for young and new entrants to the industry.	We could offer apprenticeships for young people if given incentives.	Y	
More targeted education, better communication to public, attracting young blood. Better marketing bodies. Targeted R & D into specialist areas. Industry does not attract young people, wrong hours? dirty?. Support from government and Europe - each county should be treated individually.	Working alongside planners. Educate people more into the countryside, view will change. Improve farming image.	The farming unions CLA & NFU need to get more involved.	Y	
Critical to ensure the grower achieves a larger slice of the return from the produce on the farm.	Stop selling produce below the cost of production e.g. apples sold for 40p the grower receives approximately 10/12p after picking/packaging/transport/commission.	Prepared to look at more transparency in the marketing system - The horticulture sales on commission act 1926 requires transparency.	Y	

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
To ensure that there is a comprehensive mechanism in place to encourage young people into the industry.	Good training schemes/apprenticeships. Relevant career information and image. Ensure careers service (connexions are informed about the sector).	We are a PR, web development and marketing company that specialise in agriculture. A website already exists www.wfminkent.co.uk that may be used to start the process of improving public knowledge about the sector.	Y	
	Promote Kent as a centre for excellent agricultural output and link to the London contribution consumers.	Working on educating the public on the importance of food and farming in Kent.	Y	
Planning needs to be fair to all. Need management + skilled + casual labour.	Tidal power.			
			Y, already do	
We need substantial de-regulation in many areas - planning, employment, compliance.				
Need to improve Kent's economy so that Kent becomes a more affluent place. Providing all of the infrastructure that will facilitate that step change - transport, utilities, planning land etc.			Y	

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
Science education badly needed. Image of farming needs work. Schools should foster knowledge of agriculture. More young people needed, therefore career <u>structure</u> needed. R & D the basis of new teaching provider. Money needed for R&D rather than diversification.				
Planning.	Everything mentioned in the meeting.	Advice.	Y	
Education of the future generations to inspire them into thinking about a future in farming and associated industries. This can be done by interactive displays, on farm experiences and going into schools.		Yes. We run a primary school event at KCAS 'The Living Land' May 5 2011 and are running a further day in October 12 for children aged 13-16 who are making G.C.S.E. & A level choices.	Y	
Continued opportunities for young people within the food and training sectors - apprenticeships / work experience / colleges.	More planning for future water storage long term planning - more support to independent retailers & transhops to encourage competition.	Possibly back as a "bureau" to collate literature about 2nd or 3rd grade fruit + vegetables from farmers that could be used in food processing businesses rather than be thrown away.		
Money targeted to R & D. Support for development of people to drive the issues. Increasing awareness	No time!	Assist (and where necessary) lead the debate around the issues involved in the support	Y	

What do you identify as the most important issues associated with your chosen priorities	Can you identify any key actions that should be taken to address the priorities you have identified?	What could you or your organisation contribute to the achievement of the priorities and associated actions?	Are you willing to assist KEB?	General Comments
of public to the issues.		and direction of research.		
Education at younger stage and encourage local skills.			Y	
Food supply in 2030!	Help - publicity with KCC.		Y	

**KEB Food Production, Horticulture & Agriculture Business Growth
Consultation Event
Wednesday 19th January
East Malling Conference Centre**

Participants General Comments

Comments
<p>A very good seminar, with people relieved and excited that the KEB are being seen to get something done; its now over to you to try and deliver.</p>
<p>Many thanks for the opportunity to comment further on the consultation meeting. Having now read the documents provided, especially that from Chavereys, it is apparent the meeting could have done more by directing itself towards the significant variations in income of the farming and horticulture sections. It seems we now have a situation where there is significant wealth being generated by some sectors and others that are falling well behind. If 25% of farming incomes are below the poverty line, then surely with top fruit doing so poorly, of which 66% is grown in Kent, this must be of concern to KEB? From where I stand as a top fruit grower there are important issues that have a major influence on this. * Supermarkets together with wholesale markets take the majority of UK produce; hence in effect control the price growers receive for their produce. * The prices achieved after overheads do not provide an adequate return to sustain the business. * Wholesale markets and their standards of operation are covered by statutory legislation {Horticulture sales on commission act 1926} this act requires full transparency in the financial transaction between the salesman and the buyer, the information to be made available to the grower. This information is never provided; hence, the grower has no way of telling what the true value of the transaction was or how much the salesman has retained. * I can see no reason why wholesale markets cannot now be included in the ombudsman scheme similar to the supermarkets to provide transparency to the sales transactions.</p> <p>It would be appreciated if KEB could give some thought to these proposals.</p>
<p>It was a great event. We would like to be involved in any more you intend running.</p> <p>I would quite like to attend the property session you are planning to run in Folkestone – would that be possible?</p>
<p>A quick note to let you know how interesting I found the seminar earlier in the week at the East Malling Research Centre and to thank you each for all your efforts in bringing the event together.</p>
<p>Thank you so much for an excellent presentation and all the time you committed to the meeting at EMR on Wednesday. I am getting a lot of positive feedback from the many people who attended and will make every effort to make sure things come out of it that make everyone feel we are moving forward. I do think I should attempt to get the Kent fishing industry involved as this may also help with any developing coastal regeneration plans that KCC are working on.</p> <p>The one thing that is also coming out is the grave concerns about localism being used against farmers, landowners and the general potential to set communities against each other. I am seeing the negative impact of this under the current system when a community becomes unbalanced i.e. more</p>

commuters than local workers. It is not pleasant. I understand this grave concern is general and not just a Kent issue, however with the large commuter base in West Kent and the large commuter belt developing around Ashford it may become a far from pleasant land to live in.

A personal thank you for making yesterday possible and your comments. It was an excellent event. If ever you need any briefings in relation to taxation or finance in the sector please let me know.

Interesting debate.

It was an extremely interesting event and I was very glad to have been there. We will return our feedback form early next week, as there are some points I think Nick would like an input on - will you still be able to include these in your report?

Appendix 6

Attendees

Name		Job title	Organisation
Philip	Acock		Fourayes Farm Ltd
William	Alexander		Castle Farm
Nick	Allen	Finance Director	Berry Gardens
Kevin	Attwood		
Simon	Ayshford	Field Officer - East Sussex & Kent	The Turbine Barn
George	Back		RH & RW Clutton
Robert	Balicki	Chief Executive Officer	Worldwide Fruit
Michael	Bax	Director	BTF
Clive	Baxter		
John	Bee	Estate Manager	The Marquess of Abergavenny Eridge Estate
Stephen	Betts	Director	Laurence J Betts Ltd
Tim	Biddlecombe	Managing Director	FAST Ltd
Fiona	Boucher		
Hugh	Boucher		
Jeremy	Boxall	Commercial Manager & Director	LEAF & LEAF Marque Ltd
Tim	Brock	Assistant Director	Country Land & Business Association
Tom	Bulpitt	Manager	Laurence J Betts Ltd
Paul	Carter	Leader	Leader Kent County Council
Richard	Castle		Moor Organics Ltd
Katie	Chantler	Project Manager	KCC
Peter	Checkley	Farm Manager	Howard Chapman Ltd
Frances	Clayton	Communications Manager	Kent Downs AONB
Gill	Collins	PR and Marketing	Ether Creative Ltd
Barbara	Cooper	Director of Economic Development	KCC, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development

Name		Job title	Organisation
Don	Cranfield	Head of Business Training	Plumpton College
Pat	Crawford	Press Officer	Hadlow College
Roz	Day	Chairman - Education Committee	Kent County Agricultural Society
Bob	Dean	General Manager	Fruition PO Ltd
Martin	Deer		
Oliver	Doubleday	Managing Director & Chairman	GH Dean & Co Ltd, East Malling Research
Paul	Dracott	Chairman	LEAF Technical Advisory Committee
Stephanie	Durling		Produced in Kent
Simon	Edridge	Managing Director	SEA Ltd
Malcolm	Ewsoll		NFU
David	Figgis		Lavender Farm
Nicholas	Fox	Managing Director	Individual learning Company
Tom	French	Managing Partner	BTF
Roger	Gabriel	Skills Manager	KEB, Skills Manager
Mike	Gibbon		Berry Gardens
Stuart	Gibbons	Director	Rural Sector Solutions
John	Grafik	Assistant Principal, Customer Services	K College
Paul	Graves	Marketing Director	AV Produce Ltd
Michael	Green		F.W. Munsfield & Sons
John	Guest		The English Apple Man
Colin	Hall	Director	50 Club Horticultural Employers Association
Paul	Hamlyn	Crop Production Advisor	Berry Gardens
Richard	Harnden	Technical and Development Director	Berry Gardens
Liz	Harrison	Rural Regeneration Manager	KCC, Rural Regeneration Manager
Vanessa	Harvey	Executive Assistant	Kent Showground
Neil	Hipps		East Malling Research Station
Nick	Holmes		Chavereys

Name		Job title	Organisation
Catherine	Horne		Nash Court
Douglas	Horner	Director & Member	Trenport Investments Ltd & CBI South East Council
Miles	Irving		
Michael	Jack	Food & Farming Advisor	HSBC Bank
Douglas	Jackson	Rural Business Consultant	Laurence Gould Partnership Limited
Rob	James		Thanet Earth Marketing
Huw	Jarvis		KCC
Alastair	Jessel		Taywell Ice Creams Ltd
George	Jessel	Partner	Jessel Farms
Paul	Kelsey		Kelsey Farms
Matthew	Knight		Knights Solicitors
Richard	Knox-Johnston	Chairman	Protect Kent
Rob	Lister		Rural & Business Specialists Limited
Sue	Lister	Senior Associate, Commercial Property	Thomson Snell & Passmore
John	Llewelin		Kent Downs AONB
David	Long		
Mark	Lumsdon-Taylor	Director of Finance and Resources	Hadlow College
Kevin	Lynes	Cabinet Member	KCC, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development
Deborah	Malthouse		KCC
Nina	Marchant		AJR Marchant & Partners
Richard	Marchant		AJR Marchant & Partners
Jennifer	Marchant		AJR Marchant & Partners
Tom	Maynard		Fruit Grower
Megan	McKibbin		KEB, Executive Director
Philip	Merricks		
Andrew	Metcalf		Maxim PR
Geoff	Miles		Maidstone Studios and Chair of Kent Economic Board
Nick	Moor		Moor Organics Ltd
Prof Jeff	Moorby	Member	Kent Food Security Group

Name		Job title	Organisation
Roger	Moore		
Nicholas	Morton		
Kevin	Moule	Relationship Director, Agriculture	Barclays Corporate
Ingrid	Murray		We Buy Nearby
Dr Hilary	Newport	Director	Protect Kent
Judith	Norris		
Charlie	Oakes		
Andrea	Oakley		East Malling Trust
Rodney	Older		Romney Marsh Farms
Jane	Ollis		BSK-CIC
Jim	Pace		GW Finn
Nigel	Parsons		Landmark Systems Ltd
Duncan	Pierce		Goblands Farm Business Centre
Andrew	Pierce	Orchard Place Farm	
Scott	Raffle		HDC
Jon	Regan		Hugh Lowe Farms
Marion	Regan		Hugh Lowe Farm Ltd
Jon	Rimmer		The Hobbs Parker Group
Oliver	Robinson		Batcheller Thacker
Jon	Rose	Regional Agricultural Manager	LTSB
Barbara	Sacher		KCC
Mike	Salomon		East Malling Research
Nick	Sandford	Vice Chairman	Kent CLA
James	Simpson	Managing Director	Adrian Scripps Ltd
David	Slack	Partner	Smiths Gore
Stephen	Solley	Managing Director	Solley's Farms Ice Cream Ltd
Bernard	Spring	Managing Director	BLPS Consulting Limited
Mark	Styles	16 - 19 Innovations Unit Manager	KCC
Natalia	Sukhram	Economic development Officer	Canterbury City Council
Charles	Tassell	County Chairman	Kent NFU
Harry	Teacher	CLA Kent Committee member	Hadlow Place Farms/Hadlow Estate
David	Toms	Partner	Ashes Plantation
Dean	Tunbridge		Norman Collett Ltd

Name		Job title	Organisation
Gillian	van der Meer	East Sussex NFU County Chair Elect	Oak Bank Farm
Christopher	Wacher	Partner & Head of Property & Estates Team	Furley Page
Elizabeth	Wade	Non Exec Director	Berry Gardens
Sarah	Ward		W.Rogers & Sons & EMR
Henry	Warde	Director	Estover Energy Ltd
Mark	Weaver		Complete Land Management LLP
Anthony	Weston		Complete Land Management LLP
Christopher	Wheeler		L Wheeler and Sons
Martin	White	Business Partner	Clydesdale Bank
William	White		Regional Director of the NFU in the South East
Andrew	Wickham	Chair Rural board, Member	KCC, Deputy Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development and Chair Kent Rural Board.
Michael	Wooldridge	Partner	Smiths Gore
Harry	Wooldridge	Partner	Beechfarm
Alan	Zeal	Partner	Rix and Kay Solicitors LLP