



**Environmental** sustainability by making care for the environment an integral part of business management in the sector.

# The 2020 Vision

The Vision is ambitious in three main areas:

**Production** by developing the sector so its contribution to the regional economy doubles by 2020. This would be achieved by:

- Increasing the value of food output by increasing primary agricultural production and adding as much value as possible within the wider food chain by responding to growing consumer demand for convenience, health and provenance
- Supporting transformational, large scale new production projects as well as continued growth of existing businesses
- Embracing the drive for renewable energy primarily by using crop and food wastes to provide much of the biomass needed to avoid increasing pressure on food production
- Championing the development of renewable materials for industrial uses from bio-pharmaceuticals to automotive components and sustainable building materials

**Environmental** sustainability by making care for the environment an integral part of business management in the sector. This will include:

- Increasing the efficiency with which inputs are used, with a focus on halving artificial fertiliser use and reducing non renewable energy use by 25 percent
- Securing sustainable resources for production by enhancing water storage and management so 50 percent more land can be irrigated, and by implementing a regional soil strategy
- Developing new technologies to reduce pollution and the emissions associated with production
- Promoting the uptake of agri-environment schemes, and working to develop new options in carbon and climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as promoting collaborative schemes amongst multiple landowners

**Social responsibility** by action both within the sector, and in conjunction with the public sector, to:

- Develop new foods which confer enhanced dietary benefit by building on the region's excellent health and dietary research expertise
- Ensure that consumers are educated about what constitutes a healthy diet

In all three areas it is recognised that a combination of new skills, innovative technologies and investment are needed to create the conditions for change.



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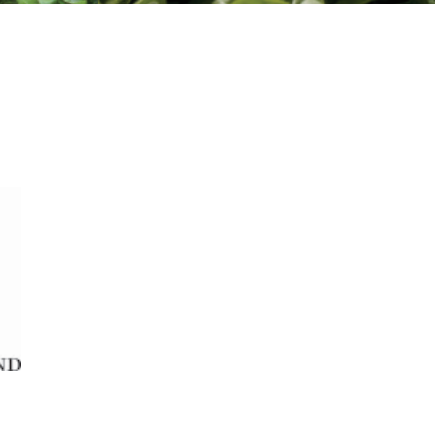
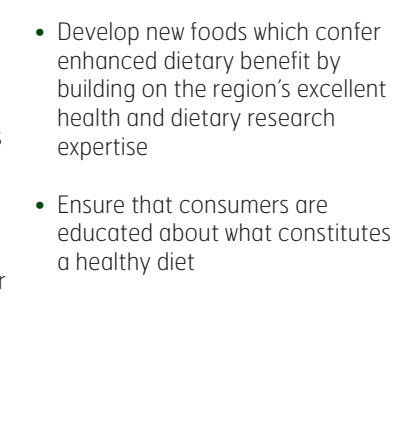
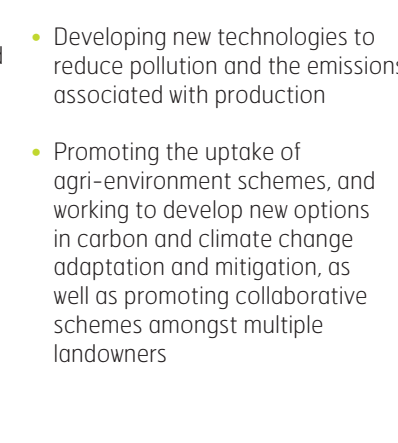
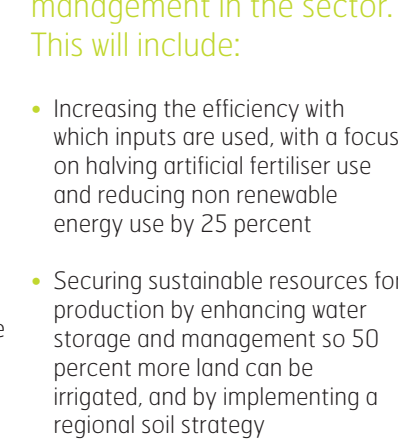
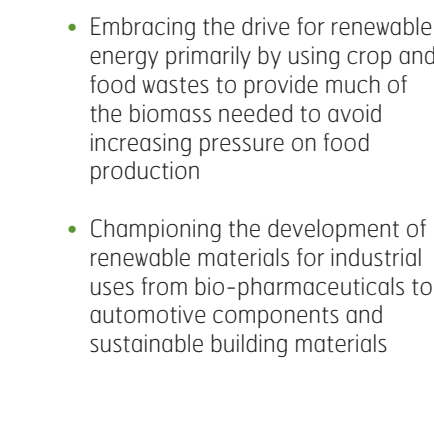


GOVERNMENT OFFICE  
 FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND

# The 2020 Vision for the East of England Food and Farming Sector

**Production** by developing the sector so its contribution to the regional economy doubles by 2020.

**Social responsibility** by action both within the sector, and in conjunction with the public sector.



# The 2020 Vision for the East of England Food and Farming Sector

A broad partnership in the East of England has worked over the last year to develop the 2020 Vision for the region's food and farming sector, one which recognises the multiple pressures now being faced regionally and globally in building a productive and sustainable industry. The Vision responds to:

- The growth in the global market for food, and the need to embrace emerging markets for renewable materials and energy
- Growing awareness of the environment footprint of the sector, but also recognition that the sector can provide solutions in areas such as climate change, carbon emissions and water resources
- The growing problems caused by poor dietary choices and the consequences this has for both people and health services

These changes create a need for leadership both in the industry and by government. The Vision is designed to create a common agenda for change around which everyone can unite.

The East of England is an ambitious and growing region. It has a strong reputation for being innovative and contains arguably the largest concentration of agri-food and life sciences research in Europe. This world class research base also has expertise in dietary health, sustainability and climate change adaptation.



Building on this knowledge base the region can lead an innovation agenda to increase production in ways which also improve the environmental performance of the industry, and contributes to improved dietary choices.

The region has a large scale, professional and progressive agricultural and food sector which employs one in seven of the workforce and is a substantial component of the regional economy which contributes £8billion to the region's GVA (seven percent of the total).

With a diversity of crops and livestock, the region contains over 700 food manufacturing companies from small innovative, niche and speciality producers to some of the largest food companies in the world.

The region leads on environmental issues and has a strong focus on biodiversity with more land in stewardship than any other region. The region also has a number of innovative resource management projects including waste to energy plants and large new collaborative farmer owned reservoirs.

The industry is keen to work in partnership with other stakeholders and government agencies to ensure that it plays an enhanced role in the economic, environmental and social success of the region.



Rebecca Rayner,  
managing director, Glebe Farm

## Delivering the Vision

Writing a Vision is easy, but implementation inevitably creates trade-offs and can be disrupted by external change. In this case, the industry and regional stakeholders have actively debated the Vision and in parallel considered how it could be implemented.

Delivery of the Vision must be led by the industry because only by using the resources of the commercial sector can the change which is envisaged be realised.

It is essential, however, that implementation is facilitated by a supportive and proactive public sector which both recognises and addresses the constraints the industry faces in delivering an ambitious agenda.

Delivery will require action in three areas:

- Research, development and knowledge transfer to support increased production, new product development and new ways of working to both increase business efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of production processes
- Skills will need to be enhanced across the sector as new technologies, priorities and markets emerge. Allied to the need to develop new skills will be the ongoing need to attract and develop the business leaders and technologists of the future
- Investment both in commercial facilities and new product development by the industry as well as in infrastructure by the government is essential to the delivery of a modern and efficient industry

In addition to delivering benefits to the economy and businesses within the farming and food sector, considerable effort has been paid to how delivery of the Vision can help to deliver wider benefits to the community.

The actions set out within the Vision will also deliver:

- A low carbon economy by focusing on both production efficiency as well as the development of new sustainable products
- New jobs in new industries through supporting the development of the renewable energy and materials sector
- Resource efficiency by championing the use of wastes reductions in energy use and enhanced water efficiency
- A healthy natural environment by promoting an increase in the take up of environmental schemes
- Health priorities through improving food formulation and supporting dietary education leading to a reduced incidence of obesity, cancer and heart disease

## What Happens Next?

The East of England is committed to making the 2020 Vision for the East of England Food and Farming Sector a reality, but to do so action by a wide range of individuals, private, voluntary and public sector bodies will be needed.

It won't be easy, and we will undoubtedly face obstacles, but if you believe that the role of the farming and food sector can and should be enhanced we would like to hear from you.

If you are from the:

- Industry we will be pleased to listen to the ideas you have on how best to deliver the Vision and what support businesses need;
- Voluntary sector we will be pleased to support and promote work you are undertaking which supports the delivery of the Vision;
- Public sector we would be pleased to work with you to ensure that your policies and work support a dynamic and progressive farming and food sector in the East of England.

Whether you are investing in the industry, are responsible for planning, infrastructure or work in research or education you have a key role to play in delivering a more vibrant, globally competitive and sustainable farming and food industry.

Collectively we have to ensure that the food and farming sector is able to respond positively to the growth of its markets whilst improving its record on the environment.

We look forward to working with you.

A full version of the 2020 Vision paper, and further information on the work being undertaken to support the sector in the East of England is available to download at:

[www.eeda.org.uk/2020vision](http://www.eeda.org.uk/2020vision)

Development of the 2020 Vision was led by the East of England Sustainable Farming and Food Group, chaired by Marie Francis OBE [mariefrancis@fastmail.fm](mailto:mariefrancis@fastmail.fm)

This group includes representatives of:

- A range of food and farming businesses
- National Farmers Union
- Country Land and Business Association
- Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board
- LANTRA
- RSPB
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Business Link East
- East of England Regional Assembly (EERA)
- East of England Development Agency (EEDA)
- Government Office for the East of England (GO East)

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