



FRESH FOOD!

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Fresh Food / Horticulture
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Economy, Health & Food Security:

- Sufficient safe, affordable & nutritious food to meet dietary needs.
- Resilient & Reliable domestic food producing sector is critical.
 - Short, simple domestic supply chains.
 - Control of our own standards.
 - Resilience.
 - Assurance that the UK does not import food leaving other areas in a poorer state. (e.g. from water poor locations).
- Garden of England: Fresh food historically a major part of Kent economy.



Challenges:

- The UK picture – 2023 vs 2021:
 - Fresh Vegetables – 53% from 57%.
 - Tomatoes – 15% from 18%.
 - Potatoes – 62% from 74%.
 - Fresh Fruit – 16%.
 - Apples – 38%.
 - Pears – 8%.
- Pressures include, cost of inputs, wages (50% +), audit & compliance, quality standards & specifications, where food comes from, border checks.
- Supply chains & cost risk, energy & climate.
- Planning Frameworks that omit food production.
- Dietary choice & the retail environment.





Opportunities:

Fresh, healthy food underpins the two pillars of Economic growth and Health of the nation.

The food agenda plays a crucial role by emphasising the importance of nutrition and its impact on overall well-being productivity.

British growers are ambitious to produce more of the food our maritime climate enables us to excel at, while reducing our impact on the environment.

- Kent growers & food producers are highly responsive and versatile.
 - KCC leading the way on Public Sector purchasing:
 - Schools, hospitals, staff cafes/canteens.
 - Prioritising “buying Kent grown produce”.
 - Trail blazer.
- Future-focussed, investing in high technology & automation.
- Central to the delivery of national food strategy.
 - We are home to 40% of UK horticultural production
 - We are a key gateway to global markets.
- We are supporting skills development.
- Critical to the UK Industrial Strategy.
- Economically active businesses!
 - With turnovers in the millions £.
 - Adding to the GVA of the Kent economy.



Objectives:

- Place **Fresh Food & Horticulture** sector at the front and centre of **county growth and industrial strategies**.
- **Promote fresh food** as the **building block** of healthy living, healthy lives and healthy economic growth.
 - Enabling ambitious targets for growth in the economy and improving lifestyles to be achieved.
- Boost **productivity, supporting innovation** and strengthening supply chains – including through **local public sector purchasing**.
 - Delivers the Governments ambition of **half of all food purchased via public sector to be locally produced**.
- Support a pipeline of people into the industry, tackling barriers to employment.
- **Demand for fresh food is growing, and Kent is perfectly placed to produce it.**



Next Steps:

- **Request a report to look at challenges and opportunities** in more detail:
 - How the **economic, environmental, health and community benefits** can help achieve growth?
 - How can KCC help to address the issues and assist with **capitalising on the opportunities**?
 - How can KCC help ensure the **fresh food / agri-tech/food sector is fully supported across all levels of government**?
 - Especially in public procurement.
 - How we can commit best to **collectively achieving this**?
- There is a **moment in time opportunity in Kent for the sector and KCC to work together and lead the way.**



Thank you!



Any Questions?