



Press Release
October 17, 2018

“Sowing the Seeds of the Fingal Agri-Food Sector”
A new strategy is launched to help Fingal food producers grow



Food companies from throughout Fingal this week joined the Mayor of Fingal Cllr. Anthony Lavin and Fingal County Council Chief Executive, Paul Reid to launch the inaugural “Fingal Agri-Food Strategy” in Newbridge House Donabate.

Aimed at cultivating businesses and employment in Fingal, the new plan sets out a series of actions designed to bolster food businesses in the region in the coming three year period to the end of 2021.

Two years ago, Fingal County Council Chief Executive Paul Reid brought together some of the key food businesses and encouraged them to work together and to collaborate on a new plan for the food sector in Fingal. A new committee was formed, the “Fingal Food Committee”, chaired by Michael Hoey (founder of Fingal’s Country Crest and Ballymaguire Foods) and made up of key business leaders from the Fingal food industry. This committee has steered the production of the new strategy and marks a new approach to collaboration among the Fingal food sector.

Work on the formulation of the new Food Strategy was coordinated by the Fingal Local Enterprise Office which itself provides a series of successful and popular programmes designed to support small and start-up food businesses in the region.

The areas where food businesses will benefit from the new focus are summarised in six key areas:

1. Fostering collaboration and clustering among stakeholders;
2. Enhancing innovation;
3. Improving business management performance;
4. Supporting the attraction and retention of food talent into Fingal;
5. Creating a Fingal food and drink Tourism destination;
6. Examining the feasibility of developing an Agri-Food hub.

Following the launch, the Local Enterprise Office hosted a business networking event with over 60 local food businesses benefiting.

Fingal County Council, through the Local Enterprise Office, is delivering a wide range of financial and non-financial supports to agri-food companies in the county. The Agri-Food Strategy for Fingal builds upon this work and sets out a common framework that will foster innovation and collaboration across the sectors, increasing value added, leading to further jobs creation in the agri-food sector and maximizing the potential of the agri-food base in the county. Fingal County Council developed the strategy with the input of a steering group of local sectoral experts.

The Mayor of Fingal Cllr. Anthony Lavin, launching the Fingal Agri-Food Strategy 2019–2021 stated *“As Mayor of Fingal, I very much welcome this agri-food strategy for the County. The food production sectors in Fingal are very active and the county has a strong footprint throughout the ‘farm to fork’ cycle”*.

He continued *“The agriculture and agri-food sectors are very important to Fingal and the county holds a disproportionate share of the total national output. Aided by the work of the Local Enterprise Office, and the wider departments of Fingal County Council, this innovative piece of work will, I’m sure, allow Fingal to continue to be a national forerunner in the agri-food industry”*

Announcing the Strategy, Paul Reid, Chief Executive of Fingal County Council said *“I would like to pay tribute to all of the businesses, individuals and organisations, that have generously given their time and energy to help in the construction of this Strategy. I am delighted that so many of our local food businesses in Fingal are working together to ensure the common goals and objectives of this industry are achieved. One of the most important aspects of shaping any new industry sectoral strategy is that it involves the key businesses within that sector at every stage of its development.”*

Welcoming the Strategy, the Chairman of the Fingal Food Committee, Michael Hoey reiterated the words of the Chief Executive, saying that he is *“calling on you all to take ownership of this strategy and play an active part in the rollout phase, so that we in Fingal can maximise the benefits of working collaboratively and cooperatively in supporting this vital sector going forward and that Fingal has a robust and ambitious strategy to build upon over the coming years.”*

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About Local Enterprise Office, Fingal

The Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in Fingal is part of a network of 31 Local Enterprise Offices nationwide, located within the Local Authority structure. The Fingal office is one of the largest and most active LEOs in the country. The role of the LEO is to support and provide assistance to existing and potential small business promoters located in Fingal, North County Dublin. In addition the Fingal LEO aims to foster the development of an enterprise culture. The LEOs operate under a Service level Agreement with Enterprise Ireland. Local Enterprise Office Fingal is funded by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and is con-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Notes for the Editor:

The Fingal Agri-Food strategy 2019 to 2021 can be downloaded online from the Local Enterprise Office website <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Fingal/Enterprise-Development/Fingal-Agri-Food-Strategy/> or from the Fingal County Council website www.fingal.ie.