

Food Chain Excellence



Showing Farmers the Route to Success

Farexchange is a Supply Chain Development Programme which aims to help Yorkshire businesses operating in the food supply chain to improve their competitiveness and efficiency through collaborative working with their suppliers and customers.

Summary

The Food Chain Excellence course was run over 2 days, and provided bite sized learning across a series of short presentations given by leading business owners and managers.

The two days covered:

- Market Overview - global food trends, consumer insights and marketing strategies.
- Food Innovation – product development, automation, packaging, distribution and collaborative supply chains.
- Strategy for Growth – risk management, staffing and focusing on the next steps for delegates businesses based on the learnings from the course.

The course used a variety of business speakers and was designed to be interactive, encouraging delegates to draw on their own experiences and to generate debate.

The challenge

Enabling Yorkshire and Humber farmers to develop their business skills, especially when moving beyond commodity production and into adding value and marketing their own produce, is key to developing the next generation of successful food businesses.

How we helped

Farmers from all over the region attended the two-day event at the Yorkshire Agricultural Society's new Regional Agricultural Centre at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate, where topics ranged from global food supply chain issues to branding, marketing and meeting consumer needs.

"As a result of the Food Chain Excellence course we are now actively looking at making the packaging of our muesli products more attractive and we are also collaborating with others on potential new products next year. The course proved quite a wake-up call and has given us plenty of food for thought on how to improve our margins."

Caroline Sellers
- Side Oven Bakery

Key industry figures from both the wholesale and retail markets gave in-depth presentations, including EFPF Business Development Director Mike Ader, who spoke about global food supply issues and Jodie Dunkley of Arla who spoke about shopper marketing.

On the second day speakers included Ian King of Kings Catering who spoke about food service and contract catering, Andrew Loftus of Weetons who covered retail and Waitrose Agriculture Manager Duncan Sinclair, who gave an informative talk on boosting business performance in challenges times. The course allowed delegates to listen and take from each session examples of how they may develop their own business by learning from both the challenges faced and the successes of the guest speakers.

Organic farmer Caroline Sellers, who runs Carr House Farm and its award-winning Side Oven Bakery in Driffeld with husband Tim, said the course was a "real eye-opener" and had been invaluable in providing her with fresh ideas for taking the business forward.

The outcome

The group came away with many new ideas and a willingness to learn more. YAS's regional programme director George Hamilton said: "The Food Chain Excellence course is the first project that YAS has delivered for Farexchange. I am very keen to encourage farmers as food producers to develop closer links with their markets and customers. As a result of the success of this programme, we intend to run another later in 2010."

Farexchange is supported by:



Delivery Partnership:

