

Eastern AgriGate Research Hub launched

On 13th November 2015, NIAB and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership co-hosted the official opening of the Eastern AgriGate Research Hub at Hasse Fen, near Soham in Cambridgeshire. The event was well attended and attracted much media attention as well as support from George Freeman MP, the Minister for Life Sciences and Lucy Frazer, MP for South East Cambridgeshire.



Key moments from the launch including: unveiling of the plaque by George Freeman MP; launch event VIPs and local dignitaries; local MP Lucy Frazer speaking with exhibitors; NIAB CEO Dr Tina Barsby welcoming guests to the launch; and Anna Hill, presenter of BBC R4's Farming Today, interviewing KisanHub's Giles Barker for the programme.

New activity

- An industry *steering group* is now in place to focus project delivery.
- The first *tenants* started in the labs in December 2015.
- *Meeting room* bookings are being taken.
- *ARTIS* will deliver skills training courses from the new centre (www.artistraining.com)
- *R&D* and other *funding opportunities* for SMEs are available. Contact us for information.



Mark Reeve, chair of the GCGP LEP

Innovators in food and crop waste reduction

Examples of innovations in resource use efficiency and waste reduction were demonstrated by the exhibitors at the launch event.

Entomos, a Cambridge start-up working in collaboration with Sainsbury's, is using food waste to grow insects from which high value compounds are extracted.

G's, local fresh produce growers and processors, showcased a lettuce crop modelling project to improve the

availability of iceberg lettuce throughout the year using forecasting methods, identification of growth stage and integration of market intelligence data to inform harvest schedules relative to demand.

KisanHub, a Cambridge-based software developer for agriculture, demonstrated the power and capability of their web platform and software tools to aggregate and analyse farm data and integrate them with metrological data

and agronomy intelligence for on-farm decision support.

Ozopure, based in Oxfordshire, demonstrated electrolysed water technology and its application in crop protection as a sustainable and environmentally friendly option for disease control.

Anglian Water showcased sustainability projects, and work to manage water resource at catchment level.



Presenters from left to right: Emma Garfield, G's; Giles Barker, KisanHub; Matt McLaren, Entomos and David Thurston, OzoPure showcasing innovations to George Freeman and Lucy Frazer.

Book meeting rooms, offices, research space and the field lab

The Eastern AgriGate Research Hub is already hosting tenants and meeting events for local businesses. The facility's laboratory, meeting room, office, field lab and canteen are now fully operational. With full internet connection, IT and AV equipment is available for webinars and presentations in the meeting room. An internal network and WiFi allow IT connectivity throughout the building, with access to a central printing facility.

Office space is designed for hot-desking and additional meeting pod/work station with power and intranet sockets has been installed in the canteen to extend the working environment. The meeting room can be rearranged to a theatre-style setting for up to 30 people. Full catering for events is available through local service providers and is easy to arrange.



Management of the facility is delivered by NIAB, led by Dr Effie Mutasa-Göttgens in close collaboration with a steering group including:

- Andrew Burgess Produce World
- Jeremy Macklin Hutchinsons Ltd
- Belinda Clarke Agri-Tech East
- Ed Moorhouse G's
- Martin Lutman GCGP LEP observer
- Tina Barsby NIAB



There is a wide ranging local business community of over 165 enterprises involved in the agri-business supply chain within easy reach of the hub.

Working at the Eastern AgriGate Research Hub

Who can work there?

Anyone looking for a temporary lease on lab, office or meeting room space to service agriculture-related R&D for their business.

The meeting room is available on a day and half-day rate to anyone looking for the convenience of working in the Fens.

Lab space is also available on a day rate for anyone wishing to pre-process field samples before taking them back to their own base. Space will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Fees and charges

We operate a cost recovery model. Temporary leases start at £500 (+VAT) per month with six month reviews.

The meeting room costs £200 (+VAT) per day. This including light refreshments (tea, coffee, juice, bottled water and biscuits) and is available during normal working hours only.

Recent and planned activity

- **Entomos** took up tenancy in December 2015.
- **ARTIS** is planning to run a series of courses at the Hub.

New projects: A consortium led by NIAB, working on water catchment management, with Anglian Water, University of Cambridge and The British Antarctic Survey, is through to the final application stage of the BBSRC SARIC call.

The University of Hertfordshire (UH) and NIAB have submitted a joint bid to procure remote sensing hardware and software development to integrate the strawberry powdery mildew disease and infection risk early warning system to be delivered as a new application - the **UH Strawberry App** - on the niabnetwork.com app ecosystem platform.



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