



Stimulating Innovation in the (Yorkshire) Agri-Food Sector

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... plus >15 others!



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About SIAFS

To help grow agri-food businesses in the region with innovation

- Part funded by European Regional Development
- Partnership between Fera and MiY
- £1.6m stimulus investment (50% invested by the partners)
- Supporting SMEs in York, North Yorkshire and East Riding and Leeds City regions
- Minimum target = 220 businesses with 12 hours of support



How do we help?

Free workshops:

- Mixture of business and technical workshops e.g. social media marketing, exporting, food hygiene, packaging
- Maximum of 12 participants, usually 3 hours long

Innovation voucher scheme:

- £2k or £5k of free services from Fera.
- £20k vouchers require SMEs to contribute £10k cash
- Simple and transparent application process
- Covers anything that Fera does, or could, offer; shelf life testing, packaging consultancy, nutritional analysis



How do we help?

Larger scale events - examples:

- Themed conference-style events
- Christmas market at NAFIC on December 6th
- Meet the Buyer events

1:1 targeted support - examples:

- Photography/videography services
- Marketing and PR
- Website development
- Marketing plans



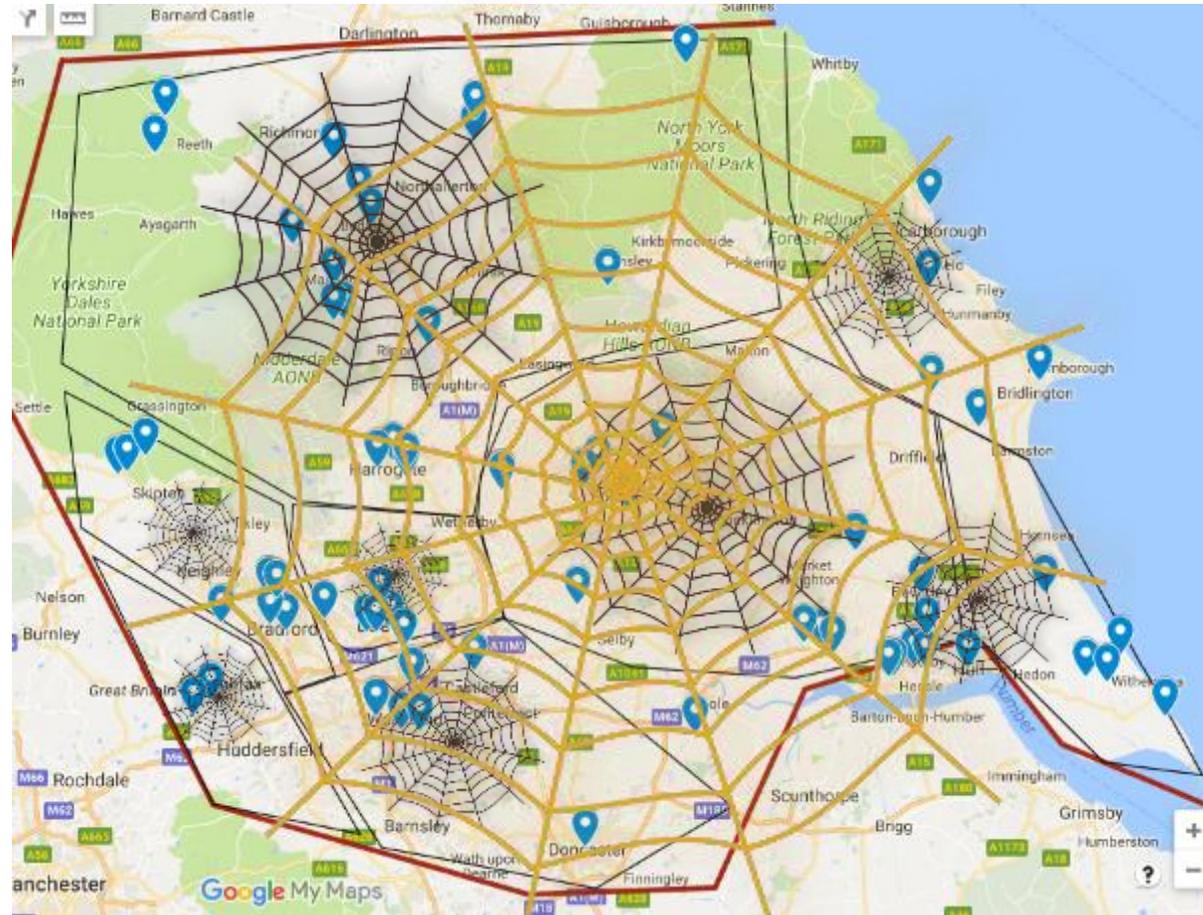
We've got Yorkshire food talking and innovating ...

- > 330 Yorkshire SMEs signed up
- > 200 businesses actively engaged
- 41 workshops delivered
- 68 innovation vouchers awarded
- 7 new businesses supported
- 5 new to firm products launched
- 4 new to market products launched



How we do it

- Regular Meetings
- Contacts Across Region
- 'Meet The Buyer' Events
- Expert Speakers
- Partner Discounts
- Major Exhibitions
- Peer-to-Peer Support
- Group Services
- Business Advice
- Discounted Office Space
- Group Funding Bids
- Partnerships
- Etc.



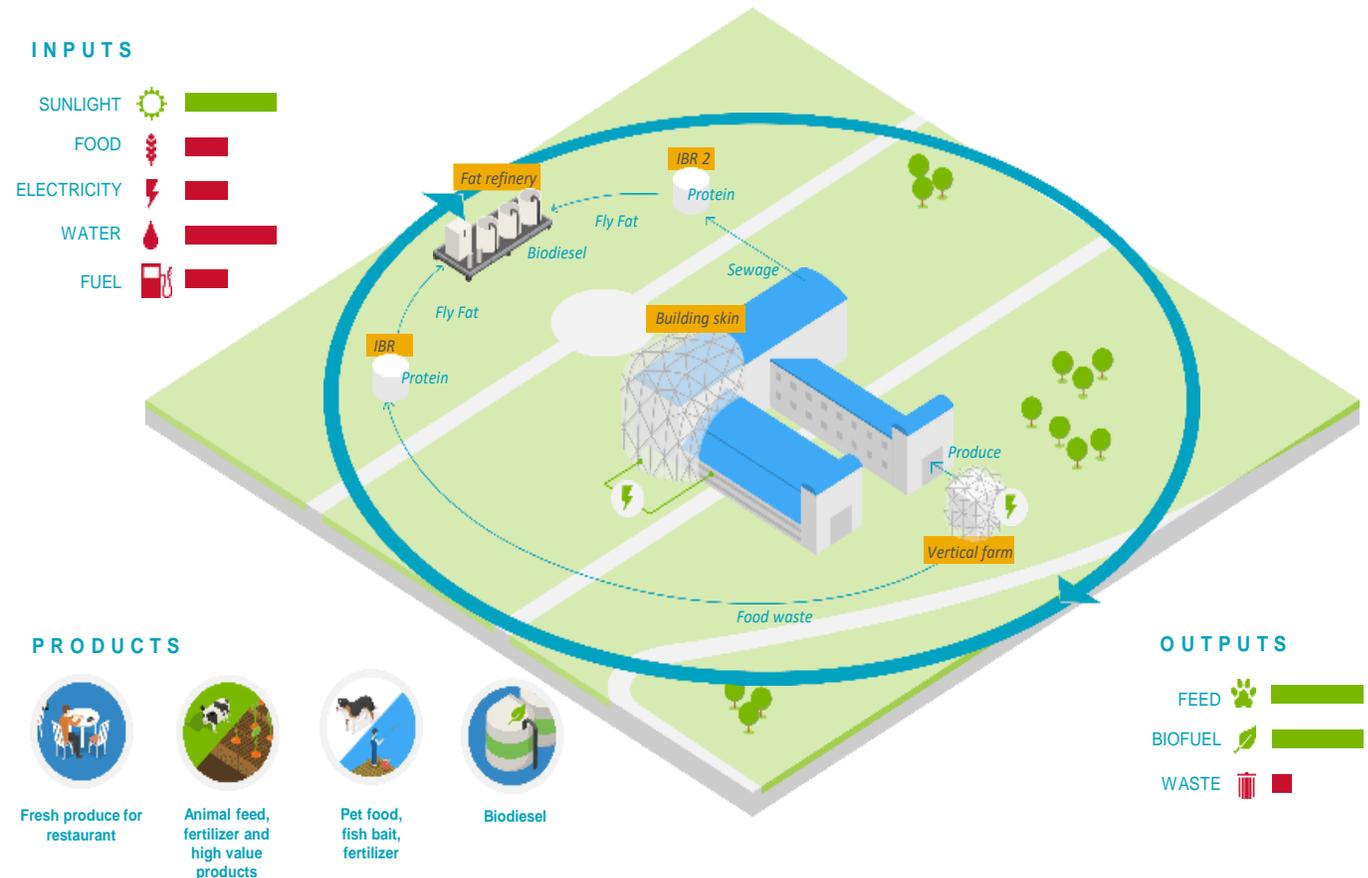
Case study #1 – innovations in brewing

- Over 20 regional breweries signed up
- Fera developed link with the Society of Independent Brewers
- Through that link and those with individual breweries SIAFS is developing three innovative services for the sector that Fera will be able to continue to offer post-SIAFS:
 - **Gluten testing** - using new more accurate chemical analysis method which will be important owing to large growth in gluten-free sector
 - **Product profiling** – to better understand characteristics of each type of beer to support more informed purchase decisions and educate consumers in new markets
 - **Product authenticity** – to support export through reduction of counterfeiting in new markets



Case study #2 – valorising food residue

- Insect biomass conversion at NAFIC
- Waste from three of the SIAFS businesses now being fed to black soldier fly larvae to produce:
 - **Protein** – for animal feed or pet food
 - **Fats** – for conversion to biodiesel
 - **Soil nutrient** – from insect frass
 - **Chitin** and the value added bi-products
- Early stage project



The future

- 2 years of investment in SIAFS has built:
 - one of the most comprehensive regional databases for agri-food businesses
 - an engaged and dispersed regional market place in agri-food which has an appetite for innovation
 - an engagement model that works for food innovation
 - an effective network of partners and



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 - an effective network of partners and
- many lessons learned, like,
some times you can't give it away ...!



The future

- End of ERDF funding in March '19, cannot mean the end of this valuable business support activities for the region
- We are:
 - Committed to continue these activities
 - **Acting now!**
 - In discussion with a number of possible future partners to help us achieve this, including both LEPs
 - Welcoming conversations with others that would like to be involved



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 - ... like Grow Yorkshire





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