



IDEAL LINCS

A new Regional Food Hub - Best of Lincolnshire - is a new initiative, which delivers locally sourced grocery products to ASDA stores Lincoln, Grimsby & Scunthorpe. The project is run in partnership with Ideal Lincs and started in August this year.

Ideal Lincs is owned by Lincolnshire farmer, Paul Davey, who brings local products direct from local suppliers and farmers to the supermarket. There are currently 80 lines from 10 Lincolnshire producers being sold in ASDA's Best of Lincolnshire regional food hub, from flapjack, shortbread and apple pie, to Lincolnshire sausage, cakes and mineral water.

Started in 2004, Ideal Lincs initially delivered fresh produce to restaurants and has since grown to supply wholesale markets with Lincolnshire Fresh Produce and ASDA stores in Lincolnshire and the East Riding with local grocery products.

Paul is in the process of adopting the Select Lincolnshire brand and his suppliers around Lincolnshire are also being targeted to come on board.

Paul Davey's family history is certainly well rooted in Lincolnshire farming. He's been tracing his family and has got back to 1752 with a Thomas Davey at South Killingholme. However, he's keen to keep on delving and finds it fascinating to see throughout history farming has gone through many peaks and troughs.

Farming faces new challenges, unique to the world we live in now. Sir Stuart Hampson, the chairman of John Lewis Partnership, which runs the Waitrose chain of supermarkets, commissioned a report in his role as president of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, which shows the way forward is for farmers to differentiate their output on the basis of quality, high standards and environmental responsibility. Hampson states, "We have got to get the point across that what UK farmers produce is of a very high quality and offers real value."

Paul Davey comments: "Consumers are surrounded by a multitude of accreditation and nutritional schemes, but there is nothing in the marketplace that directs the customer to regional produce."

Sales of the Lincolnshire range at the Lincoln ASDA store have been positive. Andy Peach, the store's manager, has encouraged his store staff to get behind the local range and the positive and proactive approach has certainly paid off.



Photo courtesy of Lincolnshire Echo

There is definitely the opportunity for Select Lincolnshire to act as the talisman for local quality food. Select need to shout about Lincolnshire as one of Britain's prime agricultural counties, with a long tradition of agriculture and horticulture. Lincolnshire is a food producing machine and Ideal Lincs are happy to use the Select branding to support this county initiative.

Ideal Lincs will incorporate the Select Lincolnshire branding onto the livery, catering packs and wholesale bags. For the future, we will also look at the re-design of our farm produce packaging of potatoes and onions, which is distributed throughout the UK including delivery to restaurants. It would be encouraging if chefs looked at the ingredients they use and where they come from, and Select Lincolnshire!"



the potato liners featured in Boston, Scunthorpe, Grantham, Grimsby and Lincoln ASDA stores. For the six week trial period all loose new potatoes were sourced from Lincolnshire and visibly branded in stores as Select Lincolnshire.

Warren Keyes, key account manager for ASDA at E Park & Sons, said that the combination of the Select Lincolnshire branding and the supply of Lincolnshire new potatoes was positively received by ASDA. "ASDA as well as E Park & Sons, recognise the increasing customer demand for locally sourced produce and are keen to support local producers. We have an ideal grower base to provide ASDA, who are proactively supporting local sourcing."

"A regular supply of Lincolnshire potatoes with Select Lincolnshire branding to stores will continue. And, we will hopefully see the next period of supply sometime in the New Year."

The ASDA potato buyer, Drew Kirk, commented: "The Lincolnshire branding offers local product for the ASDA customer. Local selling will streamline the food chain, remove increasingly unpopular food miles and speed up the process from field to plate."

E PARK & SONS

Select Lincolnshire was unveiled for the first time in ASDA stores earlier this year thanks to the family owned potato merchant, E Park & Sons.

Established in 1924, E Park & Sons has a dedicated grower base in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, supplying 80% of their UK sourced volume. The merchants supply a total of 41 ASDA stores through the Wakefield depot.

The trial period in ASDA consisted of Lincolnshire new potatoes being sold in five ASDA superstores in the region. The Select Lincolnshire brand could be clearly identified on