

Supporting agritech exports to Ukraine

About the transaction: Legume Technology

Region	Nottinghamshire
Sector	Agritech – inoculants
Export destination	Ukraine
UKEF support	Export insurance

Nottinghamshire-based [Legume Technology](#) manufactures a range of specialist fertilisers using natural bacteria to replace chemical fertilisers for pulse crops. The company has distributors throughout Europe, Africa and North America.

One country where orders for its products have been increasing steadily is Ukraine. The company wanted to increase its business further to distributors covering Ukraine's soy bean sector and wanted to insure against the risk of non-payment. However, it was unable to obtain cover from the private sector due to the unstable political situation in the country.

We've worked with the company to issue [export insurance policies](#) that cover the non-payment risk on its fertiliser exports.

Dr Bruce Knight, Managing Director, Legume Technology, said:

The help we received from UKEF gave us the confidence to put time and money into stock for Ukraine. This has given us both security for our current employees and the confidence to increase production capacity.

Putting the right finance and insurance in place can give you the exporting edge, helping you to win contracts, fulfil orders and get paid.

[Tell us about your business](#)

UN Human Rights Council 43: Interactive Dialogue on Libya

Thank you, Mr President,

High Commissioner, the UK welcomes your critical efforts towards accountability in Libya, and welcomes the Government of National Accord's commitment to work with the OHCHR and this Council.

The UK is gravely concerned by the continued deterioration in the human rights situation in Libya, and the recent reports of concerning activities attributed to both sides in the conflict, including reprisal attacks, the discovery of mass graves, and continuing civilian casualties from attacks and explosive remnants of war.

We condemn all human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including indiscriminate attacks, unlawful killings, sexual and gender-based violence, and the silencing of journalists, activists and human rights defenders. The case of parliamentarian Seham Sergiwa, and all politically motivated disappearances and intimidation, must be investigated.

The persistent climate of impunity must be addressed. We support the draft resolution establishing an independent, international fact finding mission.

The UK urges all parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and engage meaningfully in the UN-led political process, which is essential to improving human rights.

High Commissioner,

How closely is your office working with the UN in Libya to ensure that human rights issues are factored fully into the UN approach?

[Next phase of NHS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) app announced](#)

This next phase will bring together the work done so far on the NHS COVID-19 app and the new Google/Apple framework.

Following rigorous field testing and a trial on the Isle of Wight, we have identified challenges with both our app and the Google/Apple framework.

This is a problem that many countries around the world, like Singapore, are facing and in many cases only discovering them after whole population roll-out.

As a result of our work, we will now be taking forward a solution that brings together the work on our app and the Google/Apple solution. This is an important step, allowing us to develop an app that will bring together the functionality required to carry out contact tracing, but also making it easy to order tests, and access proactive advice and guidance to aid self-isolation.

NHS Test and Trace is already working to stop the spread of coronavirus and save lives. Building on our previous work, data published today (18 June)

shows that tens of thousands more people who may have otherwise unwittingly spread the virus are now remaining safely at home.

Joint statement from Baroness Dido Harding, Executive Chair of NHS Test and Trace and Matthew Gould, CEO, NHSX:

3 weeks ago we launched NHS Test and Trace as a brand new, end-to-end service, to help control the spread of COVID-19 and we are hugely grateful for the way the public have responded to protect those around them.

Our ambition is to develop an app which will enable anyone with a smartphone to engage with every aspect of the NHS Test and Trace service, from ordering a test through to accessing the right guidance and advice. This will support our vision of helping more people get back to the most normal life possible at the lowest risk.

Our response to this virus has and will continue to be as part of an international effort. That is why as part of a collaborative approach we have agreed to share our own innovative work on estimating distance between app users with Google and Apple, work that we hope will benefit others, while using their solution to address some of the specific technical challenges identified through our rigorous testing.

We will also draw on the invaluable insight from all of those who trialled the app on the Isle of Wight – and the brilliant teams who have worked on it to date – to build an app that can form part of the end-to-end NHS Test and Trace service, and this insight will be integral to the next phase of development.

Crucially, NHS Test and Trace is already playing a vital role in helping us stop the spread of the virus. We will keep learning, improving and refining to build a high-quality service on which all of us can depend and to have the right technology in place.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Our approach to the virus, whether that's on vaccines, testing, treatments or cures, has been that we are willing to back innovative solutions and to be ambitious.

We knew from the start that we would need to test and learn as we developed this new technology. The NHS COVID-19 app has undergone some of the most rigorous testing in the world – utilising a real world trial on the Isle of Wight pilot and in a series of field tests – and I want to thank all of those involved.

As we enter this next phase of research and development we remain

determined to continue in our ambition to develop an app which meets the technical, security and user needs of the public and which can complement the NHS Test and Trace service.

Countries across the globe have faced challenges in developing an app which gets all of these elements right, but through ongoing international collaboration we hope to learn, improve and find a solution which will strengthen our global response to this virus.

International evidence shows the importance of a comprehensive human contact tracing service underpinned with a huge, nationwide testing capacity which is now available through the NHS Test and Trace service. Any future app would complement this service.

Alongside the launch of this end-to-end service, extensive testing of a new contact tracing app has been undertaken, building on the initial trial phase on the Isle of Wight with a series of field tests to develop a viable product which could be introduced nationally.

Rigorous field testing is an integral part of any project of this scale and ambition and the focus has been on identifying solutions to the issues which have emerged.

Through the systematic testing, a number of technical challenges were identified – including the reliability of detecting contacts on specific operating systems – which cannot be resolved in isolation with the app in its current form.

Google/Apple's announcement that they would make their application programming interface (API) available, if a number of conditions were met, allowed exploration of how our technology could work alongside their solution to begin, while also closely following the latest international evidence.

While it does not yet present a viable solution, at this stage an app based on the Google/Apple API appears most likely to address some of the specific limitations identified through our field testing. However, there is still more work to do on the Google/Apple solution which does not currently estimate distance in the way required.

Based on this, the focus of work will shift from the current app design and to work instead with Google and Apple to understand how using their solution can meet the specific needs of the public.

[Parole Board Chief Executive's blog –](#)

June 2020 recruitment

The Parole Board last week launched its [latest recruitment drive](#) for new [psychologist](#), [psychiatrist](#) and [retired judicial members](#). This is an exciting opportunity for those who feel they can contribute to the vital job we do in risk assessing society's most serious offenders on their suitability for release into the community.

About the Parole Board

The work is both stimulating and interesting and I would like to take this opportunity to explain a little about the recruitment campaign, the Parole Board and what the work would involve. The Parole Board is an independent body which aims to protect the public by assessing whether prisoners can be safely released back into the community. Our work is of critical importance to prisoners and their families, but it also has a wider role in maintaining public confidence in the justice system.

I am extremely proud of the work we do, however, I know there is more to be done. This recruitment campaign gives candidates the opportunity to be part of this work and our wider vision going forward.

We are pressing ahead with our member recruitment drive to ensure that we have the right people in place to deliver parole decisions in ways that are fair and timely for prisoners, victims and the public. There are currently 263 members. The majority are independent members, meaning that they come from all walks of life and we also recruit from specific professions. Our membership will increase to 292 in September and include 62 retired and serving judges, as well as 53 psychologists and 20 psychiatrists.

There is an increasing demand for specialist input in our cases and we are looking to appoint up to 15 new psychologist members; 15 psychiatrist members and 10 new judicial members from the ranks of retired judges. We are seeking people with a genuine interest in the work we do and who possess the 'behaviours', strengths and skills to make an effective contribution to the Board's work.

This is a very exciting time to be joining the Parole Board. The Board has reacted quickly to continue to progress cases amid the present public health crisis despite the huge challenges we are facing and restrictions in place at prisons across the country. This has involved innovative changes which are likely to endure beyond the pandemic. Before the coronavirus outbreak, almost all oral hearings took place inside prisons with all parties involved in one room. Far from grinding to a halt, we have made thousands of parole decisions since the outbreak, adapting and making use of remote hearings (video and telephone). Provisional figures indicate that up to 12th of June, 6,368 decisions had been made, with nearly 800 prisoners directed for release, over 130 recommended for open conditions, and over 3,000 directions that imprisonment continues to be necessary for the protection of the public.

We believe we have achieved this in a manner which both ensures the protection of the public without compromising fairness to the prisoner. Once the pandemic is over, we expect that there will be many remote hearings as prisons will have improved their capability to hold them. Nevertheless, there will still be a substantial number of cases requiring face to face oral hearings and we will need psychologists and psychiatrists across all of England and Wales, and especially outside London and the south east. We expect that parole panels will undertake a mix of both remote and face to face hearings.

We have also adapted our training and guidance so that members continue to have access to a range of resources to support them in this vital work. If you believe that you have the qualifications, experience and qualities that we are seeking, I hope you will consider applying for this important and rewarding position.

We are aware that our membership is not sufficiently ethnically diverse. We would therefore particularly welcome candidates from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.

Work to start on second phase of £40m flood scheme in Bury.

The £40 million scheme, forms part of the Environment Agency's programme of £2.6 billion investment into flood defences across the country. Working in partnership with Bury Council, the scheme, which will be delivered in three parts, will not only reduce the risk of flooding to hundreds of local homes and businesses but aims to keep transport routes and infrastructure open during times of flood. This will help to maintain vital links in an area that has been severely affected by flooding on a number of occasions.

Work on the second phase of the Radcliffe and Redvales Flood Alleviation Scheme will see a combination of traditional walls and embankments, along with new wetland habitat, as part of a catchment wide approach to reducing flood risk.

The project also incorporates a flagship Natural Flood Management (NFM) programme. Natural flood management is when natural processes are used to reduce the risk of flooding. The team is working with partners and landowners across the catchment to deliver a range of measures, such as the Lower Hinds wetland and other natural features. These techniques will hold back water to help reduce the flow of rainwater into the river and help reduce the impacts of climate change.

Construction activity for Phase 2, currently due to start in July, will be in a number of locations including, Warth Road, Central Avenue, Whitefield Road,

Dumers Lane and York Street. When works begin, much of the left bank of the river will be inaccessible from Lower Hinds (at the top of Warth Road) to Hardy's Gate Bridge. The Environment Agency and Bury Council are working with contractor BAM Nuttall to minimise any disruption to the public but ask that residents adhere to any warning signage around the site areas for their own safety.

All works will be undertaken safely in line with Government guidance on social distancing.

Peter Costello, Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager said:

"It is heartening to see the next stage of this ambitious scheme to reduce the risk of flooding across Radcliffe and Redvales starting. Seeing further work happening on the ground will hopefully give reassurance to residents and businesses owners that soon they will have measures in place to prevent a repeat of the catastrophic damage and pain caused by the impact of past flooding incidents.

"The scheme itself is a perfect example of the value of partnership working but also how when we are designing and building these incredible structures, we can regenerate the natural environment and public spaces while still making communities more flood resilient for the future. We look forward to additional progress on the ground in the coming months and will continue to keep residents and businesses affected by our work informed about the scheme at every stage of its development. Community drop in events will restart once it is safe to do so as and when coronavirus restrictions are lifted."

Cllr Alan Quinn, cabinet member for the environment said:

"In the last five years Bury has been hit by two of the worst storms in history, Storm Eva (Boxing Day 2015) and Storm Ciara in February. During Storm Ciara, the flood defences installed worked and stopped major flooding in Radcliffe; unfortunately Redvales was flooded as there were no defences yet. This next phase will eventually see Redvales protected and give residents the confidence that these defences are in place to stop flooding. Bury Council has contributed £2m to these defences with a further £3m partnership funding from the NW Rivers Floods & Coastal Committee. In 2018 I led a delegation from Bury which successfully lobbied for a further £7m from government to make sure that Bury got the flood defences it needed."