

## SECTOR PROFILE:

# WORCESTERSHIRE'S AGRI-TECH SECTOR

## WHAT IS THE AGRI-TECH SECTOR IN WORCESTERSHIRE?

The Agri-Tech sector is one of Worcestershire's top three growth sectors. This sector is vital to the economic prosperity of the County. Agri-Tech is a fast-growing industry focused on improving traditional forms of farming through technology. Agri-Tech is a term that is used nationally to cover research and innovation in the agricultural industry, including horticulture, to increase yield, profit, turnover, and business growth.

The Agri-Tech industry focuses on tools and techniques to improve Agri-Food productivity; enabling technologies in engineering, robotics, ICT, and data; primary production, and food manufacture and logistics.



**15,000**  
PEOPLE  
EMPLOYED



**2,060**  
BUSINESSES



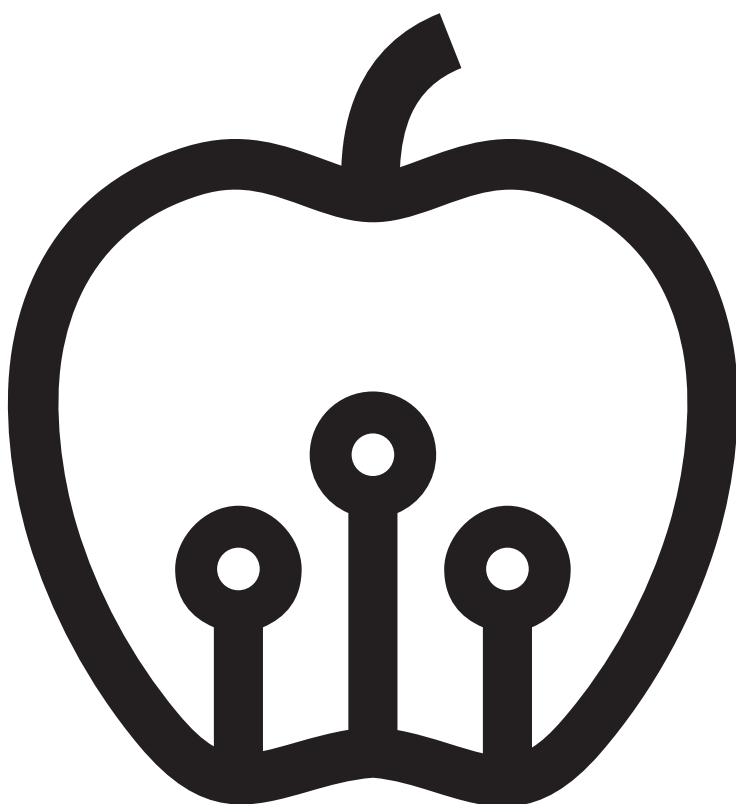
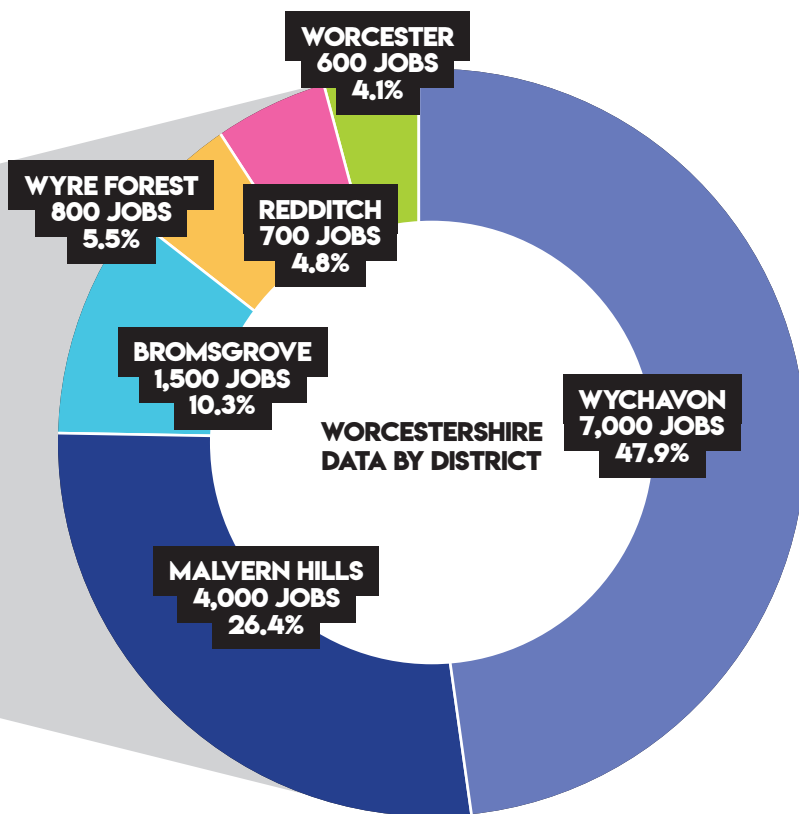
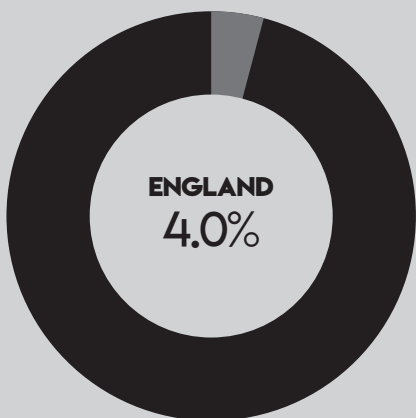
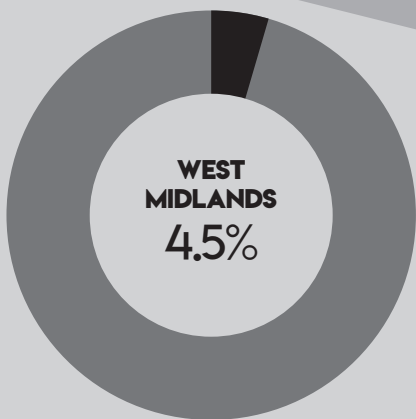
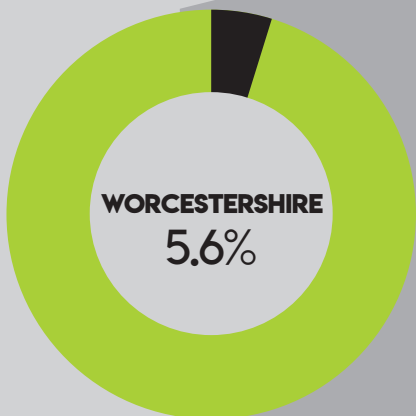
**£217M GVA\***  
GENERATED  
BY TOP 50  
BUSINESSES

\* GVA = Gross value added is an economic productivity metric that measures the contribution of a corporate subsidiary, company, or municipality to an economy, producer, sector, or region

# WHAT DOES THE AGRI-TECH SECTOR LOOK LIKE IN WORCESTERSHIRE?

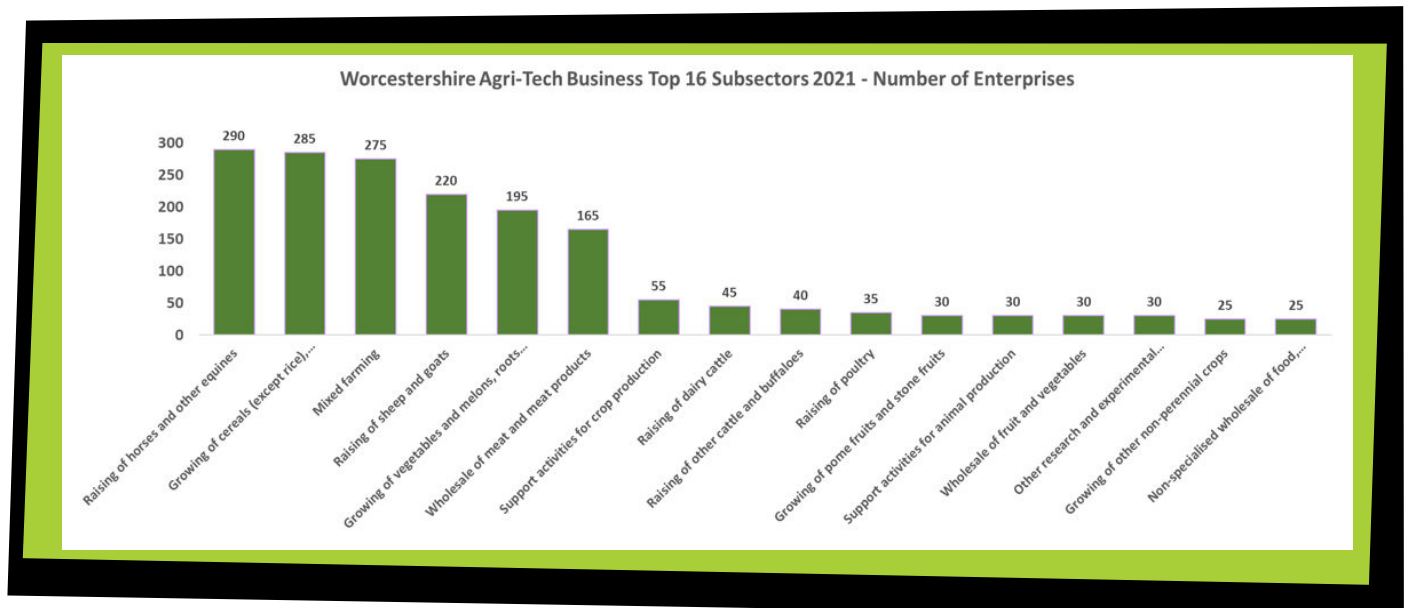
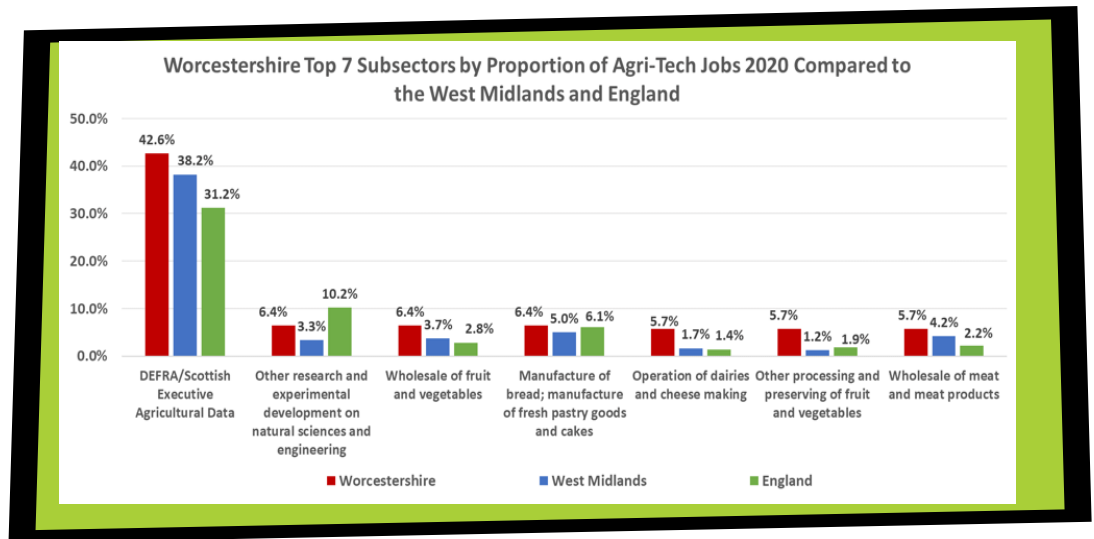
The graphs below highlight the number of Agri-Tech jobs in Worcestershire in comparison to both the West Midlands and England. This emphasises the importance of the Agri-Tech industry throughout the county as a key employment industry, and shows which districts employ the most individuals into Agri-Tech job roles.

## AGRI-TECH JOBS AS A % OF TOTAL WORKFORCE



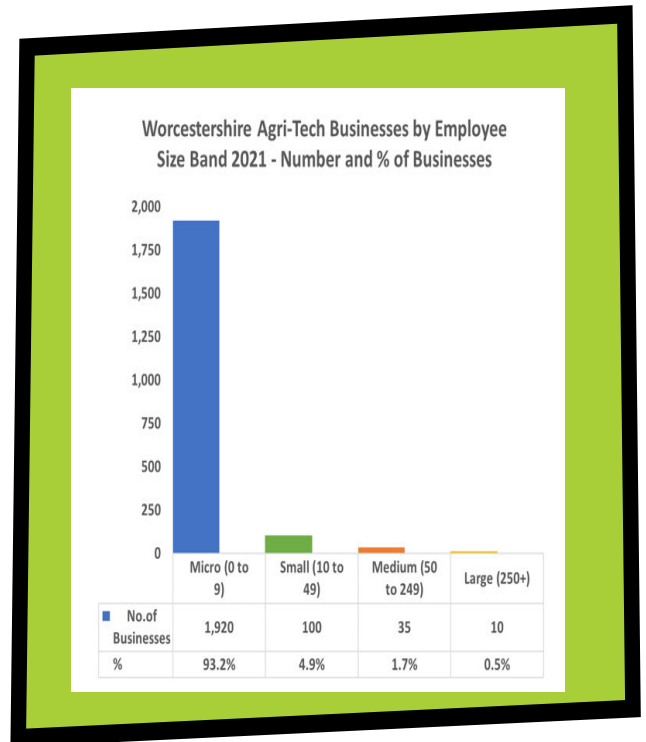
## KEY FACTS:

- Currently there are 15,000 people employed in Worcestershire's Agri-Tech sector.
- The proportion of total employment in Worcestershire's Agri-tech sector (5.6%) is higher than the West Midlands average (4.5%) and the England average (4.0%).
- Worcestershire was placed 11th highest out of all LEP areas when looking at Agri-Tech jobs as a % of total jobs.
- Employment in Worcestershire's Agri-tech sector has increased by +1,000 jobs between 2019 and 2020.
- Highest proportion of Agri-Tech employment in Worcestershire is in DEFRA/Scottish Executive Agricultural Data (42.6%, or 6,000 jobs) - higher than the England average (31.2%).
- In 6 out of the top 7 sectors Worcestershire has a higher proportion of Agri-Tech jobs than both the West Midlands and England average.



- The top 3 Agri-Tech subsectors in Worcestershire are: Raising of horses and other equines, Growing of cereals (except rice), leguminous crops & oil seeds and Mixed farming.

> The largest proportion of Worcestershire's Agri-Tech businesses are micro businesses employing 0-9 people (93.2%). Small businesses employing 10-49 people account for 4.9% of businesses and medium sized businesses employing 50-249 people account for 1.7%.



# TOP 10 WORCESTERSHIRE AGRI-TECH EMPLOYERS

## KANES FOOD

WYCHAVON

Manufacture of fresh and healthy food offering a wide choice of fresh and convenient meal solutions for everyone.

[Website](#)

## STRICKLAND TRACKS LIMITED

WYCHAVON

Manufacturer and worldwide distributor of crawler track systems.

[Website](#)

## PRIMAFRUIT LIMITED

WYCHAVON

Primafruit is a leading name in the fresh produce industry, specialising in the sourcing and supply of fresh fruit to the UK market.

[Website](#)

## LALLEMAND ANIMAL NUTRITION

MALVERN HILLS

Global leader in microbial fermentation using yeast and bacteria in animal agriculture.

[Website](#)

## CP FOODS (UK) LIMITED

WYCHAVON

Global business working with leading restaurants, retailers and manufacturers to supply food.

[Website](#)

## DAWN FOODS LIMITED

WYCHAVON

Supplier of a complete range of mixes, bases, icings, glazes, fillings, compounds, chocolate decorations, frozen doughs, and fully baked products to food industry customers around the world.

[Website](#)

## SPRING HILL FARMS (PERSHORE)

WYCHAVON

A major grower and packer of tomatoes, salad onions and more. Supplying both supermarket and wholesale customers throughout the UK.

[Website](#)

## BLUE EARTH FOODS LIMITED

REDDITCH

Manufacturer of premium seafood products, supplying to major retailers throughout the UK and Europe.

[Website](#)

## DLF SEEDS LIMITED

WYCHAVON

Provider of one of the world's largest research and breeding programmes for both turf and forage.

[Website](#)

## WESTBRIDGE FOOD GROUP LIMITED

MALVERN HILLS

Supply chain partner specialising in the development, sourcing and supply of poultry products and prepared foods.

[Website](#)

# MADE IN WORCS

- > **DLF Seeds** is one of the leading producers of grass and specialist seeds in the UK including grass seeds, wildflowers, maize & bioenergy crops. As part of the global DLF Group the company is involved in an extensive research and development programme focussed on improving the reliability and quality of grass and forage varieties.
- > Hydroponics play a key part in tomato production at **Springhill Farms (Pershore.)** Other innovative production methods include the use of a waste wood burning boiler to heat the greenhouse and an anaerobic digestion plant that captures CO2 and feeds it back into the glass houses to aid with photosynthesis.
- > Starting from a small holding in the 1960's, **Bumble Hole Foods** is now one of the leading suppliers of eggs and egg products to the UK food production sector. This includes a state-of-the-art processing facility which can provide around 2.5 million hard boiled eggs per week.
- > **Lallemand Animal Nutrition** are specialists in the development of fermentation products for animal nutrition using yeasts and bacteria.
- > Supplying around 1.7 million plants per year to the UK Garden Centre sector **Bransford Garden Plants** operates from a nine-acre site in Worcestershire. The company uses biological controls for pests in their protected growing areas resulting in lower levels of insecticides being used.
- > **Well Hopped** is a hop merchant, factor and grower that has been in business since 1865. The company has a hop development programme that introduces 1-2 new hop varieties every year and is run through growing and development partners in the USA, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Poland, and the UK.
- > **Artificial Intelligence** and **data analytics** are making inroads into the Agri-Tech sector in many forms. From robotic fruit pickers to the use of drones and GPS mapping to show when

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- crops are ripe for harvest or need watering.
- > The roll out of the **5G and broadband programme** in Worcestershire will be crucial in enabling developers and producers to use GPS, drones, and robotics efficiently and effectively.
  - > The **Agri-Tech West Alliance** has developed wider relationships which can provide testing grounds for new products to be trialled on the ground such as Harper Adams with technologies and Keele University's specialism in dairy.
  - > The **Agriculture Bill** was passed into UK law in November 2020, introducing changes to future payments to farmers and land managers to focus on "public goods," many of which provide opportunities for the use of technology, AI, and data analytics.
  - This includes improving soil and air quality, introducing methods to help wildlife thrive, and sustainable food production.
  - > Worcestershire has key assets in the Agri-Tech sector. The **University of Worcester** is home to the **National Pollen and Aerobiology Unit** which has been producing pollen forecasts since 1995.
  - > **Pershore College** is a national centre for horticulture and houses an **Agri-Tech Research Centre**. This has been designed to develop, demonstrate, and make accessible progress in the sector such as continuous research and improvements in hydroponics and vertical farming.