

Case Study: FEAST Grant Support

Business Expansion



A Growing Future for Derbyshire Fruit and Vegetable Processors

Derbyshire-based fruit and vegetable processor, Zest Produce has accessed grant funding through the Food & Drink Forum's FEAST project in order to expand the business.

The background

Zest Produce operates throughout Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Staffordshire, processing fruit and vegetables for a growing number of customers including schools, restaurants, care homes and food manufacturers. Zest Produce has simple principles of providing high quality fresh produce, delivered on time and at competitive prices.

With large growth plans, Zest Produce recently located to new premises and identified the need to improve the efficiency of the vegetable production line in order to gain new business.

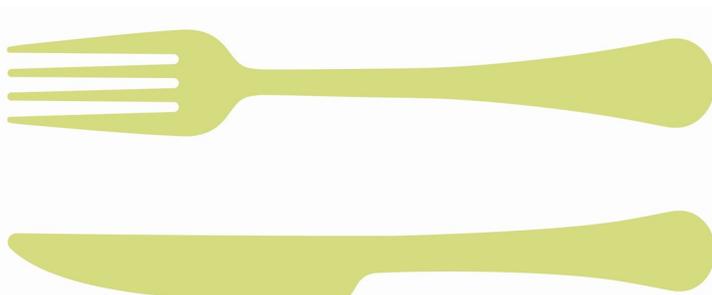


"The grant support from FEAST came at exactly the right time for us. We were having to make some difficult choices about our growth plans but the grant allowed us to invest in some fantastic equipment at an earlier stage than planned. In fact, FEAST has helped take Zest up to the next level as a company."

Ashley Hopwell

Director

Zest Produce



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FEAST Support

Paul Sheppard, FEAST adviser for Derbyshire contacted the team at Zest Produce to inform them of the funding available through the FEAST project. FEAST which stands for the Food Enterprise Advisory Support Team will run until December 2018, the project is worth £7.1million in total and will receive £3.5million funding from the European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Growth Programme 2014-2020.

Following a successful application, Zest Produce received £18,000 in grant funding towards the cost of their total £91,285 investment in a new production line.

The result

The funding received through the FEAST project allowed Zest Produce to invest in a fully automated vegetable production line to increase production capacity by a factor of 10 whilst meeting strict BRC standards.

Shortly after installation of the equipment, Zest Produce has already seen improvement in its growth with product consistency improving significantly and capacity increasing. Based on this the businesses has already recruited 6 new members of staff and will look to increase staff levels by a further 7 roles by the end of the year. The full benefits of the grant funding received through FEAST will significantly contribute to Zest Produce's future growth and success.



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

The FEAST project is receiving up to £3.5million of funding from the European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for the European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit: www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding