



# Passion for food and drink

All the right ingredients



South West England

## Introducing South West England

a world-class centre for the food and drink industry

South West England has a very long and proud tradition of farming and agriculture, so it's no surprise that the food and drink industry is one of the largest sectors in our region. Since 2002, productivity has grown at a faster rate than the national average for the industry.

Overall, there were 1,616 established food and drink businesses in the South West in 2006. Of these, 956 were operating in food and drink manufacturing, and 660 were operating in fishing (Nomis ABI Data 2006). As a result, the South West accounted for 18% of food and drink business in England, the largest percentage of any region in the country.

The widest range of foods on offer in the UK can be found here, including meat, fish, fresh fruit & vegetables, dairy & cheese, cider & beer as well as amazing producers of grocery items and bakery.

Food producers based here find the vast array of raw material on their doorsteps, including the widest range of seafood species in Europe, a great asset in reducing costs and food miles. We have a mild climate, and this provides a high quality environment for farming which has driven the South West to become the leading region for organic foods in the UK and provides a quarter of all national organic production.

Some of the key employers include Unilever, Wrigleys, Apetito, Ginsters, Gerber Juices, Milk Link, Yeo Valley and Dairy Crest. The South West has gained a reputation for the production of a range of high quality foods, including Wiltshire Ham, Double Gloucester Cheese, Somerset Cider, Devon Toffee and Cornish Clotted Cream.

To support this, there are currently several PGI (Protected Geographic Identity) applications currently with the UK government and the EU Commission, namely: Somerset Levels Native Breeds; Somerset Apple Juice; Fal Oysters; Cornish Pasty; South West England Lamb & Beef; Cornish Sardines & Traditional Gloucestershire Old Spot Pork.

For more information about food and drink in the South West, please contact Denise Blackmore, Food & Drink Adviser for the South West RDA (the region's economic development agency).

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### Our sectors

Aerospace • Biotechnology & Bio-medical technologies • Composite technologies • Creative industries  
Environmental technologies • Financial services • **Food and drink** • Information communications technologies  
Manufacturing & advanced engineering • Marine industries • Renewable energy

[www.southwestengland.com](http://www.southwestengland.com)

South West  
England



## Reaching out to the UK and the world

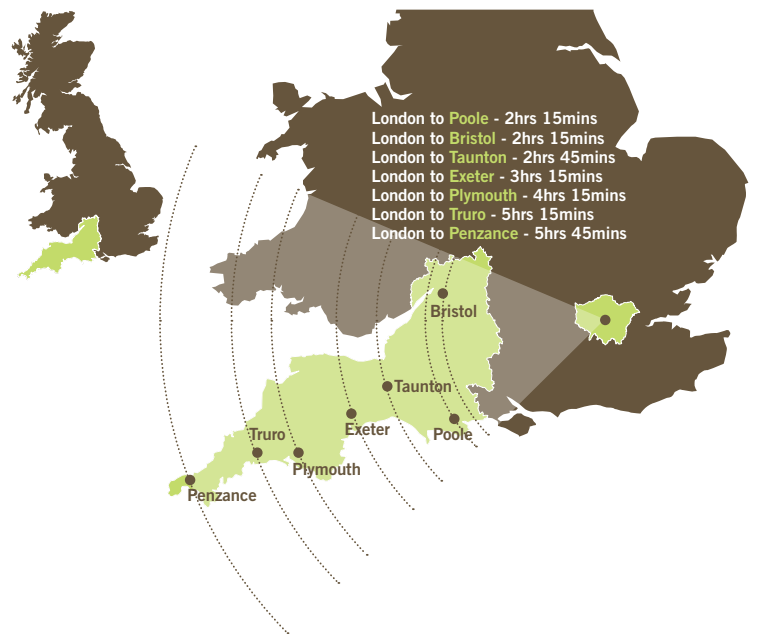
The South West of England is ideally positioned to distribute produce nationally and internationally, with many distribution companies based in the region who specifically handle food and drink produce.

The South West has an extensive rail and road network. The major motorways are the M4, which links directly to London, and the M5 which runs through the centre of the region from Devon to the Midlands.

There is an excellent rail infrastructure with many towns and cities having mainline stations for London and the Midlands.

There are several airports in the region, the largest being Bristol International, which is the second fastest growing airport in the UK and includes routes to the USA and Canada. Other airports are located in Bournemouth, Plymouth, Exeter and Newquay.

The region has a history of sea trade and there are major ports located all along the coast at Bristol, Poole, Plymouth, Weymouth and Falmouth.

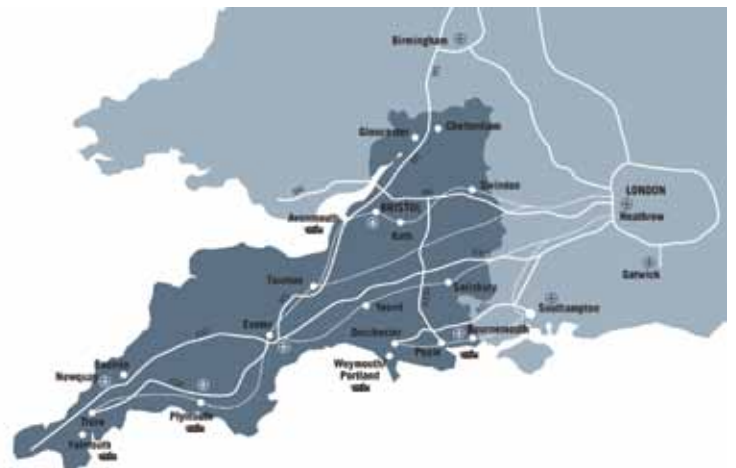


### Bristol Port

[www.bristolport.co.uk](http://www.bristolport.co.uk)

- Over £330m has been invested in the dock estate and the Port is now recognised as being one of the most productive and technically advanced in Europe. The Port can handle much larger ships than others across the South of England - up to 130,000 tonnes dead weight.
- Bristol is recognised as the most economical port distribution location in the UK, reaching some 42 million people within a 250 km radius.
- Bristol Port also offers extensive warehousing and distribution solutions.

To find out more please contact:  
Simon Bird on +44 (0)117 982 0000





## Where business is buzzing

There are many reasons why food and drink businesses thrive in the South West of England.

There is great interest in all types of food and drink in the region and it is recognised as a key sector for growth.

Industrial Food Parks and hubs are being developed across the region specifically aimed at food and drink companies. To staff them there is a large, multi-national workforce who are used to working in food and related industries. Behind them an efficient and extensive supply chain is available right across the region.

There is a booming tourist industry and 31% of the £8 billion annual tourist spend in the South West is on

food and drink. What's more, the opportunity to eat locally produced foods is the third main reason for holidaying in the South West.

In recognition of the quality of produce in the South West of England, many 'Celebrity' Chefs are based here with their award winning restaurants serving locally sourced food, a great endorsement for the region.

## What works for you?

The South West of England has already proved to be a successful region for many food and drink companies. A dedicated team based in the South West RDA works with a network of colleagues across the whole of the region to help identify locations and premises suited to companies' needs.

- Local knowledge of the region and the food and drink sector can be used to help identify potential business opportunities and possible partnerships or collaborative working.
- Personal and social requirements, such as finding suitable houses and schools, is an important consideration that is well catered for via a comprehensive network of local contacts.
- Bespoke tours of the region can be organised with relevant introductions to contacts who will be able to help you develop your business and products.
- There are also key personnel in offices based overseas, who would be keen to meet with you to discuss how the South West of England could work for you.



## A helping hand

Other organisations in the region that can help your business take off include:

### **Business Link**

[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

A free business advice and support service for companies. International Trade Advisers are based within Business Link who work with food and drink companies already housed in the region and interested in exporting overseas. Business Link will also be able to advise on any grant funding available in the South West.

### **South West Food and Drink**

[www.southwestfoodanddrink.com](http://www.southwestfoodanddrink.com)

A strategic company that oversees the food and drink sector and feedback on national consultation.

### **Seafood Cornwall and Seafood Devon & Dorset**

[www.seafoodcornwall.org.uk](http://www.seafoodcornwall.org.uk)

They work with all those within the fishing sector to advise on legislation, innovation, production efficiency and promote the sector to ensure long-term sustainability.

### **Meat South West**

[www.meatsouthwest.co.uk](http://www.meatsouthwest.co.uk)

It works with all those involved within the meat supply chain to promote the meat sector, advise on legislation and offer guidance on efficiencies and innovation.

### **Campden BRI**

[www.bri-advantage.com](http://www.bri-advantage.com)

It provides practical, scientific, technical, legislative and information support to the food, drink and allied industries. It is membership based and works to ensure the industrial relevance of its services, underpinned by research and development, including analysis and testing, product innovation, process validation, consultancy, auditing, and training.

There are also many other food groups operating across the region on a more local basis.

The South West RDA also delivers the Grant for Business Investment (GBI) aimed at businesses of all sizes looking to invest in assisted areas that need a grant to take their vision forward.

The scheme focuses support on high-quality, innovative, knowledge-based projects that lead to long-term improvements in productivity, skills and employment in South West England. The majority of jobs created are expected to be at NVQ Level 2 and above.

Each application has to meet certain criteria.

The project must:

- Be located in an assisted area
- Have a proven need for financial support
- Display quality features, such as good skills levels and growth in Gross Value Added
- Be funded mainly by the applicant or from other private sector sources
- Involve capital investment on fixed assets such as property or machinery
- Create new jobs or safeguard existing employment.

The minimum grant threshold is £10,000

There is no upper limit, but there are aid ceilings on the percentage of capital expenditure imposed by the EU, which vary depending on the area and the size of company.

Grants between £250,000 and £2 million will be appraised within the South West RDA and referred to the South West Industrial Development Board. Any projects needing grants over £2 million will be appraised by BIS, the government department responsible for business.

It is an aim of the South West RDA for the region to be the UK's leading food and drink location by 2015, with the most successful and sustainable producers offering unrivalled product choice.



## Universities meet the challenge

In the field of education, university expertise is working alongside business innovation in areas such as food processing and food safety to ensure the dynamic growth of the industry. There are over 50 dedicated courses on offer at the region's world-class universities as well as many specialist research centres.

With two of the countries leading food and agricultural colleges in the region delivering bespoke training to both employers and their workforce, the level of skills in the industry is higher than many other regions.

Over recent years, there have been many great success stories involving all types of food and drink producers working with South West England universities to contribute to innovation, production and economic growth from areas such as lobster hatcheries and crisp production, to crop prediction and management.

Advice is also readily available to help companies become more efficient in other key elements of production, such as reducing carbon footprints, refrigeration processors, distribution & logistics, and leadership & management.

For further information on the different research establishments involved in current success stories, go to: [www.expertsouthwest.com/businesssectors/AgricultureFoodDrink.aspx](http://www.expertsouthwest.com/businesssectors/AgricultureFoodDrink.aspx)

“The Food Innovation Service is staffed by consultants with international food industry experience. The team is based in a state of the art facility, at Duchy College, Cornwall, containing a broad range of food processing equipment. The Food Innovation Service has already assisted overseas businesses in developing products and identifying market and manufacturing opportunities within the South West of England.” Jon Stephens, Head of Agri-Food Innovation Service.  
[www.cornwall.ac.uk/duchy](http://www.cornwall.ac.uk/duchy)

## Success is spreading

Working with the South West RDA, an Italian family was able to bring their traditional Chicken Liver Paté to the region, where the agency introduced them to various contacts and identified a company who wanted to produce the paté to launch under their own new Italian label.

The paté was successfully launched at the Speciality & Fine Food Fair, London in September 2009. To help make this happen, there was collaboration between companies based in Somerset and Wales with support from Duchy College, Cornwall, who undertook various microbiological tests on the product.

Luca, the Italian paté producer, put it like this: “We were looking at producing our traditional Italian paté in the UK in order to increase our market share. We approached the Consulate in Milan, who then put us in contact with the South West RDA. They arranged a visit to the region where we were introduced to the right people who could help make our project happen. We have now launched our traditional Italian paté to the UK market and by using the regional contacts hope that our paté will be just the first of many exciting and delicious products we are able to introduce to the UK. Without the regional knowledge, contacts and support from the South West RDA, we would not have been able to be in this position so quickly.”





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