



N8 AgriFood External Advisory Board

Working to ensure sustainable, resilient and healthy food supplies for all





Deborah Smith

Deborah Smith trained as a biochemist at the University of Southampton and held post-doctoral

fellowships at MRC Mill Hill, NIH Bethesda (USA) and Imperial College London before joining the academic staff of the Imperial Biochemistry Department. Following appointment to a Chair and serving as Associate Head of Department and Associate Chair of the Graduate School of Life Sciences and Medicine, she moved to the University of York in 2004 to establish the Centre for Immunology and Infection and further her research interests in neglected tropical diseases.

Deborah was Head of the Biology Department at York from 2010 - 2013 when she was appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research. Externally to York, Deborah has chaired the MRC Infections and Immunity Board and been a member of MRC Strategy Board (2007-2010), and has co-chaired the Science Funding Interview Panel of the Wellcome Trust (2011 - 2014). She has participated in international research reviews for organisations including Genome Canada, the Institut Pasteur Paris, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Copenhagen Research Forum and FCT Portugal. Deborah was awarded an OBE for Services to Biomedical Sciences in 2010.



Katherine Denby

Katherine started her scientific career with a PhD in Plant Science at Oxford University, followed

by postdoctoral training at the Boyce Thompson Institute, Cornell University. At the University of Cape Town, Katherine headed up a research group investigating the regulation of plant defence before moving back to the UK in 2006 to the University of Warwick. Here she began to use interdisciplinary approaches and to apply these in breeding crops with enhanced disease resistance.

Katherine was also Director of the Midlands Integrative Bioscience doctoral training programme. She is now a Professor in the Biology Department at the University of York and Academic Director of the N8 AgriFood Resilience Programme.



Janet Bainbridge

Janet is the Chief Executive of Agri Technology Organisation for DIT and is a non-civil

servant specialist.

Janet has a personal Chair in Biotechnology and Food Science, and an OBE for Services to Science and Technology. She was a former Dean of Science and Technology and has a wide range of scientific publications. She is a national expert in the regulatory framework relating to the genetic modification of plants and has Chaired many national and international expert panels.

She was a Senior Specialist Advisor (Government and Europe) to One Northeast from 2004-2007. Janet was also a founder member of the ONE NORTH EAST Science and Industry Council and was seconded from academia to the position of Chief Executive of EPICC (European Process Industries Competitiveness Centre) from 1997 until 2001 when EPICC became part of the Centre for Process Innovation.

Prior to following an academic career, she was senior research microbiologist at J Sainsbury Limited and has maintained close links with businesses across the food chain and has delivered a large portfolio of consultancy and non-executive roles bridging the gap between public and private sectors.



Alison Austin

Alison Austin is an independent consultant working with businesses to put sustainable

development issues at the heart of their activities. She spent 25 years working with Sainsbury's Supermarkets where she headed up the environmental team for the last 18 of those years. For 5 of those years Alison led the Sainsbury's Own Brand Policy team that developed product policies ranging from health and nutrition to agricultural and sustainable sourcing of raw materials as well as ethics and renewables.

As well as working directly with clients she works through 2 consultancies, the first, 'Robertsbridge' where she was a co-founder and secondly with 'Iken Associates'. Recent work has ranged through companies in the food manufacturing, dairying, transport infrastructure and biotechnology sectors.

Alison is a Trustee of the UK Government's delivery body WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) and The Green Alliance as well as being an Independent Board member of Seafish. Additionally she is currently chairing an Industry Expert Advisory Group for DEFRA developing a seafood strategy for 2040. She also chairs Impartiality Committees for The Soil Association and SGS Climate Change programme.

Alison was awarded the OBE in 2000 for services to sustainability.



Adam Bedford

Adam became NFU Regional Director in March 2016 after working for the NFU locally,

nationally and internationally for nine years. Before taking on his Director role, he headed up the NFU's permanent office in Brussels.

Adam is responsible for managing the regional team, ensuring a co-ordinated approach and liaising with the NFU Mutual and external stakeholders at a senior level – everyone from the Banks and government agencies to MPs and MEPs.

Adam works very closely with the region's team of elected farmer officeholders and has overall responsibility for the regional recruitment and retention of members.



Tim Benton

Tim is Dean of Strategic Research Initiatives at the University of Leeds and Distinguished

Visiting Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, UK (working in the Energy, Environment and Resources Department). From 2011-2016 he was the "Champion" of the UK's Global Food Security programme which was a multi-agency partnership of the UK's public bodies (government departments, devolved governments and research councils) with an interest in the challenges around food. The key role of GFS was to undertake systemic analysis and horizon scanning, in order to identify research priorities to mitigate the challenges of providing sufficient, sustainable and nutritious diets for all. He has published over 150 academic papers, many on the topics of agriculture and its sustainability. His particular interest is currently on food system resilience in the face of climate change.



Sue Davies

Sue is Chief Policy Adviser for Which?. She was Chair of the Management Board of the European Food

Safety Authority (EFSA) from 2012-16. Sue works on a broad range of food issues and has represented consumer interests in food policy debates at national and international level. Sue was awarded an MBE for services to food safety in 2003.



Sara Eppel

Sara is a leader with more than 25 years' experience of working at senior levels of the UK Government,

public sector agencies and international organisations, and has co-founded Eppel Sustainability Ltd.

Until March 2016 Sara led Defra's farming strategy, innovation and sustainability team. She was lead author of the Government's (as yet unpublished) 25-year Food and Farming Plan, and led climate change and agriculture policy, delivery of the Agri Tech Strategy, and the agriculture R+D programme. Sara was Head of Rural Policy in Defra, Head of Sustainable Consumption and Production; and head of the Independent Forestry Panel secretariat. Sara was Director of Policy at the Sustainable Development Commission, was a consultant to the OECD and International Energy Agency on energy and environment policy, and early in her career was assistant private secretary to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.



Tim Finnigan

Tim is currently Technical Director for Quorn Foods – covering both the Quorn and Cauldron

brands across 11 countries.

A PhD graduate of the Food and Biosciences faculty of the University of Reading he has held innovation roles in government food research, General Foods, APV, RHM, Zeneca and Premier Foods. Tim has been instrumental in the product and technology innovation programs that have helped to establish Quorn as the world's leading meat free brand.

A holder of many key business patents, he has relished the opportunity to create the 'first new food since the potato' and is often still found with sleeves rolled up exploring opportunities for breakthrough

innovations in texture and flavor. Tim drives a vibrant industrial and academic research and development programme and works alongside a network of key opinion leaders who help share the current hot topics of nutrition research into satiety alongside developing an understanding of the future potential for Quorn in the sustainable diet. He is a keen speaker within the European network and a regular contributor at conferences on weight management, life cycle analysis and the future of food proteins.

Tim and his team work across 6 manufacturing locations within a network of more than 20 key finished product suppliers and develop new products for 10 countries worldwide and were awarded 3 trade awards in 2012 for food innovation – a testament to their work in the food arena. Tim is a visiting lecture at Sheffield Hallam University and sits on their advisory board in the centre for food innovation.



Heiner Goldbach

Heiner's expertise lies in the areas of agrobiology, and plant nutrition.

He has long term

overseas experience in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Before retiring he was Professor of Agroecology (University of Bayreuth), and Chair of Plant Nutrition Group (University of Bonn) and chaired research consortia on sensor application. He is co-founder of HGoTECH GmbH research company and specialises in: functions of micronutrients in plant metabolism; processes on foliar surfaces; water balance of plants; waste management and nutrient cycling; metabolic and proteomic stress indicators and functions of plant growth promoters in plant metabolism.



Katherine Kahn

Kathy is a Senior Program Officer in the Agricultural Development Group at the Bill & Melinda

Gates Foundation, where she has worked since 2007. She manages grants focused on crop improvement and discovery research addressing the needs of small holder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. This includes partnerships supporting innovation across crops, co-funded with the US National Science Foundation, the UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, and the UK Department for International Development. Kathy trained as a plant biologist, and is a dual national of the United States and the United Kingdom.



Calum Murray

Calum is Senior Innovation Lead with Innovate UK with responsibility for Agriculture and Food.

He represents Innovate UK within the Global Food Security initiative, the LEAF advisory board and the Agri-Tech East Stakeholder Group. He was a member of the X-Whitehall working group developing the 'UK Strategy for Agricultural Technologies'.

Calum studied agriculture at Aberdeen University and started his career with ADAS in England in 1982. In 1995 he was appointed by Bank of Scotland as national agricultural specialist becoming a Regional Director of the joint venture NFU Mutual Finance in 2006. Calum joined Innovate UK in Feb 2010.



Ian Noble

Ian leads Global Category Product Platforms Group for Chocolate focused on delivering the strategic

innovation and renovation agenda

for brands including Cadbury's Dairy Milk and Milka around the world. He is the site leader for the Bournville R&D Centre in Birmingham.

Prior to joining Mondelez, he led the Global Emerging Snacks Technology group for PepsiCo R&D based across R&D Centres in Shanghai, Leicester, Plano (Texas) and Monterrey (Mexico) accountable for the creation and delivery of new technologies for non-Core products. Previous roles included the R&D strategy lead for Global Snacks and the Europe Sector Foods Innovation R&D group based in Leicester

He joined PepsiCo in 2007 from Unilever where he was latterly the Global Food Service Beverages R&D Director, having joined Unilever into the Colworth House research laboratory in the UK on completing his PhD in Biochemical Engineering in 1994. He subsequently worked in Sri Lanka, Japan, China, France, the Netherlands and the UK, in R&D roles from background research to commercial market leadership, including championing Open Innovation in Unilever Foods R&D.



David Read

David has had lifelong scientific interests in the fields of plant and soil science, mycology, and pollution biology.

His particular specialism is in the area of plant-fungal root symbioses-mycorrhizas. He has investigated the biology of this symbiosis in natural, agricultural and forest ecosystems. He has spent most of his scientific career at the University of Sheffield where he is currently Emeritus Professor of Plant and Soil Sciences but has held visiting research Professorships at the Universities of Cape Town, California (Berkeley) and most recently, (2010-15), Western Australia.

David has supervised 50 PhD students and published over 300 scientific papers. He has been a Thomson-Reuters and ISI Highly Cited researcher

for 15 years and has an h-index of 65. He has served on the editorial boards of Science, Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, Advances in Botanical Research, Trees, Plants Today.

He was Chair of the Board of Trustees at Rothamsted Research (2003-2008) and served as a Board member for 13 years. He chaired the Board of the Macaulay Institute and was a Board member from 2003-2009. He Chaired the Research Advisory Board of the Forestry Commission's Forest Research Division for 5 years (2006-2011), has been a member of Council of NERC and of the International Advisory Board to the Joint Infrastructure Fund at the Wellcome Trust. He has Honorary Doctorates of Science (DSc) from the universities of Lund (Sweden), Hull and Sheffield. He was awarded the Kempe Prize in Ecology in Sweden in 2002 and an Honorary member of the British Ecological Society in 2007.

David was elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1990 and served as Biological Secretary and Vice President of the Society from 2003-2008. He was knighted for services to Biological Science in 2008.



Mark Suthern

After graduating from Sheffield Hallam University with a Geography Degree, Mark worked in

industry for a short while before joining Barclays.

During his career as a professionally qualified banker, Mark has specialised in relationship management focussing on the SME sector, financial planning and spent 5 years working within a lending sanctioning team specializing in the agricultural sector. Mark has also gained extensive experience of leading regional teams in the North, South East and London.

Mark is National Head of Agriculture for Barclays Bank where he leads a

team of 200 colleagues within the UK who work entirely for and within the agricultural sector.

Mark is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers, a Fellow of the Institute of Sales Marketing and Management, a member of the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society, a Council Member of the Institute of Agricultural Management (having completed their Leadership Development Course in partnership with RAU) a Trustee of The Farming Community Network a member of The Princes Farm Resilience Programme and is a member of the Field of Wheat Collective (an Arts based project) investing in a field of wheat!