



University of
Nottingham
Future Food

September news

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Future Food Beacon.

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Who are we?

We are an open, research cluster exploring ways to feed a growing population sustainably within a changing environment. The University of Nottingham has over 250 researchers working on questions across the food system, spanning five faculties. The Future Food Beacon focuses this breadth and depth of expertise to generate transdisciplinary solutions to questions of future food security.

You can find out more [on our website](#). Want to work with us? [Get in touch!](#)

Recent highlights from the Future Food team



'The project 'Hungry for Words', led by Dr Heike Bartel (School of Modern Languages & Cultures) has been shortlisted for the [Times Higher Education Award 2021](#) in the category 'Research Project of the Year: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences'.

Eating disorders in men and boys are rising sharply. 'Hungry for Words' has addressed this pressing situation and transformed the understanding of this complex illness via an interdisciplinary AHRC and Wellcome-funded project on patient-centred narratives of EDs in literature and other media. The project generated new resources that have won the endorsement of three key medical bodies and reached over 500,000 medical practitioners. Winners will be announced on 25th Nov. 2021. Congratulations to Heike!

Opportunities

Public Engagement Masterclasses

The Institute for Policy and Engagement is hosting four virtual public engagement masterclasses for staff with an interest in public engagement activity. You are invited to attend one, two, three or all four standalone sessions. The 4th session will be confirmed following the REF outcome.

The sessions will offer an opportunity to hear about specific topics relating to public engagement from colleagues across the University, including presentations on public engagement projects from research staff in all faculties.

- **Wednesday 13 October, 1.30-3pm. Digital engagement and citizen science. Book your free place [here](#).**
- **Wednesday 17 November, 1.30-3pm. International engagement and patient and public involvement. Book your free place [here](#).**
- **Wednesday 15 December, 1.30-3pm. Outreach and Co-creation. Book your free place [here](#).**

Food Innovation Centre news

Could seagrass become a valuable alternative protein?

There's a growing interest around the world in alternative proteins, and plant-based foods from the sea is one area where the spotlight is currently shining. Seagrass has the potential to produce premium products.

Seagrass grain has a chemical composition that appears positive for health - high fibre, low in fat and a higher protein content than rice. It reportedly also has pleasant sensory properties – Michelin-starred Spanish chef Ángel León is a big fan and uses it in his restaurant in El Puerto de Santa Maria. It also has low input farming and sustainable sourcing credentials, being useful for carbon capture and as an environment for seahorses.

“This work to support Grains of the Sea is incredibly exciting given that it offers the chance to further diversify our diets both from a nutritional and sensory perspective, with a range of other potential environmental and community benefits too,” explains senior food innovation advisor at the Food Innovation Centre, Alice Jones. “We hope to attract interest from wider within the University to work on this subject further.”



Upcoming talks, seminars and conferences

Food matters and materialities: Critical understandings of food cultures

23 SEPTEMBER

[UN Food Summit](#)

4 OCTOBER

IFST Policy Lates: [Rethinking our food system](#) 6.30pm

1 DECEMBER

[Systematic innovation for food security and rural sustainability in China.](#)

6 DECEMBER

[LEAP Conference](#), Oxford

Publications from Future Food

Veronica Guwela and colleagues have published a review paper in CAB Reviews titled [Wheat value chains in Malawi: trends, gaps, challenges and opportunities](#).

Levi Yant, David Salt and colleagues published a new paper on parallel adaptation in autopolyploid *Arabidopsis arenosa* in [Nature Communications](#). Their article was chosen as [an editor's highlight](#) in plant science.

Levi Yant and colleagues paper on convergent evolution of meiosis in response to genome duplication was the choice for the September 2021 cover of [Molecular Biology and Evolution](#).

New postdoctoral fellow in Levi Yant's lab, Tuomas Hämälä, has published [the cover story in PNAS](#) on the genome assemblies for 31 wild-collected *Theobroma cacao* accessions to understand how structural variants affect natural populations.

David Salt, Malcolm Bennett and colleagues have a new paper in Nature Communications: [Non-invasive hydrodynamic imaging in plant roots at cellular resolution](#).

Future Food researchers are involved in an ERA-CAPS project to shed light on [how plants modulate their nutritional and water uptake via their root barrier system](#). (Project details pp 10-11).

To tell us your news, share conference registrations or abstract opportunities, as well as any food-related reading please email:

[Lexi Earl](#), Outreach and Engagement Manager, Future Food Beacon



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