Supernode

Food, Fibre & Agritech Industry Workshop Summary

Problems/Challenges

Ecosystem/commercialisation

- Accessing and gaining funding to grow is very time-consuming and difficult for startups.
- Amalgamation of the processing industry is needed, and need to focus on procurement - there is too much focus on supply and not enough on demand
- Lots of grants and funds, but very time consuming and difficult for startups, or anyone to access
- We need to think more South Island wide and act more collectively to support the innovative community and change immigration policy for the South Island

Skills & Pathways

- Staff pipeline is too slow into tech. At one end, it's hard to find scientists and at the other manual labour is a struggle
- The tech sector is overly focused on the city. Need to improve links between Tech & Agri / Urban & Rural to improve knowledge flows in Agritech
- Urban youth don't understand the big business / high tech nature of modern and future farming
- Need to close the divide between the tech community and a FFA pipeline need
- Data scientists are growing in demand as the industry becomes more automated and connected – need more supply

Attraction

- Low general salary levels for academics in comparison to Australia and Canada
- Christchurch isn't perceived to be a place to grow your career
- Christchurch needs a strong proposition that also supports our rural economic potential

ChristchurchNZ™

Solutions

Ecosystem/commercialisation

- A funding strategy that focuses on sector outcomes
- A shift towards a customer-centric approach requires deeper market insight: fund research and make this available sector-wide
- To support early stage R&D, focus funding on outcomes rather than one specific part of the process
- More incentives for industry to test and commercialise new products and combat a risk averse culture
- Transition to a market-led, consumer-centric approach
- Consumer led research into market niches that could enable a shift towards premium markets, and new enabling technologies
- Develop shared data and intel, consumer centric mapping, deep insights in-market into how consumers use food and the very specific demographics
- Get more young people on the product development end - creating more opportunities to innovate in the traditional supply chain
- Better connection with farming, manufacturing, processing, co-ops, business to collaborate on initiatives

Skills & Pathways

- Computer Science and Engineering: highlight the innovation opportunities in Food and Fibre
- Have right programmes in place, networking, internships, develop courses in line with future opportunities, connection to the city
- Link industry & employees with schools so that children hear and experience the FFA opportunities at a young age to shape their aspirations
- There are multiple, high-value specialisations across the FFA supply chain. Profile these skills areas and show the pathway to get there
- Increase the connectivity throughout the sector to increase awareness of the cross-functional product development needs - from cultivation to check-out
- Government can play a key role by enacting policies to stem the leaky pipeline. eg policy change to stop streaming in our schools especially in math
- Co-design credentials with industry.
- Promote high-tech future jobs (not just farm jobs)

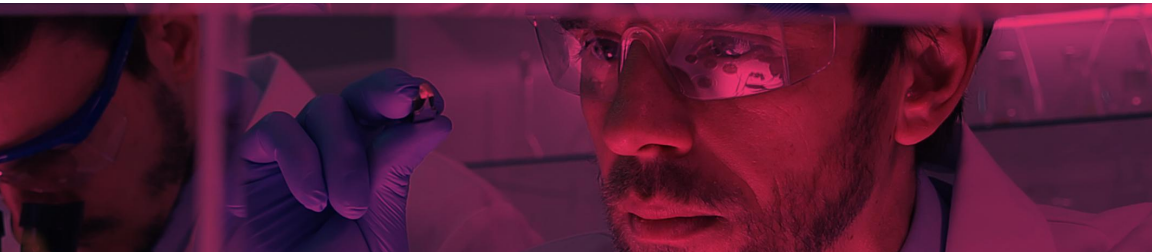
- Focus the context of learning on ambitious, innovative tech development related to minimising waste and regenerative practices
- Deliver Supernode opportunities direct to educators, schools, communities of learning - with supporting resources

Attraction

- Attract more engineers and computer scientists to increase efficiencies
- Young people are attracted to perceived city-based industries. We need to build awareness of the FFA opportunity through an urban / end-product focused lens
- Create ambassadors for each Supernode - Cantabrians that have done big things
- Quality of local environment, safety, high standard of living, world leading innovation
- Build a very strong culture and narrative around sustainability and the circular economy to shift perceptions and focus innovation
- Focus on being the best in a few areas and build Canterbury's premium, high-value brand story
- Demonstrate the integration of tech, science, industry, farmer + government & Iwi. Case studies as part of the Christchurch Story

Opportunities

- **Become Customer Centric:** Consumer led research into market niches that could enable a shift towards premium markets, and new enabling technologies
- **Focus on Demand:** Amalgamation of the processing industry focus on procurement - there is too much focus on supply and not enough on demand
- **Trust through traceability:** Agritech (traceability), working with growers to obtain farm data from farm to plate. Create a transparency pilot
- **Knowledge sharing community:** Creating a knowledge sharing community to increase knowledge flows and potential collaborations. Create opportunities for specialists, and organisations along the supply chain to connect, share knowledge and break down barriers
- **Future-focused Education:** Opportunity to reform vocational education and NCEA changes to shift current focus and provision course toward future focused need



- **Global Problems solved here:** Using tech-innovation to convert what we can produce locally into new sustainable products that can solve global problems
- **Focus on Sustainability:** Focus the context of learning on ambitious, innovative tech development related to minimising waste and regenerative practices
- **Trusted Global Player:** Own the NZ Story and build belief that we can become trusted leaders in sustainability and traceability
- Focus on being the best in a few areas and build Canterbury's premium, high-value brand story

Recommended next steps

Eco-system

- Develop incentive scheme for industry to test and commercialise new products
- Fund research and make this available sector-wide, share data and intel
- Develop consumer-centric mapping and gain deep insights in-market into how consumers use food and the very specific demographics
- Lobby for R&D policy to look to establish research to expedite grain regulations - hemp for human consumption

Skills & Pathways

- Link industry & employees with schools so that children hear and experience the FFA opportunities at a young age to shape their aspirations
- Profile the multiple, high-value specialisations across the FFA supply chain and show the pathway to get there
- Develop internship programmes to connect students with industry and the city/region
- Lobby government for policy change to stop streaming in our schools, especially in STEM
- Develop and deliver Supernode opportunities and resources direct to educators, schools, communities of learning

Attraction

- Create ambassadors for each Supernode - Cantabrians that have done big things and tell their stories
- Promote the quality of local environment, safety, high standard of living, world leading innovation to attract talent and business
- Start to build the narrative around sustainability and circular economy to shift perceptions
- Focus on being the best in a few areas and build Canterbury's premium, high-value brand story
- Develop case studies that demonstrate the integration of tech, science, industry, farmer + Govt & Iwi – and tell the stories