



## J.A. Collison and Sons

Based near King's Lynn in Norfolk, family run J.A. Collison & Sons have lived and farmed at Tuxhill Farm since the 1960s. In the last 20 years the business has expanded rapidly from a small market garden to one of the largest cut flower growers in the UK.

Having identified a way to improve production efficiency, J.A. Collison and Sons put together a grant application to the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for funding from the Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative. The grant would be used to fund the purchase, installation and commissioning of the Bercomex Furora: a fully automatic, robotic flower processing and bunching line to help grow their business further.

### Vision

*To install a machine that would improve production efficiency across the three most labour intensive crops and free up staff and resources to increase on-site production.*

### The Results

Since their application was approved, the Bercomex Furora has been successfully installed and is in full use.

Ian Collison, from J.A. Collison & Sons, said: "Obtaining the funding for this project has already made a huge difference to our business. After being awarded the grant in late 2014 we were successful in winning a new supermarket contract to supply packed tulips. This meant an increase in production of 30%, but by using the machine to improve efficiency we were able to do this with our existing infrastructure and this was a key factor in our competitive quotation. On the back of our performance on this line we have now been awarded a much larger contract meaning we will double our tulip production in 2016.



"The machine has been running for around 10 months now and we are seeing wide ranging benefits. Our staff are embracing the new technology and we are co-operating with the manufacturer to further develop the software to improve the machine. Our first staff members have undergone their training, including a visit to Holland with the manufacturer, and we are currently training further staff to operate the machine.

"All in all the grant has facilitated an exciting and progressive project which we would otherwise have struggled to implement."

To find out more about The Eastern Agri-Tech Growth Initiative, please visit [www.gcgpc.co.uk](http://www.gcgpc.co.uk)