

Agri-tech in China – opportunity for UK businesses

[Ian Cox](#), 18 November 2016

Around 55 representatives from British companies, universities and government spent last week in China to discuss collaboration in agri-tech innovation.



CRTDC, British Embassy, Innovate UK and representatives from the Agri-tech Centres



Part of the Chinese delegation at the Innovation Policy Roundtable

Xi'an & Yangling region produces 1/3 of world's kiwis

On bonfire night in Xi'an, they first attended the UK China Innovation Policy Roundtable for agri-tech hosted by the [Ministry of Science and Technologies China Rural Technology Development Centre](#) (CRTDC).

Xi'an was an appropriate venue for the Roundtable as it is the start of the ancient trading route with the West – the Silk Road - and is better known now for being the home to the Terracota Army.

Xi'an and its neighbour Yangling, in the province of Shaanxi, are important from an agri-tech perspective, as the region:

- produces one seventh of the world's apples
- one third of the world's kiwi fruit
- hosts probably one of the largest agri-tech fairs in the world in Yangling.

China and Britain shared agri-tech aspirations with each other

After an opening address from Michelle McIlveen, the Northern Ireland Minister for Agriculture, we let the Chinese know that the UK is the place to carry out cutting edge applied research.

In return, we learnt that China is serious in its intent to modernise its own agriculture over the next 5 years and improve the efficiency, productivity and environmental standards.

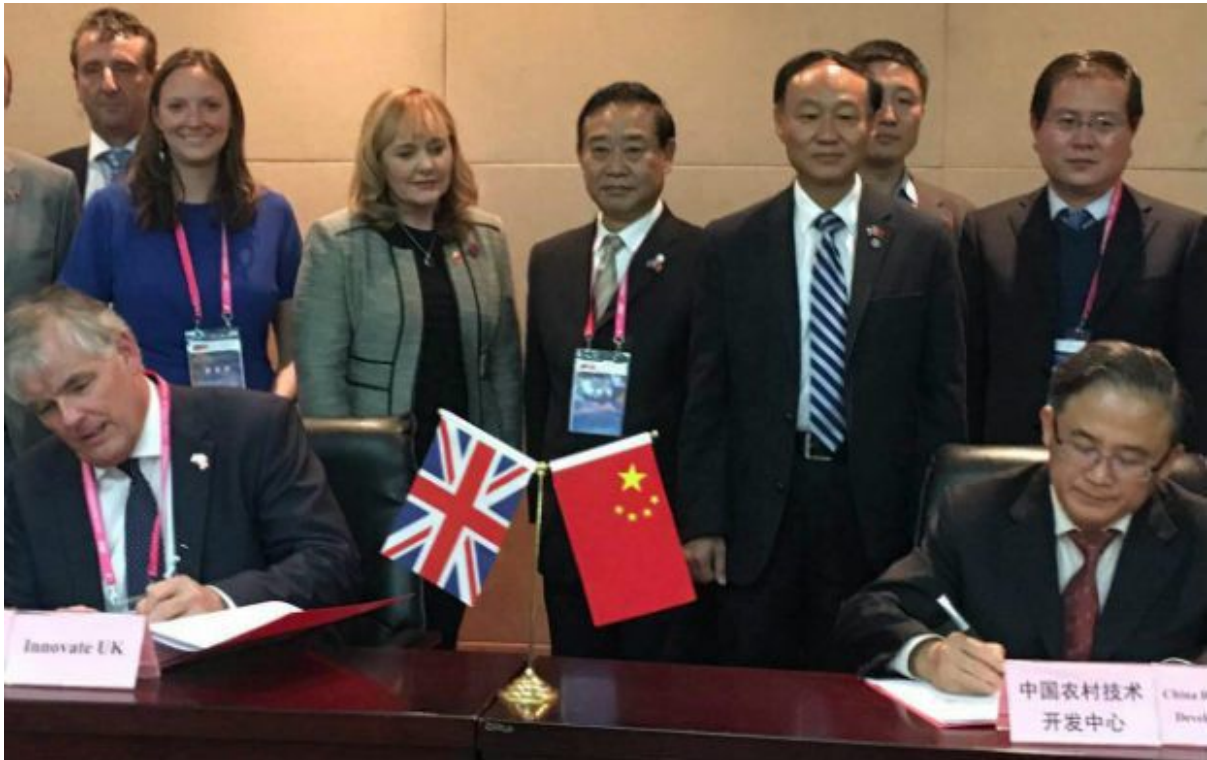
This follows on from China's 13th 5-year plan on Science and Innovation, adopted earlier this year that has agri-tech at the heart of the programme, with an eye watering £1.5 billion of government investment in this area over the next 5 years.

Agri-tech MoU signed between China and Innovate UK

The event culminated in the signing of an MoU between Innovate UK and CRTDC in which both parties agreed to explore mutual collaboration covering the following areas:

- big data in agriculture
- precision agriculture

- intelligent agricultural equipment
- prevention and control of crop and animal diseases
- agricultural biotechnology to explore improvements in crop health and protection
- nutrition and health developing high quality nutritious foods which meet the needs of future consumers



MoU being signed between Innovate UK and CRTDC

UK organisations pitched to Chinese agri-tech companies

While we were in China, an innovation forum took place at the Northwest University in Yangling. The Agri-Tech centres and other organisations, including businesses and the N8 universities, were able to make short pitches to an audience of interested Chinese companies and organisations. This was followed by a series of short meetings and many leads were generated.

Source: <https://innovateuk.blog.gov.uk/2016/11/18/agri-tech-in-china-opportunity-for-uk-businesses/>