



LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 **Be part of The Great British Farm Day**

With registrations for LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 due to open on the 1st November, organiser LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) has announced a new theme for next year's campaign, as well as plans to increase support for host farmers.

The 2018 theme for LEAF Open Farm Sunday will be **The Great British Farm Day** with a clear call to action to farmers, the farming and food industries and the public, to be part of it. LEAF is keen to remind farmers that opening their gates on the 10th June 2018 has a huge positive impact helping people understand all that farming delivers. The day offers a chance for everyone to take part – whatever the size or type of enterprise.

To help encourage more farmers to take part, LEAF has boosted the help and support it offers host farmers. This includes a simplified website and resource ordering system, a personal welcome call to new farmers from the LEAF Open Farm Sunday Regional Co-ordinators, peer-to-peer support through a private Facebook group, as well as a revised host farmer handbook. Nearly a quarter of farms which opened in 2017 did so for the first time and for 2018, LEAF is aiming to increase both the number of first time host farmers and the number of farms overall.

As Annabel Shackleton, LEAF Open Farm Sunday Manager explains: “LEAF Open Farm Sunday unites the whole British farming industry and is a key date in the farming calendar so we’re officially making it **The Great British Farm Day**. It offers farmers a fantastic opportunity to welcome people onto farms to discover real farming at first hand and see for themselves how their food (and much more besides) is produced. Our research shows that taking part in LEAF Open Farm Sunday is a very powerful way to build public trust and support at both a local and national level.”

Since LEAF Open Farm Sunday started, more than two million people have visited a farm – with 273,000 of those visiting in 2017 alone. Annabel added: “We know from what visitors tell us how important LEAF Open Farm Sunday is in helping them understand the realities of farming and how it impacts on their lives. Last year, one in five visitors were doing so for the first time and 86% told us they learned something new. So we’re calling on everyone to support LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 - it offers a perfect platform for farmers to shine a light on what they deliver and why supporting British farming matters.”

In addition to helping grow the public's understanding of British farming, many farmers make the most of the day to build trust within their own local communities, or to fundraise for charity. In 2017, it was estimated that more than £80,000 was raised at LEAF Open Farm



Sunday events for charities such as LEAF, Air Ambulance, RABI, cancer charities, as well as local schools and churches.

Annabel Shackleton has a final message for farmers: “With visitors coming from both rural and urban areas, LEAF Open Farm Sunday really does give farmers the opportunity to show the British public all that they do. So, no matter how small or large an event, we are calling on farmers to open their gates on the 10th June 2018 and be part of The Great British Farm Day!”

To find out more about LEAF Open Farm Sunday or to register an event (from 1st November) visit www.farmsunday.org.

To discuss sponsorship opportunities for LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 please contact Annabel Shackleton on 02476 413 911.