



Linking Environment And Farming

Farm Walks and Talks

engaging activities to make them memorable



www.leafuk.org

About LEAF



LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) is a leading global organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. We work with farmers, the food industry, scientists and consumers, to inspire and enable sustainable farming that is prosperous, enriches the environment and engages local communities. LEAF promotes Integrated Farm Management (IFM), a whole farm business approach that delivers sustainable farming.

Integrated Farm Management (IFM)

Integrated Farm Management (IFM) is a whole farm business approach that delivers sustainable farming. It uses the best of modern technology and traditional methods to deliver prosperous farming that enriches the environment and engages local communities. A farm business managed to IFM principles will demonstrate site-specific and continuous improvement across the whole farm.



The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review

The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review is a self-assessment, online management tool for LEAF members to help them farm more sustainably. It enables them to monitor their performance, identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets for improvement across the whole farm, covering the 9 sections of Integrated Farm Management. It is a very easy to use, practical resource to help farmers make more informed management decisions to drive their businesses forward - economically, environmentally and socially.

The LEAF Marque



The LEAF Marque is an assurance system recognising sustainably farmed products, based on LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM) principles. All LEAF Marque certified farms are independently inspected to ensure they meet stringent criteria to demonstrate that food is being produced to high environmental standards, across the whole farm.

LEAF's Demonstration Farms and Innovation Centres

LEAF Demonstration Farms are commercial farms which show the beneficial practices of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) to a broad

range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM in order to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. LEAF Innovation Centres are research organisations whose work supports the research, development and promotion of Integrated Farm Management.

Public engagement

LEAF manages Open Farm Sunday, the single, most effective and supported day in the farming calendar for the industry to 'open their gates' and welcome consumers onto farms to discover the story behind their food and the vital role farmers have in caring for the countryside. We also manage Open Farm School Days which encourage school children out onto farms to learn more about where their food comes from and how it is produced. Visit www.farmsunday.org for more information.



Let Nature Feed Your Senses delivers sensory rich farm visits to people with disabilities of all ages, older people and people who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of

England. Visit www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org

Speak Out – the LEAF communications initiative

LEAF's 'Speak Out' initiative encourages farmers to improve their communication skills and provides them with the know how to explain

'what they do and why they do it.' Speak Out is a self-help CD-Rom that has already helped thousands of farmers tell their story. LEAF also arranges communications training events for farmers.



Membership

LEAF is a charity and membership organisation. We help our members' to farm more sustainably through our membership tools and services. These include, the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review, the Integrated Farm Management Guide, the IFM Bulletin, handbooks on sustainable soil and water management, access to our online Information Centre as well as technical case studies, events and training videos.

Introduction

These activities have been chosen and adapted so that you can host a farm visit that will engage your visitors and give them a fun experience to remember. Taking part in a hands on activity will help them remember the messages that you give them.

Some of the activities require very little preparation and few resources, others are more complicated and you will need time (and help) to prepare, not a job for the night before!

There are many ways to tell your farming story. The activities in this booklet are designed to engage the visitor and enhance your farming messages – they are not an end in themselves or a substitute for a well told story.

LEAF has produced a collection of farm information boards covering a range of topics. They can be positioned individually or grouped together beside a footpath, farm entrance or even on the wall of a visitor centre or farm shop. For more information and to order your boards, go to www.leafuk.org.



LEAF's Farm Trail is another way of engaging your visitors. It delivers some simple farming messages around how farmers produce food sustainably. LEAF's Farm Trail, developed with funding from The Ernest Cook Trust, is designed to relate to all farm enterprises and is suitable for families and school children. For further details see the activity section in 'Open my farm' at www.farmsunday.org



One or two activities should be enough for any event depending on numbers expected and how many helpers you have. Every one of the activities can be linked to the curriculum and visiting teachers can do this easily themselves.

Liaison with the class teacher before a visit is essential and if you let them know what you are planning to do, they will be able to tell you where the activity fits into their scheme of work or how they intend to use it in their creative curriculum.

Remember that practice makes perfect, you will soon work out what is best for you and your farm. Do what you do best, tell your own unique farming story, this is what the visitor wants to hear and what they will remember most.

Good luck and enjoy showing visitors around your farm. Remember to tell us how you got on and about any other activities that you have tried and would like to share with others.

The LEAF team

Being propped up

Before any farm walk or talk you should fill your pockets with a selection of tools and small items of equipment that are used in your everyday farming activities that will be unfamiliar to your visitors. These 'props' can then be handed around to engage your visitors by asking them what they are and how they are used.

You could include hand tools and equipment from a bygone age to challenge your audience (e.g. reaping hook, plum picking basket) as well as 'in season' crops and vegetables. You may need to do a bit of acting as well – rather like the game charades!

Suggestions for the prop box

Find implements used regularly but which look strange to the general public such as :

- Elastrator and rubber rings for tail docking and castration (no demonstrations!)
- Ear tagging pliers and a variety of tags
- Long rubber gloves and syringe for AI
- White coat and hat if you milk
- Soil testing kit
- Ewe prolapse harness
- Ram harness with crayons
- Calving aids
- GPS system and maps
- Feed samples in clear tubs
- Crop samples
- Health and Safety equipment (ear muffs, dust mask)
- Farm maps, soil maps
- Farm Assurance certificate

When and where to do this

This is a fun activity which can be done at various stops on a tractor and trailer ride or at the end of a walk. This helps to draw people together and engage in a bit of audience participation. It demonstrates the complexity of farming today and the variety of equipment needed.



You could do an ear tagging demonstration on a cardboard calves ear (which you have prepared earlier), encourage your visitors to have a go.

Suggested messages

- Farmers need a wide range of skills in order to do their job effectively and efficiently
- Farming is a highly skilled profession
- High standards of animal welfare are essential to produce high quality food
- Crops have to be carefully managed to produce high quality raw materials

Colour and collecting strips

An activity using pieces of cardboard which have a strip of double sided tape on it onto which visitors can stick small pieces of natural things they find on their walk, which they can take home as a memory. Suitable for all ages, younger children (under 5) will need help, especially getting the top tape off the sticky bit!

You will need

- Rolls of double sided tape
- Cereal packets or cardboard pieces cut into strips wide enough to accommodate the tape with a bit extra on each side
- You should provide enough strips for at least 2 per family or one for each child



When and where to do this

This can be done throughout a farm tour or at one of the 'stops' chosen for a rich selection of wildflowers and grasses (field margins, beetle banks).

This simple, but effective activity requires little preparation time and should be done to encourage people to look closely at the world around them; to notice the variety of plants, leaves and flowers.



Whilst they are doing this they will see insects and bugs flying, creeping and crawling in different habitats.

Ask your visitors to find many different colours from plants and other natural things - on the ground, in the hedgerow and in the fields (obviously the winter months are less colourful but the example in the photo was done in December!). They need to pull off the top tape to reveal the sticky surface underneath and then pick very small pieces of the colours about the size of your thumb nail to stick on the tape. Encourage them to leave the insects where they find them, they will not recover once they are stuck onto the tape!

You will be amazed at the care and attention people give to this simple activity and it will generate some interesting comments, giving you the ideal opportunity to talk about the benefits of farming with wildlife in mind. Your visitors will look at these when they get home and remember the wonderful day they have had on the farm.

Suggested messages

- Farms are wonderful places to find all kinds of natural treasures
- Farmers play an important part in caring for the countryside and encouraging biodiversity
- All plants and animals, however small, are part of a food chain and are all important

Countryside Pizza

An activity using clay as a pizza base for your visitors to collect 'ingredients' from around the farm. A good 'messy' family activity for visitors to look more closely at the diversity around them and make a pizza to remind them of their day and why farms matter.

You will need

- Balls of clay 6 inches diameter (clay dug from your own ground is best as you can then talk about soils, but clay bought from a craft supplier is very easy to use and will self harden)
- Cardboard plates, or if you are very adventurous, ask your local pizza supplier for some boxes to put them in (good advertising for them!)
- Extra small balls of clay for modelling worms beetles, mice etc
- To provide hand washing facilities for messy hands including running water, liquid soap and paper towels

When and where to do this

This activity demonstrates the diversity of plant and animal life found on the farm and like many of the other activities, can be used to reinforce both simple and complex messages about biodiversity and different farm practices, for example LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM), organic farming, food chains. But remember - do what you do best - send them home with a message about what you do on your farm.

You can do this activity on a walk or on one of the stops on a farm tour. Suggest to your visitors that they think of a wild creature that can be found on the farm such as a rabbit, bird, deer. Then ask them to find things that the creatures like to eat and get them to press them into the clay which they have flattened to form the pizza base.

- Different kinds of seeds and berries eaten by the birds
- Grasses and leaves for the rabbit
- Leaves, shoots and bark for the deer



Your visitors will ask loads of questions and the younger children will start to add other things to the pizza. This does not matter, it is yet another springboard to talk about the way farmers care for their land and provide food for wildlife as well as people.

You can link this activity to feeding livestock on the farm. Have examples of feed stuff for visitors to see, touch and smell. Explain that you grow the feed for your livestock and feed them it during the winter whereas wildlife has to find its own food.

Suggested messages

- Farms are places where food is grown for wildlife, livestock and people
- Growing food takes a long time but farmers produce excellent quality food for animals and people

Map sticks

An activity for all ages using a stick on which visitors tie things they collect as they walk around the farm. This will help them remember their journey and why farms matter.

The idea for this activity is based on a Native American method of recording and remembering journeys. These journey sticks would be handed down through generations with great respect and care as treasured possessions as there was no written language. Different coloured twine or wool was used to tie on artefacts that would inform the 'reader' of the journey, where to find water, where to hunt for food, the best place to make shelter and dangerous areas.

You will need

- Small branches or thickish twigs (about 46 cm long) with interesting shapes
- Different coloured wool or string, cut into 30-40 cm lengths (it is a good idea to prepare this in advance)
- Rubber bands - small children find it easier to attach their finds to the stick using rubber bands rather than string
- A few things (acorns, feathers, wool) in your pocket to help them out
- A well planned route with a variety of stops
- A map stick you have prepared as an example
- Maps of your farm and the surrounding areas to use as a contrast and examples of how we use maps today, you could include soil maps and cropping rotations

Suggested messages

- Every farm is unique and has its own story
- Farmers produce food for people, livestock and wildlife
- Farmers play an important part in managing the countryside and encouraging biodiversity
- Maps are an essential tool for efficient farm management



When and where to do this

This is an ideal activity to do whilst on your farm tour. Have a good selection of materials and let the visitors choose their own stick and wool. If you let them pick them up from your own woodland floor it takes far too long and you will never start the walk!

At each stop, and after you have told them a bit about what they can see at this particular place, ask the visitors to look around and find something that will remind them of this stop and the place they are in – a small bunch of grass to indicate a field for hay, berries from a hedgerow that has been planted with native species and provides food for wildlife. They could wrap blue wool around the stick to indicate a pond or river, ears of corn will remind them that your farm produces wheat for bread flour. Feathers from different birds remind them of the variety of wildlife on your land.

My map stick journey



Nest building

A fun activity for all ages using natural materials, sticks, straw and hay to create a nest, either for a bird or for the visitor!

You will need

- Lots of small sticks of various lengths and thicknesses, shapes and sizes
- Hay and straw
- Clay or mud to help stick the material together
- Moss or wool
- Horses hair and bailer twine

What to do and when to do it

You could plan to do this as part of a farm tour, particularly if the focus at one stop was about birds, you may be growing crops for bird cover, or attracting wild birds. You may even be part of, or near, a release site for owls or Red Kites in which case you could build a huge nest with all the things Red Kites scavenge to build their nests.

Birds only use their beak and feet to build nests, so encourage your visitors to use only one hand as the beak to gather the materials and to make the nest. They will soon realise how difficult it is and just what marvellous feats of construction nests are.



This is a super activity to do if your walk is just before Easter. Your visitors can make small hand sized nests and then go on an 'egg hunt' to find eggs to put in their nests.



Suggested messages

- Carefully managed areas on farms are great places for wild birds
- Bird watching is a great hobby for all the family
- Birds help disperse seeds and increase biodiversity
- Some birds are detrimental to crops and have to be controlled

Marvellous mini fields

This is a great group activity to help you tell your 'farm to fork' story by focusing on one square metre of a field. Construct a one square metre frame. Prepare your props and use them to talk about the seeds and other inputs, the farming process, timelines, what is produced and what it is used for – whether 11 pints of beer, 265 (37g) bags of Maltesers or 33 boxes of corn flakes! Once prepared it is simple and easy to use and always amazes visitors. You can create your own mini field stories about what you produce or tell mini field stories about whatever crop or livestock you like.



You will need

For each mini field you will need:

- A one metre square frame made out of wood, sticks, bamboo or plastic plumbing conduit and corner joints
- Farming and food props for each mini field story, for example, seed, fertiliser, spray, harvested crops, through to boxes of corn flakes, 37g bags of Maltesers, rapeseed oil, crisps and loaves of bread
- Mini field facts and figures for your chosen crop/s - either prepare your own facts or refer to the pre-prepared mini fields facts available in the activity section in 'Open my farm' at www.farmsunday.org

When and where to do this

This activity can be done in the field at the start or end of a tour. Adults and children will enjoy the challenge of guessing how many loaves of bread, boxes of cornflakes, 37g bags of Maltesers, bottles of oil etc can be produced out of a single square metre mini field. For more facts and figures of what can be produced out of a square metre mini field, visit the activity section in 'Open my farm' at www.farmsunday.org and in the activity section in Things to do at www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org

Example mini field facts for: Winter Wheat

Inputs:

Seed	300 seeds
Pesticide/spray	1.5ml
PK Fertiliser (0.24.24)	30g
Nitrogen fertiliser (AN)	58g

Outputs:

Wheat	1kg
Gives 800g flour	1 large loaf of bread

Suggested messages

- Many ingredients in processed food are produced on UK farms
- Farmers produce our food with care for the environment following LEAF's sustainable farming principles
- Many farmers in the UK are LEAF Marque certified – this means they are growing food with environmental care
- The choices we make when we buy our food has a direct effect on the countryside

This activity was developed as part of the Let Nature Feed Your Senses project run by LEAF and The Sensory Trust with funding from The Big Lottery Fund www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org. Grateful thanks to David Jones for supplying the mini fields facts.

Scare the Crows

A fun activity for the whole family using props to make a scarecrow, which they can take home or leave in your fields. This activity could be used as an alternative activity if people do not want to walk around the farm. It is possible to base your whole farm visit around what props and clothing you make available to make the scarecrow.

There is a wonderful selection of scarecrows if you do a 'google' search! In different parts of the country scarecrows have different names and it is a good idea to do a little research to find out what they are called in your area.

You will need

For a full size scarecrow:

- Sticks or poles from your own woodland or hedgerow
- Plenty of string
- Hay or straw to stuff the clothes
- Old clothes - trousers, shirts, hats
- Old tights to make the head and arms
- Optional extras - gloves, socks, scarves, ties, waistcoats

For a mini version try making a 'puppet' scarecrow. This is a much simpler activity and less time consuming but does not have the same dramatic effect. You will need:

- Wooden spoons – felt pens to draw on the faces
- A stick to make the arms tied across the handle of the spoon
- Pieces of cloth to make the 'body'- sleeves cut from old shirts and jumpers
- String, wool, scissors and hay for the stuffing

Having an example scarecrow on view will help people understand how to make their own. Make sure that the cross pieces, which will form the arms, are well secured.



Suggested messages

- Methods of protecting crops have changed, from the young children forced to run through the fields scaring off birds, the scarecrow, rope bangers, raptor kites and windmills
- Crops are expensive to grow and to achieve optimum yield crops need protection from predators
- Following LEAF's Integrated Farm Management principles, encourages biological (beetle banks), cultural (rotations, varieties) and mechanical (tillage) methods, of crop protection.

Seek and find

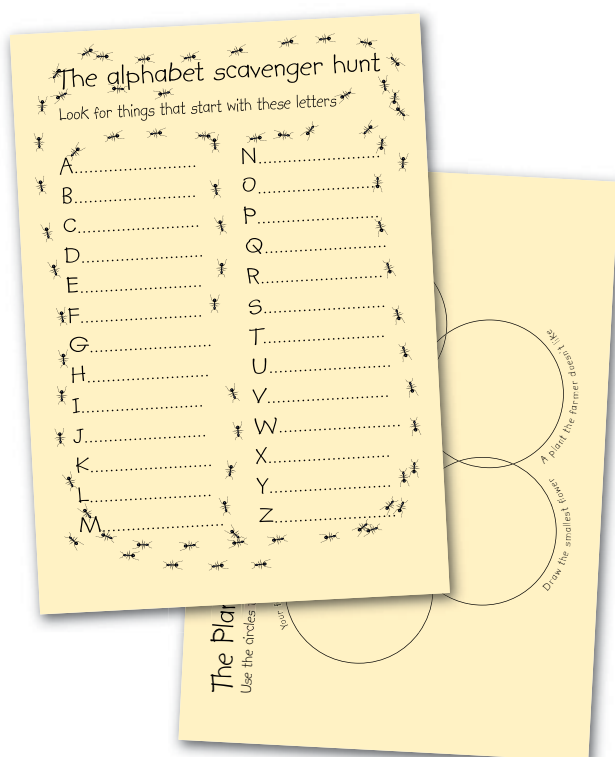
An activity using prepared sheets for your visitors to record things they see as they go around the farm.

You will need

- Activity sheets – these can be hand written and photocopied. Examples on reverse
 - Alphabet scavenger hunt
 - Minibeast hunt
 - Plant Olympics
 - Farm safari
- Something to lean on (cardboard, clip boards)
- Pencils – tie these on to the boards so you can use them again

When and where to do this

This activity does not require collecting but relies on keen observation. If the activity sheets are prepared with imagination they will be a real hit with both parents and children.



As you walk around the farm you can stop, or slow down at points that have interesting things to see which can be recorded onto the sheet. At each stop you can tell a 'chapter' of your story. Be prepared for some identification questions, have some simple ID books with you. Hopefully you will have a good idea about the wildlife on your farm! The variety of things on the 'hunt' will encourage visitors to ask questions and help them to see the broader picture of what is around them.

Depending on the 'hunt' and on how quickly your visitors fill in the sheet, you may need to have another one ready for the families who romp ahead.

Suggested messages

- Farms are wonderful places for wildlife
- You need to use all your senses to discover the wonders of the countryside
- Everything is important in the cycle of life, and contributes to the amazing countryside we have around us

The alphabet scavenger hunt

Look for things that start with these letters

A.....

B.....

C.....

D.....

E.....

F.....

G.....

H.....

I.....

J.....

K.....

L.....

M.....

N.....

O.....

P.....

Q.....

R.....

S.....

T.....

U.....

V.....

W.....

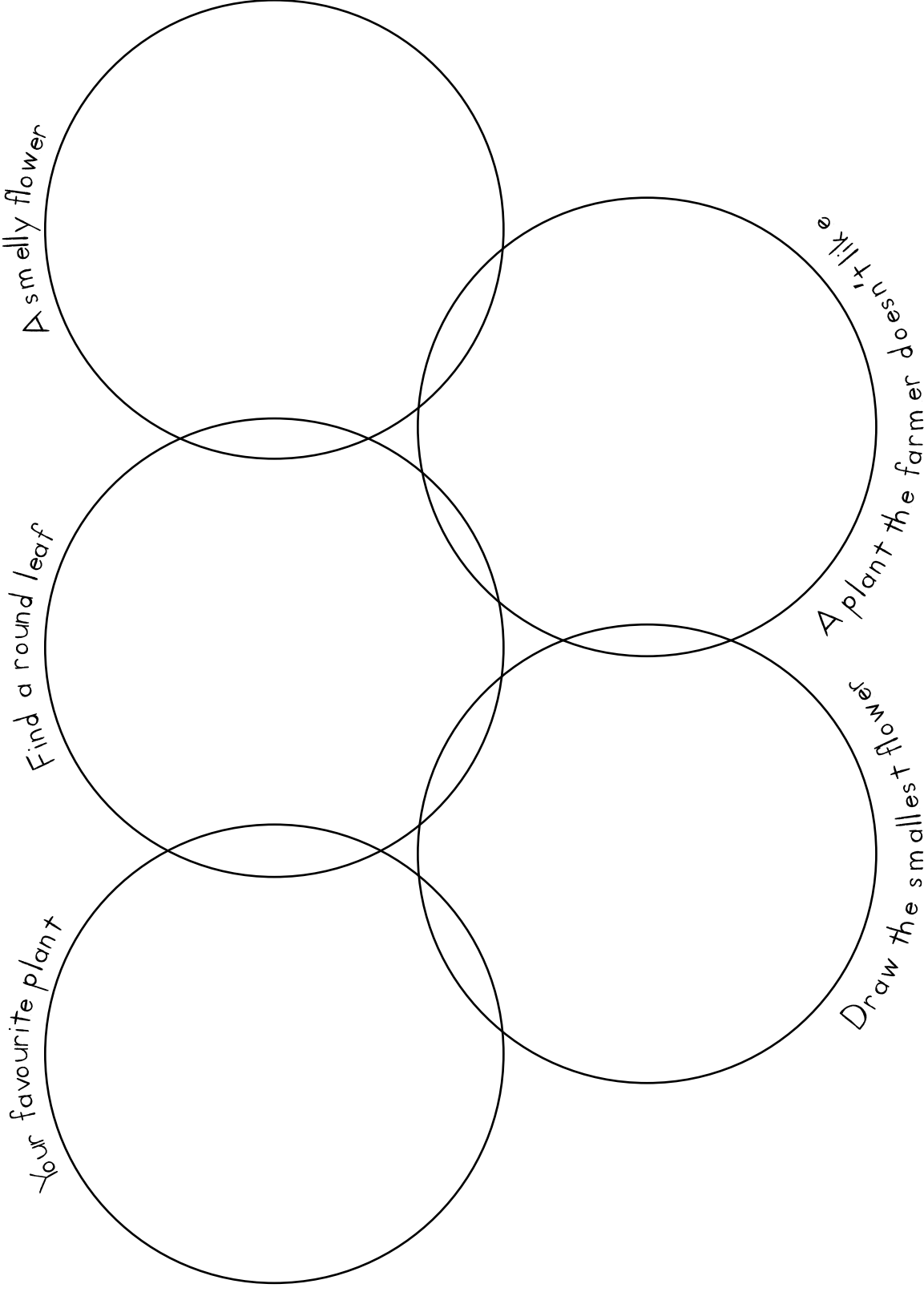
X.....

Y.....

Z.....

The Plant Olympics

Use the circles to draw in...



Machinery for sale

A display of machinery that visitors can look around to see the variety, size and technology of modern farm machinery. Each piece of machinery should have a description on a board next to it. This activity takes a good deal of time and effort to set up. It could be a good starting point for your farm tour or you could make it part of your 'grand finale'.

If you allow children to sit in or on the machinery make sure it is safe, secure one door open, lock the other and remove keys! You may need handrails, but all the health and safety issues must be dealt with as you think appropriate.

You will need

- To organise as much farm machinery on view as you can
- Group the machines according to task e.g. all the hay making equipment together
- Each machine should have a large sign beside it with a brief description of what it is and what it is used for. Perhaps with a picture of it at work
- You could include the price, or perhaps make this into a quiz. If you have farming magazines, the children will love looking through them to find the prices

For example:

FOR SALE
Second hand PZ Hay Bob
(Made in Germany)
Hay Turner
Good condition £ ???

VALUATION
New Holland TL 80 Tractor
(Made in Italy)
5 years old
Good condition well maintained
£??,000



Variation

If you have older school groups visiting you could send them out with a shopping list to buy a certain number of items. They will be astounded at the amount of money they need! They could use the information gained to take back to school to do a real accounts exercise - income and expenditure. It has been known for farmers to open up their accounts for A level students who are doing Business Studies. Brave people!

Suggested messages

- The amount of investment in equipment that farmers have to have in order to do the work on the farm
- The increased use (and size) of tractors and machinery over the last two decades has led to a reduction in farm labour force
- A range of skills is needed to manage modern methods of farming
- World Trade link – international companies producing the equipment rather than local and UK Global market You could indicate on the sign where the machines were manufactured

The farmers favourite little book

Little eight paged booklets which are simple to make from a single sheet of A4 paper so families with young children can record different things about their visit and take them home as a souvenir.

You will need

- Template overleaf - remember to take a photocopy as a master to use again!
- Sheets of A4 paper – white or coloured – but not too dark otherwise the writing will not show up
- Double sided sticky tape to put on the pages – it is more work but more fun!

When and where to do this

You can use this booklet for all kinds of activities as they are real winners with children, especially if they have the sticky bits on them!

Using the book focuses attention and encourages observation. You can make the writing in the book as simple or as complex as you want. These booklets can be used for a variety of topics for example:

My favourite farm book - things I can see, hear, smell, feel on the farm

My favourite sheep book - things I like about sheep

Farm alphabet book - things beginning with A, B, C etc (a simple look and record activity)

"I spy book" - can you see a green tractor? Where are the nest boxes in the yard?

Suggested messages

When you have clarified your take home message(s) you can decide what to write on the pages to reinforce your message – for example, LEAF farms are for food, wildlife and people.

LEAF farmers carry out Integrated Farm Management (IFM) - a whole farm business approach that delivers sustainable farming.

How to do this



Step 1

Photocopy the template overleaf and fold along the centre line



Step 2

Open the sheet back out to A4 size and fold 2 and 3 to the centre



Step 3

Open the sheet back out to A4 size and fold 4 horizontally



Step 4

Open the sheet back out to A4 size and fold back on centre line. Cut from fold 1 on solid line to fold 2 and 3, along fold 4



Step 5

When cut, open sheet of paper to A4 size and push in 2 ends to form an x shape and you have your booklet



Step 6

Now write on the pages eg. 'my favourite animal is' or 'sheep eat hay' and underneath put a piece of tape on which to stick various 'treasures'

Fold 4

Fold 2 to centre



CUT

Fold 1 centre line

Top

Bottom

Fold 4

CUT



Fold 3 to centre

Fold 4

The answer lies in the soil

Soil sieving is a great activity for all ages to explain and demonstrate the importance of soil and good husbandry. You can talk about the role of earthworms in maintaining the health of the soil. Explain practices you undertake to reduce compaction or poaching and that without the elements there would be no soil! You could also dig a soil profile pit to help demonstrate soil structure and root growth.

You will need

- Sieves of various sizes – try to find sieves with different size holes, secondary schools may have these
- A spade
- Trowels
- White trays or plastic plates
- Magnifying glasses
- To provide hand washing facilities for messy hands including running water, liquid soap and paper towels
- Soil map of your farm
- Invertebrate ID book

When and where to do this

Do this activity as part of any farm tour based on food production. It will be very rewarding as there is always something interesting turning up and your audience will be amazed by what you will find. Ideally you will have enough sets of equipment for everybody to have a go, or if you do this as a demonstration, make sure you involve different people as helpers, and there needs to be plenty of open space.

If you have been able to get hold of a set of soil sieves, do a demonstration which separates the soil particles by size. You must have dry soil for this so it is a good idea to dry some out the night before!

Each group could then dig out some soil and try to sieve it by shaking it into a tray or onto a plate. You will notice the different sized soil particles. You will find earthworms, so encourage your visitors to look at them with the magnifying glass. You may find other living things so use your ID books.



You can tell your visitors about soil cultivation and how it is done on a large scale on the farm – ask them how they do it in their own gardens. You could also have some cultivation equipment on show.

Suggested messages

- Healthy soil is required to grow healthy food for people and for animals
- Soil needs care and attention
- Changing conditions in the climate have led to soil erosion – flooding, wind blow
- Earthworms are essential for healthy soil

Look at The Adventures of Herman the Worm on Google

Weaving looms

An activity using small cardboard weaving looms which spun wool and other materials found on the farm can be woven onto. This is a great way of encouraging your visitors to look more closely at the diversity around them.

You will need

- Clean raw fleece or other materials to collect
- Cardboard and string to make looms
- Simple spindles - ball of clay at the bottom of a hazel stick about 25cm
- Wet wipes (and a bag for dirty ones)
- Examples of carded wool, finished products, sheepskins and shorn fleece (The British Wool Marketing Board could help with these)
- If you are taking the production of wool as a theme, you could have a spinner who will demonstrate using a wheel (someone in your audience might know how)

When and where to do this

Children and adults enjoy the challenge of finding out how long they can make their piece of wool by teasing it out and twisting it between their fingers. Do this out in the field if the weather is fine but in a shed or out building if it is wet. When they have a length of wool they can weave it onto the loom. Get your visitors to weave other things onto the loom, pieces of hay, straw and string.



Combine this activity with the 'Favourite Sheep Book' or a sheep related scavenger hunt. Remind them to wash their hands afterwards.



Suggested messages

- Wool is a natural fibre but today wool production is not profitable in this country unless for a specialist market - synthetic fibres have taken over
- Many of our famous medieval towns and churches were built on the wealth of the sheep industry and these contribute to our amazing heritage
- Sheep farming in this country requires the support of the British public
- Quality lamb products are available with the LEAF Marque

The shopping basket

An activity using a range of food to help people make the link between their shopping baskets and your fields and the choices people make when they buy food have a direct effect on the social and environmental future of the countryside.

You will need

- A range of foods that contain ingredients that are either grown on your farm or are produced by other farmers. You will need to take some time searching the shelves to find out just how many food items contain ingredients grown in this country – try to get a wide range of shapes and sizes to make your basket interesting
- Try and select produce that carry logos or marques that recognise farming practices that benefit the countryside such as LEAF Marque
- Put all these into a shopping basket and place it where it can easily be seen, or even ask your visitors to carry it on the farm tour
- If you have samples (or better still, fields) of corn, oilseed rape or vegetables these can go alongside
- It is a good idea to empty the packets and stuff them full of crumpled up paper - if a packet of flour or cereals gets broken it does make an awful mess!
- If you want to get involved in the topic of food miles, you could include similar foods grown abroad. This would be good for older children or a specialist group



Pick out an item and ask your visitors if they can guess the ingredients, but don't keep asking questions that you know they cannot answer as this can be very demoralising! Pass the food items around so that everyone has a chance to look at the labels - give them time to have a chat with each other. Tell them what you grow on the farm and how it is marketed. If you are growing cereals for animal feed explain how that links into the food chain. On your walk or tour give your visitors a chance to pick ears of corn, examine the pods of oil seed rape, pick peas and get as close as possible to your livestock.

When and where to do this activity

This activity can be done at the start of a walk, tractor ride or as part of a farm event. It could be the end of walk activity that reinforces the take home messages.

This activity can be as easy or as complicated as you want it to be but it is a real success as many people will have no idea about the ingredients in the food they buy such as vinegar, HP sauce, whisky, beer, biscuits, even muesli.

Suggested messages

- Many ingredients in processed food are produced by the British countryside
- The LEAF Marque shows that food has been produced with environmental care
- In some instances locally produced food is better for the environment – low food miles
- The choices people make when they buy food have a direct effect on the social and environmental future of the countryside

Mini Activities

Dancing Diggers

Have a seating area and demonstrate some machinery working, for example, a telehandler putting a grab of silage into a feeder wagon. Then you can talk about machinery and perhaps even give people a chance to sit in a tractor. Care will need to be taken to fence off this area.

Master Chef

If you have livestock, why not have different types of feed out on display next to them. For example, with dairy cows, have a barrow filled with a cow's ration for one day, a 45 gal drum illustrating how much water a cow needs to drink a day, and buckets showing how much milk one cow could produce in one day.

Farm Collage

A simple activity for children that can be done as a planned 'one off' activity or to fill in time whilst people are waiting. The collage could be a general farming one or of animals or machinery. Best done on a table and under cover if possible. You will need a variety of farming magazines, scissors, glue or blue tack, and a large piece of card or wood as a base. To give people a focus put a heading e.g. 'My favourite animals' or 'Machines I like' on top of the board and ask the group to find pictures that they want to cut out and stick on the board. If you have several large sheets of stiff paper some children could stick pictures on it and take them home, a real winner!

Weights and measures

Weighing children in an animal weigh crate is a very simple thing to do. It will demonstrate the importance of keeping a check on the animals' weight to make sure they are growing properly and are healthy. The weights could be written on a board for comparison. Provide details of animal weights at different ages so your visitors can compare them to their weights.

Great care needs to be taken to avoid trapping fingers and the weigh crate must be absolutely clean. Do not attempt to do this if there are very large numbers of children.



Clean Hands

A short fun activity with a serious message to encourage visitors to wash their hands after touching animals. It should be done at the start of a farm walk or before your visitors enter any building with animals.

Mix up the cardboard 'hands' and then hand them out to some volunteers and ask them to arrange the 'hands' to spell out two words. When they have successfully arranged them to form CLEAN HANDS explain that it is important to make sure they wash their hands (in running water with liquid soap and paper towels) after they have been in contact with animals or picking things up from around the farm.

Remind parents that children (and adults) should not put their fingers in their mouths or eat when near animals.

Points of view

In the reception area have a large board headed 'What does farming mean to you?' for people to write on. This is a great way to help your visitors get a better understanding of what you do and why.

Careers in Farming

Showing visitors around your farm will hopefully inspire some of them to consider a career in agriculture or a related industry. There are a whole range of job opportunities and skills required to work in this high tech, forward thinking, professional industry.

There are a huge number of skills required to be a farmer – mathematician, accountant, soil scientist, engineer, technician, scientist, conservationist, marketer, grain trader and lots more. If you have livestock you may be needed to be a midwife or surrogate mother! This group discussion activity will help to highlight to your visitors the many skills needed to be a farmer and the range of jobs you and the people you work with undertake. Hopefully it will inspire budding young farmers to explore the career opportunities in farming.

When and where to do this

This is a group discussion activity most suitable for young adults or families with older children. The idea is that you have a discussion with your visitors about all the skills involved in being a farmer. People will be fascinated to learn about the huge variety of skills needed and the diversity of career opportunities in agriculture. Some questions to ask to get discussions going could include, 'Who can name some of the skills involved in being a farmer?', 'Anyone thought about farming as a career?', 'If so what appeals to you about it?' Get people to shout out all the skills they think a farmer needs. Discuss what is great about your job and how you got started. People love to hear personal stories, so tell yours!



You will need

- To prepare a list of all the skills needed to be a farmer
- To think about what you do every day and all the varied aspects of your job
- A collection of 'props' that illustrate what you do. These could include an ear tagger, mobile phone, account records, soil testing kit etc

Suggested messages

- Farming is a fascinating career – every day is different – it's not all wellies and mud!
- Agriculture is at the cutting edge of research and development
- Thanks to technological advances in agriculture, the number of roles in supporting industries is growing significantly
- There are lots of opportunities involved in agriculture not only in farming but also horticulture, marketing, management

If you get any careers enquiries whether from young people wanting to start a career in the sector or career changers, please forward them to EDGE www.edgeapprenticeships.org



EDGE is an industry leading project which helps new entrants take their first steps towards careers in food and farming. To find out more and for current vacancies visit www.edgeapprenticeships.org

Checklist for making your farm walk a success

- ☐ Get experience by helping out at other farmer's events
- ☐ Promote your farm as a location to the right people in person, via networks, posters, press or tourist information
- ☐ Notify insurers of the visit
- ☐ Observe health and safety procedures – risk assessment, handwashing facilities
- ☐ Involve others as helpers or speakers. Brief them well
- ☐ Plan route taking account of interests/needs of group, time available, distance, weather
- ☐ Prepare props - small or large - for each stop along the way
- ☐ Set up display with posters and props of interest for early arrivers
- ☐ Walk the route. Check all is well. Time it
- ☐ Sort the messages for each stop along the route and the thought you want all your visitors to leave with
- ☐ Organise refreshments/toilet and hand-washing facilities
- ☐ Have 'give-aways' ready – farm facts, leaflets, stickers, products to look for and where to buy etc
- ☐ Signs up at entrance, for parking, toilets etc
- ☐ To get feedback – know what you will ask or prepare sheets for visitors to give comments

And afterwards

- ☐ Make a note of what went right and wrong – and do even better next time!



LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) is the leading organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. We work with others to inspire and enable sustainable farming that is prosperous, enriches the environment and engages local communities.

LEAF is a charity and membership organisation. We help our members to farm more sustainably through our membership tools and services. Go to www.leafuk.org to join online.

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)
Stoneleigh Park
Warwickshire
CV8 2LG
UK
T: 02476 413911

www.leafuk.org
enquiries@leafuk.org

 [@LEAF_Farming](https://twitter.com/LEAF_Farming)

 facebook.com/LinkingEnvironmentAndFarming

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