

LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2019

Connecting people with the world of farming



LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING



www.farmsunday.org

A Celebration of British Farming

LEAF Open Farm Sunday is the farming industry's annual open day – a celebration of farming and all it delivers. A day when hundreds of farmers, landowners and crofters, welcome people onto their farms to learn more about farming and the story behind their food.

For the fifth year running, over a quarter of a million people were welcomed on to farms. Events ranged from informal farm walks to self-guided tours, tractor-and-trailer rides and large-scale events with organised activities and local stallholders.

Over the last 14 years, LEAF Open Farm Sunday has enabled 2.5 million people to visit a farm – vital to build trust and understanding in food and farming.

LEAF Open Farm Sunday plays an important role in uniting the farming industry and bringing communities together. Events were supported by around 8,000 helpers, including staff, family, friends, neighbouring farmers, advisers, sponsors and suppliers.

To **everyone** who got involved – thank you.



Number of events

365

Number of visitors

250,450



Total number of visitors since LOFS began

2.5 million

Our Visitors



Credit: Craig Stephen

91%

Visitors told us they learned something new

1 in 5

Visitors had never visited a farm before



LEAF Open Farm Sunday is all about enabling people to experience farming at first-hand. For the fifth year running, over a quarter of a million people visited a farm on LEAF Open Farm Sunday across the UK from Jersey to the Shetland Isles.

Interest from visitors in learning more about how farmers are protecting our natural resources like soil and water, how they are using more renewable sources of energy and what they are doing to protect and enhance wildlife habitats has never been greater.

Visitors wanted to show their support for British farmers and care deeply about how their food is produced and wider issues around sustainability, climate change, animal welfare and the role of science and technology in farming.

The majority of visitors were families with children aged 0-11 years. 96% of visitors told us their LEAF Open Farm Sunday event was 'very good' or 'excellent' and 91% said they had learnt something new about farming.



"It's stimulating, interesting, fun and a fabulously amazing way to enjoy a working farm whatever age."

Visitor



Our Farmers



“With farming and food supply in the news so much over the last 12 months, visitors were keen to know more about how we are producing food and looking after soils and the wider environment.”

Farmer

Once again, farmers did the industry proud – showcasing the best of British farming and demonstrating what they do as food producers, custodians of the countryside and providers of access to our beautiful countryside. Their energy, commitment, willingness to stand up for their industry underpins the success of the day. A huge thank you to the 365 farmers and their many helpers who got involved this year and proudly represented the farming industry.

25%

Farmers took part for the first time

Farms of every size and type took part – from large arable estates through to small mixed farms and crofts. We saw a significant increase in the proportion of smaller events held for up to 50 people, while 33% more farms opened in Yorkshire and 22% more in Scotland compared with last year.

Overall, more than 25% of farmers involved were hosting for the first time (in Scotland, this was 50% and in Wales, 38%). Almost all the farmers who took part reported significant business benefits from the day such as raising local profile, building community relations and for farms with a diversification, gaining new customers and boosting sales.



Our Sponsors

LEAF Open Farm Sunday relies on the support of our industry sponsors. Many have supported the initiative since the early years and we have built up strong and valued partnerships with them. Thank you to all our wonderful sponsors whose support is crucial and enables us to achieve so much to connect the public with farming.

Our sponsors represent the diversity of the farming industry – from retailers, industry organisations, support businesses and suppliers, through to government. What unites them all is their desire to support the whole industry in reaching out to over a quarter of a million people to learn about what farmers do to deliver nutritious food whilst caring for the countryside.

15

Principal sponsors

Their sponsorship helps us to provide free resources and support for host farmers, run an engaging and far-reaching media campaign, develop the all-important website for visitors to find a farm to visit, and support our team of LEAF Open Farm Sunday Coordinators.

Many of our sponsors also go the extra mile producing their own resources for farmers and visitors, encouraging and supporting their farmer suppliers to get involved, promoting LEAF Open Farm Sunday to the public as well as getting involved on the day itself to share their part of the food and farming story.

In Scotland we also had support from Quality Meat Scotland and the National Farmers' Union of Scotland whose Vice President, Martin Kennedy, hosted his first LEAF Open Farm Sunday event and is now encouraging other farmers to take part.

A grant from BBSRC, enabled us to update the Science on the Farm resources helping farmers to highlight the range of science and technology used in farming.



UK Research
and Innovation



Our Highlights



550

Pieces of media coverage before LOFS

Extensive media reach

The media 'buzz' around LEAF Open Farm Sunday this year was louder than ever and could be heard well beyond the farm gate. We certainly hit the headlines as we saw extensive coverage across broadcast, print and digital media. LEAF Open Farm Sunday featured in many national newspapers, TV and radio including a full-page feature in The Sunday Telegraph, Money Saving Expert on ITV and BBC Radio 4's Farming Today and The Archers. We also featured in a wide range of consumer magazines including NFU Countryside, Asda Good Living online, S Magazine, Waitrose Weekend and The Green Parent. LEAF Open Farm Sunday was also mentioned in The Sun, Daily Mail, Sunday Mirror and First News.



Government support

We were delighted to welcome Agriculture Minister, Robert Goodwill to Stonebeck Gate Farm in North Yorkshire. The Minister was met by Robert Sword, Dawnay Estate Director and LEAF Chairman, Philip Wynn. His tour of the event included seeing sheep shearing, dry stone walling demonstrations, sheepdog handling and moorland management practices.

Mr Goodwill described LEAF Open Farm Sunday as "a great opportunity for people to support British Farming, to learn more about where their food comes from and see for themselves the fantastic job farmers do as food producers and custodians of the countryside."

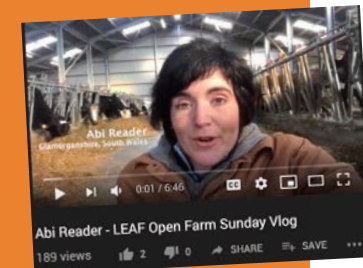


Increased engagement

Once again, we saw a tremendous growth in our social media presence with a campaign reach of 15 million on Facebook and Twitter on the day itself. We created 8 mini videos to promote the event to visitors which received 82,000 views on Facebook – nearly 20,000 minutes of video watched (or nearly 13.5 days' worth of video!).



New for this year was the production of podcasts and vlogs featuring host farmers and LEAF Chief Executive, Caroline Drummond, which were really effective in reaching out to farmers and encouraging them to take part.



On social media

15m

Social reach on the 10th June alone

555k

Twitter impressions

1.3m

Impressions on the LOFS Facebook page



Sharing the farming story

Thanks to generous support from the Crop Protection Association, we produced a series of new videos for the Speak Out Toolkit offering communication tips for host farmers in telling their farming story and key information on hot topics such as climate change, meat eating and veganism, and antibiotic use in agriculture.

We were also grateful to Sainsbury's for providing funding to develop a suite of five eye-catching sustainable farming posters. John Deere also produced an informative Technology on the Farm leaflet and children's booklet.



Thank you

A huge thank you again to everyone involved this year for all you did to make our 14th LEAF Open Farm Sunday such a success. A day for the whole farming industry to be proud of.



See you next year for




LEAF Open Farm Sunday

7th June 2020

Front cover photo credit: Craig Stephen

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