



BRITONS VALUE FARMERS IMMENSELY BUT HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY ACTUALLY DO, NEW RESEARCH SHOWS

The new study suggests farmers are the unsung heroes of Britain because the full scope of their tireless work goes under-appreciated.

The majority of Britons (94 per cent) think the work that farmers do is important, the survey found. But, only 12 per cent of the nation can claim to be well informed about what they do for the countryside.

Indeed, the research found 71 per cent of Britons have no idea that farmers are responsible for looking after almost three quarters of the countryside.

The new study commissioned by sustainable farming charity LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), organiser of Open Farm Sunday, suggests people aren't familiar with the essential work that is carried out on a daily basis.

More than a third (35 per cent) don't know farmers plant and maintain hedgerows and woodland and 62 per cent had no idea they plant and manage wildflowers, while 69 per cent don't know they create ponds for wildlife.

Over three quarters (79 per cent) don't know they create habitats for beetles, feed birds (77 per cent), and install bird and bat boxes (72 per cent).

The majority (57 per cent) had no idea farmers maintain footpaths, the research also found.

But, the Open Farm Sunday research shows there is an appetite to learn with four out of 10 (39 per cent) reporting that they want to learn more about the work farmers do.

Half of Britons (48 per cent) want to see more food labels indicating sustainability of products and 26 per cent say they are more worried about sustainable food production than price.

45 per cent say they buy British when possible and 40 per cent carefully look at food labels.

The rise of farming TV shows like Clarkson's Farm has also impacted consumers' knowledge, the research suggests. Almost four in ten (37 per cent) get their information about farming from TV documentaries or celebrity farmers like Jeremy Clarkson, Matt Baker, and Kelvin Fletcher.

But, 20 per cent still don't get any information about farming.

LEAF has been running Open Farm Sunday for 18 years.

The annual event - which takes place this year on June 9 - is the national open day for farming and lets members of the public visit farms to see first-hand what farmers do.

Annabel Shackleton, LEAF's Open Farm Sunday Manager, said: "Farmers really are the guardians of the earth, but are often unsung heroes, who go to great lengths to protect the natural environment around them whilst producing nutritious food for us all to enjoy.

"Farming with nature is a vital battleground on which our heroes live, thrive and sometimes struggle - there are challenges we don't see, threats that are ongoing, victories that aren't recognised.

"Farming's annual open day, Open Farm Sunday, now in its 18th year, takes place on 9th June, and gives everyone the opportunity to discover what farmers do to farm with nature and why it is so important for all of us and our planet.

"89 per cent of event visitors to a farm last year, said that their visit has encouraged them to buy more British food and 96 per cent said that they have a greater appreciation of the work that farmers do.

"We know that for many visitors, Open Farm Sunday is a fun day out with family and friends – but we also know that they come away from events with increased knowledge and respect for British farmers and all of the often-unseen important work that the industry delivers."

-Ends-

* Mortar Research carried out a survey targeting adults in the UK. This survey was taken by a total of 2,096 respondents on both mobile and desktop devices. All were based in the UK. The study ran on 7th-9th May 2024.

For further information contact the Open Farm Sunday Press Office:

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

Keep up to date with all the Open Farm Sunday news and join in the online conversations using #OFS24:

- Website: www.farmsunday.org
- Facebook: @LEAFOpenFarmSunday
X: @OpenFarmSunday
Instagram: @OpenFarmSunday
- Open Farm Sunday is managed by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) – the charity that promotes and supports more sustainable farming to create a resilient food and farming system for future generations. LEAF is a registered charity no: 1045781 <https://leaf.eco/>
- This year Open Farm Sunday comes of age – 18 years in the making and open to all! The OFS team at LEAF are ready to support farmers across Britain to take part to make Open Farm Sunday 2024 the best ever! www.farmsunday.org
- With thanks to our Open Farm Sunday principal sponsors: AHDB, Arla Foods, Asda, BASF, Coop, Defra, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, M&S, McDonald's, NFU, Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Waitrose.
- Open Farm Sunday 2024 will take place on 9th June 2024. Register to host an event at www.farmsunday.org
- To contact the Open Farm Sunday team direct: Email: OpenFarmSunday@leaf.eco Tel: 02476 413911 Mob: 07912 463151.