



MEDIA RELEASE: 23rd July 2019

Latest LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2019 Figures Released

- 250,450 visitors to LEAF Open Farm Sunday Events
- 365 farms opening across the UK
- *8% increase in visitors from urban areas
- 96% visitors reported event was 'very good' or 'excellent'
- 91% visitors said they 'learnt something new'

*Compared to 2018 data

Success of LEAF Open Farm Sunday confirmed as organisers, LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) release final figures for this year's event.

For the fifth year running, over a quarter of a million people connected with farming on LEAF Open Farm Sunday. This year **250,450 people** went out onto **365 farms** from Jersey to Shetland.

Results from the visitors exit survey released by LEAF show the growing popularity and reach of the annual event with an 8% increase in people coming from urban areas and a 14% increase in visitors who had been to a LEAF Open Farm Sunday event before. The main motivations for visiting a farm included "having a family trip out" (46%), "showing support for British farmers" (31%) and "finding out more about British farming and what farmers do" (23%). Furthermore, 91% of visitors reported "learning something new" about farming with increasing levels of interest in finding out what farmers are doing to care for the environment. Many people reported they were "amazed to see how farmers are trying to balance crop production and protecting woodland, birds and pollinators" and "how much farming contributes to the environment."

LEAF Open Farm Sunday Manager, Annabel Shackleton said:

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“This year’s results are exciting on so many levels. Once again, they show the power of LEAF Open Farm Sunday in connecting people – from both urban and rural areas – to where their food comes from, how it is produced and the farmers who make it all happen. We are making a strong impact in reaching out to people from urban areas, opening up opportunities to learn more about sustainable farming and the science and technology that lies behind it.”

“Interest this year from visitors wanting to learn 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. It has been wonderful to read comments from visitors who want to support British farmers, care deeply about how their food is produced as well as being very interested in wider issues around sustainability, climate change and animal welfare.”

This year more host farmers opted to manage visitor numbers with 13% asking visitors to book in advance. There was also a 60% increase in smaller, more focused events with fewer than 50 visitors.

“Whatever the size and type of event farmers choose to organise, LEAF Open Farm Sunday provides a unique channel through which we can showcase our industry, ignite the support and interest from the general public and harness their support for our British farming industry and all it delivers”.

“LEAF Open Farm Sunday has come a long way since it was first launched in 2006. Our thanks to all the fantastic farmers who have taken part, the thousands of visitors who supported them and to our sponsors for their financial and in-kind support. As we progress our plans for the fifteenth LEAF Open Farm Sunday on 7th June 2020, we will continue to adapt and respond to input from host farmers, sponsors and stakeholders to ensure its continued positive impact as Britain’s leading on-farm public outreach event.”



LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2020 will take place on Sunday 7th June with registrations opening on the 1st November at www.farmsunday.org. To keep up to date with all the latest news from LEAF Open Farm Sunday follow [@openfarmsunday](https://twitter.com/openfarmsunday) on Twitter.

LEAF Open Farm Sunday is hugely grateful to its sponsors: AHDB, Arla Foods, Asda, BASF plc, Co-op, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, Marks and Spencer, The National Farmers' Union, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose; and supporting sponsors: BBSRC UKRI, CPA and QMS.

LEAF are calling for more farmers to get involved next year to meet the increasing demand from the public to visit a farm as part of LEAF Open Farm Sunday.

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Editor's notes:

- LEAF Open Farm Sunday is managed by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming). LEAF is a leading organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. It works 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 has organised Open Farm Sunday since it began in 2006. (LEAF is a registered charity no: 1045781)
- LEAF Open Farm Sunday offers a chance for all farmers to open their gates and welcome people onto their farms to discover the world of farming. Events can be as simple as a farm walk for a small group to larger open days. LOFS offers advice and support for all types of event.
- LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2020 will be held on **Sunday 7th June**.
- National sponsors of LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2019 were: Arla Foods, Asda, BASF plc, Co-op, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, Marks and Spencer, The National Farmers' Union, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.

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