

News release:

British weather (and more) puts damper on outdoor enthusiasm

While most of us agree that we feel better after being in the countryside, it seems that we need the sun to shine before we are prepared to venture out. In a survey¹ for LEAF Open Farm Sunday, half (51%) of respondents said that they are put off spending time outside because it's too cold, 45% because it's too wet and a quarter (23%) because it is often too muddy.

Despite us living in one of the most beautiful countries in the world, 83% of the population live in urban areas², and it seems there are a host of things that put people off making the most that the countryside has to offer.

In this fashion-conscious age, one in twenty (5%) of us worry that we don't have the right outdoor clothing or footwear. This rises to nearly one in ten (9%) of under 35s. We are also nervous, it appears, of what we might find when we get there. Nearly one in eight (12%) say that it's their dislike of bugs and insects – which are vital to British farmers - that puts them off spending time in the countryside. Our lack of knowledge about the countryside is also a barrier, with eight percent saying that they don't know where to go – and 12% saying that it takes too much time and money to get there – despite most of us being less than an hour away from any countryside. Other reasons for not visiting included the countryside being boring, getting sunburnt, lack of wi-fi, laziness and lack of toilets. The research also reveals that for some it's essential that wherever they are going in the countryside has to be photogenic, with thirty percent saying how 'instagrammable' a location is influences their decision.

Commenting on the findings ahead of this weekend's Open Farm Sunday (10th June), Annabel Shackleton from LEAF, (Linking Environment And Farming) organisers of Open Farm Sunday manager said: "These results suggest that sadly many people are missing out on all that the countryside has to offer. Visiting a farm on 10th June is an ideal opportunity to connect with the countryside and learn more about British farming. We can't promise that it won't rain – and it's likely that there will be some mud - but farmers will be doing all they can to welcome people onto their farms for a great day out! From guided nature walks to finding out about why worms, beetles and bees are so important, through to seeing science in action, or taking a tractor and trailer ride and admiring the

¹ Survey conducted with 2,000 adults aged 18-65+ during April 2018 by Mortar

² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2212.html>



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view along the way. Each event is different, but each offers a fabulous opportunity to enjoy a day in the wonderful British countryside – whatever the weather!

-Ends-

For more information visit www.farmsunday.org. To keep up to date on Twitter follow [@OpenFarmSunday](https://twitter.com/OpenFarmSunday), [@LEAF_Farming](https://twitter.com/LEAF_Farming) and [@AnnabelOFS](https://twitter.com/AnnabelOFS)

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Editors notes:

- **LEAF Open Farm Sunday** is managed by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming). LEAF is the 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
- LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 takes place on the 10th June 2018. Farmers wanting to host an event are asked to register at www.farmsunday.org
- **LEAF Open Farm School Days** run alongside LEAF Open Farm Sunday. The programme supports hundreds of farms across Britain to host on farm school visits throughout June. They provide thousands of school children with the opportunity to visit a farm to learn more about where their food comes from and how it is produced.
- Sponsors of LEAF Open Farm Sunday 2018 are: 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.
- **Social media:** To keep up to date on Twitter follow [@OpenFarmSunday](https://twitter.com/OpenFarmSunday), [@LEAF_Farming](https://twitter.com/LEAF_Farming) and [@AnnabelOFS](https://twitter.com/AnnabelOFS)