



## Success for LEAF Online Farm Sunday

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June, farmers across the country took to social media for the first ever LEAF Online Farm Sunday, with thousands of consumers joining them on virtual tours of their farms, to see and hear directly from the farmers themselves about all they do for the environment and to produce the food we eat. The day marked the planned date of LEAF Open Farm Sunday, when hundreds of farms should have been opening their gates for what would have been the 15<sup>th</sup> LEAF Open Farm Sunday. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the annual celebration of farming is now scheduled for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September.

Against a backdrop of stunning British countryside, consumers were invited to join farmers from Cornwall to the Isle of Arran and Northamptonshire to Pembrokeshire broadcasting live on the LEAF Open Farm Sunday Facebook page – with a new farmer going live each hour from 8am – 8pm. Just as with LEAF Open Farm Sunday itself, each virtual tour was different and every farm had something special to offer – it was evident that all who took part have an equal passion for farming, caring for the environment, and sharing their stories.

Over the course of the day, videos on the LEAF Open Farm Sunday Facebook page were viewed 85k times – equating to 54 days' worth (or 77k minutes!) of video viewed. Consumers had the chance to interact and ask farmers questions, just like they can on LEAF Open Farm Sunday itself, and many were delighted to be able to see farms from parts of the country they would not normally be able to visit.

The hourly tours included insights into what crops are used for – including the unexpected such as wheat being a contributor to intravenous drips! What and how cows eat, why good soil is vital to all the crops, how many kilometres of hedgerows farmers have planted and why that matters to the wildlife that live there, as well as the chance to hear skylarks, see what rapeseed looks like after harvesting, and generally to understand what farmers mean when they talk about LEAF's Integrated Farm Management, and so much more besides. All videos are still available to watch on the LEAF Open Farm Facebook page.

Activity on LEAF's Open Farm Sunday social media platforms started with a fortnight of teaser videos with the farmers taking part generating more than ½ million impressions by the time Online Farm Sunday had finished. LEAF also encouraged other farms to get involved with many, including some long-term Open Farm Sunday hosts, sharing their own videos and imagery to social media during the day, which now acts as a warm up to the on farm event in September.



Caroline Drummond, LEAF Chief Executive, said: “The level of engagement with LEAF Online Farm Sunday really shows how much the public care about British farming and the interest there continues to be with the story behind our food. The day provided people with a unique opportunity to ‘visit’ farms and parts of the country they have never been to and would not normally get to visit on LEAF Open Farm Sunday and we’re pleased we were able to mark the day with this event. As so many people have been consuming information and entertainment online during lockdown, it was only right that Open Farm Sunday had an online presence too.

“I’d like to add my huge thanks to all the farmers who took part and to all our sponsors and supporters who made yesterday possible. We are very much hoping to be welcoming people onto farms on the 20<sup>th</sup> September this year, but in the meantime LEAF Online Farm Sunday has given thousands a fantastic insight into all that British farmers do and have continued to do, during these very challenging times.”

We’d like to say thank you to all our sponsors for making the event possible: The AHDB, Arla Foods, Asda, BASF plc, Co-op, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, Kellogg’s, LEAF Marque, The National Farmers’ Union, Sainsbury’s, Tesco, and Waitrose.

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**For further information contact the LEAF Open Farm Sunday Press Office at Ceres 01189 475 956 [openfarmsunday@ceres-pr.co.uk](mailto:openfarmsunday@ceres-pr.co.uk)**

**Editor’s 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 set up and has managed 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 fully fledged events for over 1000 people. LEAF offers advice and support for all types of event.



- LEAF Open Farm Sunday will take place on 20th September 2020. Registrations are open at [www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org). The following year's event will take place on 13th June 2021
- Sponsors of LEAF Open Farm Sunday include: Arla Foods, Asda, BASF plc, Co-op, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, Kelloggs, LEAF Marque, The National Farmers' Union, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.

LEAF is a registered charity (No. 1045781) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (No. 3035047).