

## **LEAF calls on farmers to stand proud on Open Farm Sunday 2017**

‘Open your gates for next year’s Open Farm Sunday on 11<sup>th</sup> June and proudly show the public all that you achieve and the breadth of goods and services you deliver.’ That’s the message to farmers from LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), as registrations for Open Farm Sunday 2017 open on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

As the sector is working to determine what a post-referendum farming industry is going to look like, there has never been a more critical time for farmers to demonstrate the vital role they play in delivering a wide range of public goods, beyond food production. This includes managing the countryside, its wildlife, our natural resources such as water, air and soil, and contributing to a stable climate and resilience to flooding.

Caroline Drummond, Chief Executive of LEAF explains: “Open Farm Sunday provides the perfect platform for farmers to shine a light on what they deliver and why supporting British farming matters. Everyone can and should get involved in Open Farm Sunday, regardless of the type or size of farm and help the public discover the world of farming.”

To help more farmers host an event, LEAF is developing a new programme of webinars, blogs, Q&A sessions and case studies to give farmers the knowledge, ideas and confidence to invite the public onto their farm. A team of eight Open Farm Sunday Regional Co-ordinators and LEAF staff are on hand to support farmers.

As the go-to organisation delivering sustainable farming, LEAF is developing activity ideas and resources to help host farmers show the public what sustainable farming is all about.

Annabel Shackleton, LEAF’s Open Farm Sunday Manager added, “Farming is a sector which impacts on all our lives, yet so many people know so little about it. From our research it is clear that Open Farm Sunday is helping to bridge the gap between farming and the public. This year’s visitor feedback highlighted that one in five had never visited a farm before and nearly 90% of them learnt something new about farming and food production during their visit.”

“All farmers can get involved - whether hosting a farm walk for 20 or more neighbours, or opening for hundreds of visitors, each event is equally important. LEAF’s Open Farm Sunday will have an increasingly important role in the industry’s public engagement activities as we face a new, challenging, yet exciting era as we prepare to leave the European Union.”

For more information on how to get involved or to register an Open Farm Sunday event from 1<sup>st</sup> November, visit [www.farmsunday.org](http://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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**Editor’s note:**

- 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’s twelfth annual Open Farm Sunday will take place on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017. It is the farming industry’s annual open day. A day for farmers to open their gates and welcomes people onto their farms to discover the world of farming.
- Alongside Open Farm Sunday, farms across Britain also host Open Farm School Days which runs 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 Open Farm Sunday 2016 were: Arla Foods, Asda, BASF plc, Co-op, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, Jordans, LEAF Marque, Marks and Spencer, National Farmers Union, Sainsbury’s, Tesco, Waitrose plus the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, with direct support from the following AHDB sectors: Beef and Lamb, Cereals and Oilseeds, Dairy, Horticulture, and Pork.
- Keep up to date with LEAF’s activities via twitter [www.twitter.com/LEAF\\_Farming](https://www.twitter.com/LEAF_Farming) and [www.twitter.com/OpenFarmSunday](https://www.twitter.com/OpenFarmSunday) and our regular blogs at [leafmarque.wordpress.com](http://leafmarque.wordpress.com).

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