

LEAF calls on farmers to 'Share Your Story' on Open Farm Sunday 2016

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) has announced an exciting new campaign to inspire and encourage more farmers to open their gates for next year's Open Farm Sunday on the 5th June 2016. **'Share Your Story'** will call on all farmers to get involved to share their story – from how crops are grown, animals cared for, to how they manage our countryside.

Building on the success of the past decade, organisers LEAF are broadening the reach of Open Farm Sunday to encompass all types of British farming. The theme for Open Farm Sunday 2016 will be 'Discover the World of Farming' – to reflect the huge diversity within our industry and enable a greater variety of farmers to take part. Last year's Open Farm Sunday saw nearly 400 farms welcome over a quarter of a million visitors and LEAF is aiming to beat this record in 2016.

Annabel Shackleton, Open Farm Sunday Manager said: "Open Farm Sunday is the industry's annual open day showcasing *all* types of farming. Historically, it has focused on the story of food production, but British farmers are responsible for so much more. Whether they are producing nutritious food, fuel, or crops for medicine, clothing and manufacturing, we want to reach out to all farmers to share their story on Open Farm Sunday. The day is a great opportunity to show the public why farming is so important and to help build trust and understanding in agriculture. Whether farmers choose to hold a simple farm walk or a much bigger event, Open Farm Sunday is their chance to explain to the public what farming is all about and why it matters. We have lots of exciting new activities for Open Farm Sunday 2016 and are looking forward to even more farmers taking part next year!"

To get involved in Open Farm Sunday 2016, farmers are asked to register their event at www.farmsunday.org from the 1st December 2015. All host farmers receive a huge range of fabulous free resources and support from the team of Regional Co-ordinators around the country.

LEAF will also be encouraging farmers to use the power of social media to fanfare their involvement in Open Farm Sunday. Mini case studies and videos are also being produced to support the recruitment campaign.

New for Open Farm Sunday 2016 will be a refreshed website that will be launched in January. LEAF is also working with Biotechnology and Biological Research Council (BBSRC)*, to create some engaging new resources for farmers to help inspire their visitors about the wonderful science and technology behind farming.

Open Farm Sunday continues to receive tremendous support from the food and farming industry. Sponsors who have already signed up for 2016 include: Waitrose, Marks and Spencer, ASDA, plus AHDB, BASF, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque and the NFU. There are still sponsorship opportunities available for next year's campaign and anyone interested should contact Annabel Shackleton at LEAF.

* Applications for funding are currently being received. For more information please visit: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/opportunities/2015/leaf-open-farm-sunday-call-science-activity-resources/>

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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](#))
- The eleventh annual Open Farm Sunday will take place on 5th June 2016. 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 will run throughout June. They will 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 include: **Asda, BASF plc, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, Marks and Spencer, National Farmers Union, Waitrose plus the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.**
- Keep up to date with LEAF's activities via twitter www.twitter.com/LEAF_Farming and www.twitter.com/OpenFarmSunday and our regular blogs at leafmarque.wordpress.com.
- The **Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)** invests in world-class bioscience research and training on behalf of the UK public. Our aim is to further scientific knowledge, to promote economic growth, wealth and job creation and to improve quality of life in the UK and beyond. Funded by Government, BBSRC invested over £509M in world-class bioscience in 2014-15. We support research and training in universities and strategically funded institutes. BBSRC research and the people we fund are helping society to meet major challenges, including food security, green energy and healthier, longer lives. Our investments underpin important UK economic sectors, such as farming, food, industrial biotechnology and pharmaceuticals.
For more information about BBSRC, our science and our impact see: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk>
For more information about BBSRC strategically funded institutes see: <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/institutes>

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