

**8<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

## **Open Farm Sunday one month on: officially another record breaking year**

- **207,000 visitors for Open Farm Sunday 2014**
- **375 farms held events of all sizes showcasing British farming**
  - **Nearly one in five farms reported more than 1,000 visitors**
  - **Nearly a quarter of farms held small events of less than 100 visitors**
- **One in three farms were opening for the first time**

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), the organisers of Open Farm Sunday confirm that 2014 was officially a record breaker - with increased visitor numbers, and greater reach across Britain than ever before. Since 8<sup>th</sup> June, LEAF has been reviewing feedback from both farmers and visitors and, one month on, is delighted to announce that just over 207,000 visitors visited a farm on Open Farm Sunday – a 3% increase on last year’s numbers.

375 farms opened up across every corner of the UK – from Britain’s most southerly mainland farm on The Lizard in Cornwall to the most northerly on the Orkney Islands. Some farmers reported that more visitors were travelling further out of urban areas to visit a farm, and were pleased to see a real willingness to learn about farming and food production.

Rona Amiss, from Tregullas Farm on The Lizard in Cornwall, who hosted the most southerly Open Farm Sunday event said: “I’ve always been a big fan of Open Farm Sunday! It’s just so rewarding to reach out to all our customers and make them aware of how we are farming so they come to understand and respect what we’re trying to do. We had a real mixture of activities on the day - from sheep shearing demonstrations and goat feeding to farm walks, electronic sheep tagging and machinery displays. The most surprising, and pleasing thing was the support we got from the local community and from other farmers – it was quite amazing. People are already talking about next year’s Open Farm Sunday!”

Naomi Bremner from Schoolhouse Farm on the Orkney Islands opened up for Open Farm Sunday for the first time this year: “Because we’re a new farm and we’re doing something

different with water buffalo, we thought Open Farm Sunday was a great way to introduce people to water buffalo and to share what we're doing. 100 folk had said they were coming on our Facebook event, so we were expecting maybe a couple of hundred, but in the end it was nearer 650. The population of Orkney is only around 20,000 so we think this was incredible! We'd worked really hard before our event and although we didn't have that much time on the day itself, it was wonderful to share it all with our visitors. In lots of ways, it felt like a celebration of everything we'd worked for over the past couple of years."

The good vibes around Open Farm Sunday have continued long after the day itself with hundreds of articles in regional media about the events, and farmers and visitors alike sharing their pictures and memories on social media.

Annabel Shackleton, Open Farm Sunday manager at LEAF said: "Open Farm Sunday continues to go from strength to strength and it is fantastic that we have set new records for visitor numbers again this year and it's encouraging to see that people from more urban areas are travelling some distance to visit a farm and learn where their food comes from and how its produced. Lots of people we've been talking to have said they can't wait for next year so we think Open Farm Sunday's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015 is going to be something quite special. We hope that the successes of this year will encourage even more farmers to get involved. The more farms that open up the more people we can inform and inspire about the great job farmers do to produce our food in sustainable ways that protect our wonderful countryside and the wildlife that lives there."

Next year's Open Farm Sunday will take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015. For more information visit: [www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org) or follow @openfarmsunday on Twitter.

**-Ends-**

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### Editor's note:

- LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) 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. (Registered charity no: 1045781)
- The tenth annual Open Farm Sunday will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Open Farm Sunday provides a great opportunity for people to visit a farm to truly get to know how their food is produced and how the countryside around them is cared for.
- Alongside Open Farm Sunday, farms across Britain also hosted Open Farm School Days which ran from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> June. They provided 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.
- Our thanks to our Principal sponsors for Open Farm Sunday 2014 : **Asda, BASF, Country Life butter, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, Kellogg's, LEAF Marque, Marks and Spencer, National Farmers Union, Syngenta, Tesco, The Co-operative, Waitrose, plus Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board (from its BPEX, DairyCo, Eblex, HDC and HGCA divisions) and Hellmann's.**
- Keep up to date with LEAF's activities via twitter [www.twitter.com/LEAF\\_Farming](http://www.twitter.com/LEAF_Farming) and our regular blogs at [leafmarque.wordpress.com](http://leafmarque.wordpress.com).