

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2011

## PRESS RELEASE



### SCHOOL VISITS MADE EASIER FOR FARMERS

Three leading farming, natural environment and education organisations, LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), FACE (Farming and Countryside Education) and Natural England, have joined forces to help farmers plan, promote and host school visits. Called **Visit My Farm**, the project (launched Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June) at Devereux Wootton, Norton Canon, Hereford - provides a wealth of information, resources and ideas to help farmers open for educational visits.

Caroline Drummond, Chief Executive of LEAF explains how **Visit My Farm** can help farmers: “**Visit My Farm** offers, for the first time, a unique one-stop-shop for farmers hosting educational visits. This new, easy online information hub [www.visitmyfarm.org](http://www.visitmyfarm.org) has been developed using the best industry resources and latest information available to help farmers find everything they need to host engaging farm visits.”

Bill Graham from FACE adds: “There is a constant demand by schools for educational farm visits and it is a very effective and enjoyable way of teaching the pupils about the food they eat and how farmers care for the countryside. **Visit My Farm** offers a valuable resource for any one who wants to get involved”.



[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



[www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org)



[www.face-online.org.uk](http://www.face-online.org.uk)

**Visit My Farm is a partnership between FACE, LEAF and Natural England and other organisations which support educational visits to farms**

Poul Christensen, Chair of Natural England, explains how farm visits are vital for children in a number of ways and provide the perfect opportunity for young people to discover the connection between food, farming and the countryside. He says: "Farm visits are a great way to allow children to get close to nature and be shown how their food is produced and the important work farmers do to protect the countryside. As a farmer myself, I am delighted that Natural England is supporting **Visit My Farm**, which is an exciting new initiative that will help young people to meet up with farmers who really care about the vital link between our food and the countryside."

**Visit My Farm** includes a range of downloadable resources, including press release templates, introductory letters to schools and posters that farmers can display in local educational offices, libraries and village halls.

For more information visit [www.visitmyfarm.org](http://www.visitmyfarm.org)

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## Editors notes:

**1. FACE (Farming and Countryside Education)** [www.face-online.org.uk](http://www.face-online.org.uk) - is a registered charity committed to educating children and young people about food and farming in a sustainable countryside.

**2. LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)** [www.leafuk.org.uk](http://www.leafuk.org.uk) - is a national charity that promotes environmentally responsible farming. LEAF helps farmers produce good food with high environmental standards recognised by the LEAF Marque. It aims to help build public understanding of food and farming in a range of ways including;

- **Open Farm Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012** ([www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org)) and attracting some 120,000 people on to farms each year
- A national network of 70 plus **demonstration farms** attracting 14,000 plus visitors annually
- **Virtual Farm Walk** is an online resource for teachers to use to explore a farm without leaving their classroom [www.virtualfarmwalk.org](http://www.virtualfarmwalk.org)
- **Let Nature Feed Your Senses**, a project in conjunction with the Sensory Trust, that organises sensory rich visits to farms and nature reserves across Britain providing opportunities for disabled and socially excluded groups to visit the countryside ([www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org](http://www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org))

**3. Natural England** is the government's advisor on the natural environment. Established in 2006 our work is focused on enhancing England's wildlife and landscapes and maximising the benefits they bring to the public.

- We run England's Environmental Stewardship green farming schemes that deliver over £400 million a year to farmers and landowners, enabling them to enhance the natural environment across two thirds of England's farmland. These include educational access options for farmers hosting school visits.
- We establish and care for England's main wildlife and geological sites, ensuring that over 4,000 National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are looked after and improved.
- We work to ensure that England's landscapes are effectively protected, designating England's National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Marine Conservation Zones, and advising widely on their conservation.
- We fund, manage, and provide scientific expertise for hundreds of conservation projects each year, improving the prospects for thousands of England's species and habitats.
- We promote access to the wider countryside, helping establish National Trails and coastal trails and ensuring that the public can enjoy and benefit from them.



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