



Press Release  
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## Find out what can LEAF do for your business – *visit us on stand BM224 at the Dairy Event*

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) have issued an open invitation to livestock farmers visiting the Dairy Event, to come and find out why LEAF is relevant to their business. On the LEAF stand (**no BM224**), there will be experts on hand to explain how LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM), can help farmers manage valuable resources such soil and water.

LEAF will be showing farmers how the LEAF Audit is a practical tool that can deliver benefits for farmers across all sectors. Benefits can include cost saving and minimising environmental impact.

IFM provides a framework for the whole farm and is the principle behind the LEAF Marque, recognised as the leading environmental food label. IFM starts with the LEAF Audit, a self assessment management tool helping farmers review all aspects of their business from soil and water management, energy efficiency and biodiversity, to how they work with their local communities.

Dairy farmers, such as former Investment Banker and Non Executive Director of Rothamsted, Graham Birch, value the business benefits of LEAF membership. Graham initially joined LEAF because he believed that as a progressive farmer, it was an organisation his business should belong to. He says, "LEAF helps to provide a really helpful framework for the farm that can result in economic and environmental benefits. I have found the tools they provide to do this very effective – and I haven't used them all yet! The business has also gained a lot

through by opening for Open Farm Sunday. We have opened twice now and enjoyed significantly improved local community relations as a result.”

Tim Lewis who manages a herd of 150 dairy cows, quotes a range of economic, environmental and social benefits that his business has gained from belonging to LEAF and completing the LEAF Audit. Tim explains, “Undertaking the LEAF Audit has been one of the biggest benefits of our LEAF membership. It has made us consider the wider issues facing the farm and keeps us informed of the latest environmental news and research, something that I don’t always have time to do but know I should. This in turn means that I am prepared for any new environmental regulations, which of course is critical for the business.”

Tim runs a mixed farming business. As a result of doing the LEAF Audit, he now applies slurry followed by non-inversion tillage just before maize cultivation. He then invests time in targeting applications to where they are needed most, resulting in substantial savings in fertiliser costs.

LEAF’s Chief Executive, Caroline Drummond, says: “The positive impact LEAF membership offers dairy farms is very much in line with the results of the independent research published last year from CCRI (Countryside and Community Research Institute). This showed that LEAF membership offers farmers across all sectors, clear and valuable benefits from economic savings made through better water and fertiliser use, to a host of environmental improvements, as well as social advantages through activities such as Open Farm Sunday and Speak Out. All this for as little as £60 per year!”

LEAF’s Commercial Manager, Jeremy Boxall is convinced that LEAF and the LEAF Marque have a lot to offer dairy farmers, “We are seeing very good growth in the number and range of food products carrying the LEAF Marque label. It offers all farmers, including dairy, sound economic benefits. LEAF Marque accreditation enables farmers to get recognition for their environmental credentials and, importantly from a marketing perspective, can help to differentiate their milk and dairy produce from competitors.”

**LEAF Membership starts at just £60 a year. To find out further information about how to join LEAF please visit [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org) or contact, the LEAF office on 02476 413911.**

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For further information, images, to arrange an interview or to obtain industry comment:

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For further information on all LEAF's work and activities, visit [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org)

**Editors' Notes:**

- LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) was set up in 1991. It is a farming charity working with farmers to help them produce good food to high standards of environmental care, identified in-store by the LEAF Marque logo.
- LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM) approach combines the best of traditional farming methods with modern technology, allowing farmers to manage their farms in an informed, professional and caring way. IFM encourages farmers to maintain the highest standards of food production with the minimum environmental impact.
- The LEAF Audit is a progressive and practical whole farm business management tool, to help farmers prioritise decisions and make meaningful changes to farm practices as well as demonstrate their environmental responsibility.
- LEAF also works to build public understanding and trust of food and farming. This is done through Open Farm Sunday, visits to their national network of Demonstration Farms and the Let Nature Feed Your Senses project. This project is run in partnership with the Sensory Trust to connect disengaged groups and individuals with nature and the countryside, through food and farming.
- LEAF Marque is an assurance scheme based on LEAF's Integrated Farm Management principles. It is independently inspected and certified by third party certification bodies. Farms certified as LEAF Marque can use the LEAF Marque logo on all the produce they sell, direct to the consumer or to retail outlets. LEAF Marque growers care for the environment in a number of ways including carefully managing hedgerows to provide habitats for food and wildlife, using pesticides and fertilisers only when absolutely necessary, recycling waste and conserving energy and water.

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