



**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

## **Leading fruit business recognised for environmental standards**

### ***A.J and C.I Snell launches as a LEAF Demonstration Farm***

One of the UK's leading fresh and frozen soft fruit growing businesses has today (5<sup>th</sup> July 2018), been launched as a LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) Demonstration Farm in recognition of its commitment to more sustainable farming. It joins over 35 other LEAF Demonstration Farms set up to showcase the very best of sustainable farming practices to farmers and a wide range of audiences through organised visits.

A.J and C.I Snell, owned and managed by Anthony and Christine Snell, is a family owned business near Ross on Wye in South Herefordshire. It produces nearly 1,300 tonnes of strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and redcurrants every year, along with a further 700 tonnes of conventional and organic blackcurrants. The business also includes retailer packing facilities and a pallet freezer store offering freezer storage, blast freezing and online British Frozen Fruit sales.

As a LEAF Marque certified business, the farm prides itself in high standards of horticultural growing and innovation farmed in a sustainable way through Integrated Farm Management (IFM). This includes the use of natural methods of pest control, carefully assessing energy and water use, adopting a 'reduce, reuse and recycling' approach to waste management and protecting and enhancing the farm's wealth of environmental features. Polytunnels are managed sensitively and habitats created to enhance the natural landscape and provide vital links between habitat areas. An ongoing programme of hedgerow and tree planting is carried out and bird populations are carefully managed. Over 49 species of birds have been recorded in recent years – well above the national average and one of the highest in the county. These include three species of Raptor, Skylark, Little Grebe, Great Spotted Woodpecker and both Little and Tawny Owls.

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Anthony and Christine Snell are also passionate about sharing how they are trying to balance a thriving business with positive environmental management. The farm regularly takes part in LEAF Open Farm Sunday and also hosts visits for other farmers, schools and a wide range of interest groups.

Anthony Snell said: “We are extremely proud to have been recognised by LEAF for all that we do to combine profitable fruit farming with sensitive environmental management. We have always tried to be innovative and forward thinking in the way we farm. LEAF’s IFM approach is all about striving to achieve balance across the whole farm. We’re working hard in lots of practical ways to conserve and enhance the natural environment by planting trees, creating wildlife habitats and cutting our carbon footprint. Being a LEAF Demonstration Farm will be a brilliant way to build on what we have already achieved and develop our interest in reconnecting people with how their food is grown.”

LEAF Chief Executive, Caroline Drummond, who also attended the launch added: “Our industry has much to be proud of. For over twenty five years, LEAF’s network of Demonstration Farms has been leading the way in promoting best practice in sustainable farming to other farmers as well as bridging the gap between farmers and the public. A. J and C.I Snell deserve their place amongst them. It is a first class example of how the principles of IFM can be implemented in the fruit sector and will play an important role in not only inspiring others in the food and farming industry but also helping to raise awareness amongst the public about sustainable food production.”

As a LEAF Demonstration Farm, A. J and C.I Snell will act as a live demonstration promoting the principles of IFM to other farmers as well as to industry, politicians and community groups.

A.J and C.I Snell was officially launched by past LEAF Board member and local farmer, Patrick Wrixon on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018. Guests at the launch were given a farm tour to see IFM in action and how production and conservation go hand in hand.



For more information on A. J and C.I Snell, LEAF, the LEAF Network, IFM and the LEAF Marque please visit [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org)

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### For more

Simon Colvan/David Gough  
LEAF Press Office - Ceres  
T: 01189 475 956  
E: [leaf@ceres-pr.co.uk](mailto:leaf@ceres-pr.co.uk)

### Editors' Notes:

- **LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)** is a registered charity and the leading organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. LEAF 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** promotes **Integrated Farm Management (IFM)**, a whole farm business approach that uses the best of modern technology and traditional methods to deliver more sustainable farming. IFM is made up of nine sections, which together address the entire farm business.
- **The LEAF Marque** is an environmental assurance system recognising more sustainably farmed products. It is based on the sustainable farming principles of IFM, which covers areas such as soil and water management, pollution control, crop health, animal welfare, community engagement, energy efficiency and landscape and nature conservation. **LEAF Marque** businesses are independently assessed and certified against the principles of IFM.
- The LEAF Network includes **LEAF Demonstration Farms** – commercial farms in England and Scotland, which show the beneficial practices of IFM to a broad range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. The LEAF Network also includes **LEAF Innovation Centres** – research organisations from across the UK whose work supports the research, evidence, development and promotion of IFM. They investigate and communicate practices which underpin the continual improvement of the IFM approach to help deliver more sustainable food and farming and are key to the development of LEAF.
- **LEAF Education** builds on the fantastic work of FACE (Farming and Countryside Education) following the successful merger with LEAF. This is achieved by working across the education, farming and food sectors to inspire, engage and mobilise farmers and teachers about the value of farming in a learning context. LEAF Education provides training and resources for teachers and helps farmers navigate the world of education and supports them in working with schools.
- **LEAF** manages **Open Farm Sunday**, the farming industry's annual open day when farmers open their gates and welcome people onto their farms to discover the world of farming. Alongside LEAF Open Farm Sunday, farms across Britain also host **LEAF Open Farm School Days** which run throughout June. They provide thousands of schoolchildren with the opportunity to visit a farm to learn more about where their food comes from and how it is produced.
- LEAF, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. CV8 2LG t: 02476413911 e: [enquiries@leafuk.org](mailto:enquiries@leafuk.org)  
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