

# Farmer Time Case Study

## Beef Case Study



### The Farmer

Mark Jelley, a beef farmer from Northamptonshire, heard about the Farmer Time initiative through social media. With his own children at primary school, Mark was keen to answer the many questions that he knows children have about where their food comes from.



### The Teacher

Georgina Ellis, a year 6 teacher at Thorpedene Primary in Southend on Sea, first heard about Farmer Time at a conference. She was eager to sign up in order to broaden her pupils' knowledge of the world around them and get them to talk about topics to which they would normally not be exposed.

Before each session, Georgina emails Mark to arrange the time and Mark gives an outline of what he will show the children and what he will talk about. Georgina briefs the pupils and then they prepare questions ready to ask.

During the calls, Mark has focused on many different areas on his farm including his livestock, machinery and farm buildings. Mark was impressed with the engagement from the pupils and the "enquiring and challenging questions" asked, he was pleased that the children were, "genuinely interested in what farmers do." Over the course of



the calls so far, he has been able to explore concepts such as the difference between beef and dairy cows and why eggs are different colours.

Georgina believes that from participating in Farmer Time so far, the pupils have learned about farm management, different crops that are grown, the problems farmers face and how they solve them and current ethical issues surrounding farming. She states, “I was surprised how little the children knew at the beginning and the misconceptions they had so it has been great to open their eyes to a different way of life and different career choices. It has also taught me a lot and other staff often come in and join in the session!”

## **Impact**

Mark is a great champion of the Farmer Time initiative, stating, “As farmers we often take for granted the beautiful and unique environment in which we work. To be able to share this with children who've often never visited the countryside is a really rewarding experience and one I'd highly recommend to colleagues across the industry. The Farmer Time initiative brings us into the classroom without disrupting the school day and allows teachers to link the contents of the syllabus with real life examples, adding a unique context to the topics being taught.”

Georgina states, “In my opinion, there are so many positive impacts. The children are enthusiastic and sit fascinated watching what the farmer is showing us. They are inquisitive and often think of questions to ask that I hadn't thought of.”

Her pupils echo this view: “We learn things, for example, what free range eggs are. It is cool to see the different animals and see how a farm works.” Finally, the ultimate compliment to Mark with one child stating, “Our farmer explains everything properly.”

Further information about this initiative and how your school or farm can become involved can be found at [www.farmertime.org](http://www.farmertime.org)

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Thank you to Mark Jelley and Thorpedene Primary School