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## **Jersey Farming Sector Drives Forward Increased Sustainability**

**Jerseys dairy and arable farmers are well on their way to meeting key sustainability targets, thanks to a unique partnership between the States of Jersey Government and a leading environmental farming organisation – LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming).**

This ground-breaking project, which has been running for nearly two years, is supporting the Island's farmers to farm more sustainably. By October this year, they will have achieved LEAF Marque certification – a global environmental assurance system recognising high standards of environmental care including more sustainable soil and water management, enhanced energy efficiency, improved biodiversity and landscape management, optimal animal health and welfare and stronger community connections.

Under the States of Jersey's Rural Support Scheme, farmers who have LEAF Marque certification will receive payments for the environmental and social goods they offer.

To support farmers along their journey towards achieving LEAF Marque certification, nearly thirty dairy and arable farmers attended a Technical Farmer Day on 24 July, organised by LEAF and held at The Jersey Royal Company. The practical, farmer-focused event, enabled them to share knowledge and experiences, celebrate their progress to date, examine challenges and address future priorities. Expert speakers focussed on biodiversity and different approaches to soil management and attendees were also able to participate in a hands-on 'soil lab' and see different approaches to more sustainable soil management in action.

Speaking after the event, Assurance Manager at LEAF, Jenny Clark said:

“LEAF Marque certification is a powerful catalyst for change. More sustainable farming can only be achieved through the collective efforts of Governments, farmers, retailers, NGO's, scientists and individuals. As the UK navigates post-Brexit agriculture, farmers will be looking for ways to strengthen their markets, demonstrate their environmental credentials and build public trust.”



“There is no doubt that the determination of the UK Government policy to prioritise the environment and ‘public goods’ in the new Agricultural Policy is a great opportunity for LEAF Marque certified businesses. It is testament to the progressive and forward-thinking approach of the States of Jersey, that they have recognised this and are using LEAF Marque certification to build resilience and invest in the long-term future of the Island’s agricultural sector.”

“We were delighted to see so many farmers at our Technical Event, all engaged with LEAF Marque, committed to achieving certification by the end of October and very motivated to learn more about the wider business benefits it offers. The event was all about showing what LEAF Marque certification means ‘on the ground’ as well as meeting with farmers, listening to their experiences and offering technical support. Thank you to all the farmers who attended for their engagement on the day and to all our speakers for their expertise and insights. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Island’s farmers to empower and enable them to make positive changes to more sustainable farming as well as celebrate and demonstrate their achievements in the marketplace.”

Ben Cruickshank, Technical Agronomist from the Jersey Royal Company added: “LEAF’s Technical Farmers Day brought together key players from across Jersey’s farming sector. The networking opportunities, expertise on hand and practical demonstrations, all contributed to a lively, thought provoking and inspiring day – pitched perfectly for the Island’s innovative and dynamic farmers. Hopefully this was the first of many!”

*Speakers at LEAF’s Technical Farmer Day were: Jeremy Padfield, Stratton Farms, LEAF Demonstration Farmer; Piers Sangan, Sangan Island Conservation; Mike Renouard and Ben Cruickshank, Jersey Royal Company; Ian Robertson, Sustainable Soil Management; John Vautier, States of Jersey Government; Jenny Clark and Alice Midmer, LEAF.*

**ENDS**

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#### Editors' Notes:

- **LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)** is 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 delivers more sustainable farming. IFM uses the best of modern technology and traditional methods to deliver prosperous farming that enriches the environment and engages local communities.
- **The LEAF Marque** is an assurance system recognising more sustainably farmed products. It is based on the sustainable farming principles of Integrated Farm Management (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.
- **LEAF Demonstration Farms** are commercial farms which show the beneficial practices of IFM to a broad range of audiences, through organised visits. They communicate an understanding of IFM in order to encourage uptake by farmers, support from the industry and political awareness of sustainable food and farming. The network of LEAF Demonstration Farms includes a range of farm businesses across England and Scotland. They work alongside the LEAF Innovation Centres.
- The Rural Support Scheme is a five-year initiative from the States of Jersey Government, to grow the rural economy. Instead of support for farmers based on the area of land farmed or the quality of milk produced, farmers will receive payments for the environmental and social 'goods' they deliver. All dairy and arable farmers on Jersey are required to become LEAF Marque certified by October 2019.