



## MEDIA RELEASE

5<sup>th</sup> July 2018

### Farming Competition for Schools a Resounding Success

The final of LEAF Education's inaugural farming competition for schools took place at Llysfasi College in North Wales last weekend and was won by Reddish Vale High School, from Stockport. The national competition, organised by LEAF Education and Llysfasi College was aimed at connecting teenagers with food and farming and climaxed in a final Prize Weekend at Llysfasi College Farm between 29<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> July.

The team from Reddish Vale High School competed against 14-16 year-old students from four other schools from around the country in a broad range of engaging and educational farm-related activities designed to give them first-hand experience of what it is like to work on a farm. Practical activities included driving tractors, handling farm animals and milking cows. Students also learned about soil and grass management, genetics and animal nutrition.

The final Prize Weekend concluded with each school delivering a presentation to the panel of judges, made up of representatives from LEAF Education and Llysfasi College, outlining what they'd learnt over the weekend. The judges reported that the standard of the presentations from all the schools was exceptionally high but were unanimous in their decision to crown Reddish Vale High School as the overall winner and **Innovation School of the Year 2018 in Food, Farming and Environment**.

The competition was developed by LEAF Education in partnership with Llysfasi College to reconnect teenagers with their food and also to enhance their understanding of how the agricultural industry impacts on their lives and open their eyes to the many career opportunities available in the sector.

Carl Edwards, Director of Education and Public Engagement at LEAF, said: "We are absolutely delighted with the quality of the work and the willingness to learn demonstrated by all the finalists. By immersing the students and their teachers in a weekend of farm-related activities, we wanted to open young people's minds to what farming delivers, as well as raise awareness amongst teachers of how farming can be embedded into the curriculum. And with so many of the participants coming from a non-farming background, they were able to do things they'd never done before. We were fortunate to be able to use Llysfasi College's expert lecturers to showcase the sheer variety and

complexity of the farming industry and to demonstrate the increasingly important role played by technology.

“The competition was a resounding success and I would like to thank Llysfasi College for their hugely valued support and for making the Prize Weekend such a memorable experience for all involved. We’re already planning for next year, with ambitions to make the competition bigger, better and even more wide-reaching in 2019.”

Iain Clarke, Head of College, Llysfasi added: "The level of commitment shown by all the students was immense; –their energy, enthusiasm and creativity was so impressive and truly inspiring. We hope the competition – and the Prize Weekend in particular – has equipped these young people with a greater appreciation of what farmers do and where their food comes from. We also hope the experience triggers an interest in the many exciting career opportunities there are on offer in the agriculture sector.”

In attendance during the Prize Weekend were Paul Williams, the NFU Wales County Chairman for Clwyd and Coleg Cambria’s Chief Executive, David Jones.

**ENDS**

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**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.

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LEAF is a registered charity (No. 1045781) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (No. 3035047).

### **Llysfasi College**

- Llysfasi College is one of Coleg Cambria's six sites throughout North East Wales. Coleg Cambria is one of the largest colleges in the UK and offers a wide range of courses from Further Education to Higher National Certificates (HNCs) and Foundation Degrees. Llysfasi College is set in 970 acres of stunning countryside and is home to many of Coleg Cambria's land-based students. It has its own farm, comprising three main enterprises – beef, sheep and dairy, which includes a new £1 million dairy unit. [www.cambria.ac.uk](http://www.cambria.ac.uk)