



MEDIA RELEASE

10th July 2019

LEAF Education Launches National Network of Demonstration Schools

LEAF Education has today (10th July) announced the launch of the very first national network of Demonstration Schools set up to showcase best practice in food and farming education.

LEAF Education Demonstration Schools will act as best practice examples of using food production, farming and the countryside as a core element of the school curriculum. This could be around exemplary teaching methods, engagement with farmers, provision of school gardens, nature-friendly grounds and wider school community engagement as well as events and activities specifically designed around the field to fork story.

Primary and Secondary Schools will be selected as LEAF Education Demonstration Schools in one of three categories – Bronze, Silver and Gold. LEAF Education Regional Consultants will work closely with schools to support them in achieving each of the categories.

Carl Edwards, Director of Education and Public Engagement at LEAF Education explained:

“Farming is relevant to every aspect of the curriculum. We want to shine a light on schools that are leading the way in embedding farming into their teaching and support them in developing a whole school ethos.

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We want to share best practice, encourage innovation and drive forward real improvements in how our young people connect with their food, how it is produced and where it comes from. Equally, we want to support schools by helping them through Action Research to develop a well-rounded and successful community that has a unique sense of its place by using local farmers and food production. Developing a network of schools across the UK which are leading the way in this area will help recognise and support the excellent work already being done by so many schools, help champion best practice and, provide a valuable focal point to inspire other schools.

“We are delighted to launch this pioneering new programme of Demonstration Schools, focussing specifically on food production and farming education. Much evidence shows that providing young people with opportunities to learn about how their food is produced and where it comes from, has huge positive impacts in terms of promoting health and well-being, raising awareness of issues around climate change, environmental protection, population growth and sustainability.

“Our aim is to work alongside our Demonstration Schools and the wider farming and education sectors to set gold standards in agricultural education provision.”

Twenty primary and secondary schools will be launched as LEAF Education Demonstration Schools over the forthcoming 2019/2020 academic year. The following schools are being launched as the first cohort of bronze LEAF Education Demonstration School in July 2019:

Norton Church of England Primary School, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire

Chilmark and Fonthill Bishop Church of England Primary School, Salisbury, Wiltshire

St James' CE Primary School, Chorley, Lancashire

For more information, visit education.leafuk.org/for-schools/leaf-education-demo-schools

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Editors' Notes:

- **LEAF Education** builds on the work of FACE (Farming and Countryside Education) following its merger with LEAF in July 2017. It works to inspire future generations about farming, food and the countryside. It manages a number of industry and educational initiatives, including Access to Farms, CEVAS (Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme), Countryside Classroom, Chef on the Farm and LEAF Open Farm School Days. **LEAF Education** provides teachers with curriculum focused training, tools and resources to help them deliver high-quality learning experiences about farming. It also helps farmers navigate the world of education and supports them in delivering inspiring and engaging on-farm and in-classroom activities.
- **LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)** is a 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. These include soil and water management, pollution control, crop health and protection, animal welfare, community engagement, energy efficiency and landscape and nature conservation.
- **The LEAF Marque** is a leading global assurance system recognising more sustainably farmed products. It is underpinned by the sustainable farming principles of IFM. **LEAF Marque** certified businesses are independently verified against the LEAF Marque Standard.
- 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.
- **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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