

4 January 2019

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) Response to Campaigners Following Michael Gove's Speech at Oxford Farming Conference 2019

Environment Secretary Michael Gove spoke yesterday at the Oxford Farming Conference and shared his views around how farmers and food producers will be affected by Brexit. Mr Gove's speech was met by campaigners who called on him to set up an independent regulator to ensure that minimum standards are in place to protect water, soil, wildlife and animal welfare post-Brexit.

Speaking in response to this, Caroline Drummond, Chief Executive at LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) said: "Having been at the forefront of developing and delivering more sustainable farming for more than 27 years, LEAF is responsible for helping farmers develop the economic, environmental and social success of their businesses through LEAF Marque certification. As a leading global environmental assurance system, we believe that LEAF Marque should be the standard used industry-wide both in the UK and abroad.

"The LEAF Marque environmental assurance system is underpinned by the sustainable farming principles of Integrated Farm Management (IFM), which cover soil management and fertility, crop health and protection, pollution control and by-product management, animal husbandry, energy efficiency, water management, landscape and nature conservation, community engagement and organisation and planning.

"It supports farmers through developing the financial stability of their businesses, as well as protecting and enhancing the environment. In addition, it demonstrates continuous improvement and assures consumers that their food has been produced to high standards of environmental care. LEAF Marque certified businesses, which operate in 34 countries worldwide, have been independently verified against the robust LEAF Marque Standard and undergo an annual inspection.

"LEAF Marque works to build resilient businesses, particularly around the delivery of farming that integrates the needs and requirements of transformative food production that is productive, environmentally responsible and fit for the future. It is key to driving forward supply chain innovation, and engaging consumers in positive change."

ENDS

For interview opportunities or further information please contact:

Cat Cambridge / David Gough
LEAF Press Office - Ceres
T: 01189 475 956
E: leaf@ceres-pr.co.uk

Editors' Notes:

- **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 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** 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: 02476 413911 e: enquiries@leafuk.org
www.leafuk.org LEAF is a registered charity (No. 1045781) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (No. 3035047).