



Media Release – 9 April 2019

Farmers Urged to Speak Out for UK Farming

LEAF launches new communications training workshops for farmers and researchers

With continuing political uncertainty, there has never been a more important time for farmers to communicate to the public about the British farming industry and all it delivers. Leading sustainable farming organisation, LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) is spearheading a new communications roadshow to equip farmers with the skills and know-how to do just this.

During April and May, the organisation will be travelling to ten locations across the UK with its Speak Out Roadshow communications workshops. The one-day practical masterclasses will provide farmers and researchers with front line access to the skills, techniques and tools to become expert communicators – whether in person, on-farm, online, in print or in the media through photos, film and social media.

Caroline Drummond, LEAF Chief Executive, said: “With Brexit looming, we need to start clear and meaningful conversations about UK agriculture, as well as share best practice, show techniques, explain production, reveal trade-offs faced and demonstrate where farming creates environmental sustainability. A key part of the Government’s new Agriculture Bill will see farmers being rewarded for the range of goods and services they deliver beyond food production – be that productive soils, clean water and air, increased biodiversity right through to public access. Public support for British farming will be key as we navigate this new political landscape, underpinned by clear, professional and strong communication.”

Alice Midmer, Demonstration and Innovation Manager at LEAF added: “Farmers have a fantastic story to tell and are acutely aware of the need to speak out for their industry. What they need is the right skills and know-how to do the job effectively. We are extremely excited to be travelling the country with our Speak Out Roadshow and are really looking forward to connecting with farmers and researchers to inspire, inform and reignite their enthusiasm for communication. Whether they are starting from scratch or have years of experience in talking about farming, these workshops will enable

everyone to build their expertise, bolster their confidence and be the best they can be – no matter where they are starting from.”

LEAF’s new online communications toolkit will be launched during the Roadshow. Written and developed by leading agricultural communications experts, it is packed full of easy-to-use guidance and resources, providing step by step support for farmers and researchers, helping them think about communications at every stage and providing guidance on best practice. It offers a range of interactive tools, templates and support materials to help develop communications skills, craft messages, map audiences and address their individual needs. LEAF’s Speak Out Toolkit will be available at www.leafuk.org/speakout

LEAF’s Speak Out Roadshow dates and venues:

Wednesday 24th April - Overbury Enterprises, Tewksbury, Gloucestershire

Thursday 25th April - Rothamsted Research, North Wyke, Okehampton, Devon

Friday 26th April - Henfaes Research Centre, Bangor University, Llanfairfechan

Tuesday 30th April - JSR Farms, Southburn, Yorkshire

Wednesday 1st May - Renner Farming, Belford, Northumberland

Thursday 2nd May - James Hutton Institute, Dundee, Scotland

Tuesday 7th May - Crowmarsh Battle Farm, Oxfordshire

Wednesday 8th May - The Allerton Project, Loddington, Leicestershire

Thursday 9th May - E W Davies, Thaxted, Essex

Friday 10th May - Holkham Farming, Holkham, Norfolk

The cost to attend each workshop is £30 for LEAF Members and £80 for non-LEAF members. To book online, please visit <https://leafuk.org/news-and-media/events/leaf-speak-out-roadshow-2019>.

The Brian Chambers Soils Fund are able to offer funding to ten early career professionals and practitioners. The funding will cover the cost of the training and a contribution towards travel and subsistence. Please email a short CV to events@leafuk.org to apply for this. Please also include details of the training course you would like to attend and an estimation of your travel and subsistence costs. Brian was an excellent communicator of agricultural and environmental science and its relevance to farmers, policy makers and industry. The Brian Chambers Soils Fund is therefore keen to invest in early career farmers, advisers and scientists to enhance their contribution to the sector through better communication.

For more information, an interview or images, please contact:

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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 environmental 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 FaceTime a Farmer, 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.

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