



MEDIA RELEASE Wednesday 10th August 2016

LEAF announces Public Engagement Conference

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), organiser of Open Farm Sunday, is inviting the food and farming industry to come together for its first ever Public Engagement Conference. The conference, which will take place on Monday 12th September at The Auditorium, Sainsbury's, in London, will explore the theme: *How can we make a step change in public engagement with food and farming?*

LEAF recently released its strategic direction for the next five years and one of its key objectives is to lead a collaborative approach within the industry for better public engagement with farming, something it already does very successfully through Open Farm Sunday. Now the organisation, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, hopes this conference will help pave the way in developing new and innovative strategies, that will bring people closer to how their food is produced, where it comes from and critically, why this matters.

Speakers at the conference will include:

- **Caroline Drummond MBE**, LEAF
- **Professor Michael Winter OBE**, Exeter University
- **Jon Alexander**, New Citizen Project
- **Beth Hart**, Sainsbury's
- **Fran Barnes**, Director of Communications, National Farmers' Union
- **Patrick Middleton**, Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
- **Chris Manley**, NFYFC Chairman & Sainsbury's
- **Ian Pigott OBE**, Thrales End Farm, LEAF Demonstration Farmer, FACE Chairman

The conference will also review a number of projects that are already proving successful in bringing consumers of all ages closer to farming, including LEAF's Open Farm Sunday and Farming and Countryside Education's (FACE) Countryside Classroom. Workshops will address a range of issues including food labels, teaching resources, outdoor learning and sustainability.

Caroline Drummond, LEAF Chief Executive said: "Building public trust and understanding in food and farming has always been one of LEAF's core charitable objectives. At our Public Engagement Conference, we will be taking inspiration from the experts, both within farming but also from a

range of sectors beyond our usual frame of reference, to see how different industries engage with their consumers. There are a number of tools and channels available to organisations and farmers to help reach consumers and engage with them about farming in new and exciting ways. It's important that we use all avenues available to us, be that farm visits, community outreach or social media, and work together as an industry to deliver a broader approach to public engagement - one that recognises that our health and wellbeing, and that of the natural environment on which we rely, are intrinsically linked with creating food and farming sectors that are truly sustainable."

- **LEAF's Public Engagement Conference:** *How can we make a step change in public engagement with food and farming?*

10am to 4pm. The Auditorium, Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd, 33 Holborn, Central London
EC1N 2HT

For more information and to book your free place visit:

http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/home/leaf25/public_engagement_conference.eb

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LEAF 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.

- Open Farm Sunday is managed by **LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming)**. LEAF is the leading organisation delivering more sustainable food and farming. It 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 has organised Open Farm Sunday since it began in 2006. (LEAF is a registered [charity no: 1045781](#)).