

Embargoed until 01.00am on Wednesday 12th April 2017

Proposed merger between LEAF and FACE announced

A proposed merger between two of the leading farming and food educational organisations, LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) and FACE (Farming & Countryside Education), has been announced today (Wednesday 12th April).

The vision for the proposed merger is to increase the impact and capability of the two charities' work in improving education and understanding of farming, food and the environment.

LEAF Chief Executive Caroline Drummond said: "We are really excited at this opportunity which comes at a time when it has never been more important to demonstrate and state the case for British agriculture. The potential merger offers a real opportunity for our two organisations to work together even more effectively and efficiently to deliver multiple benefits to our partners and stakeholders. The proposed merger will enable LEAF to further deepen our public engagement activity and allow the FACE team to scale up their work, nationally and regionally as the interface between agriculture and schools. Such a combination will undoubtedly strengthen the impact of both organisations and improve the public's understanding of farming, food and the environment."

The proposed merger will serve to combine the strength and expertise of the two organisations, to help drive forward an efficient and effective strategy that will directly improve education in and appreciation of, agriculture and food production.

Commenting on the proposed merger, FACE Chief Executive, Dan Corlett said: "This is a very exciting moment for FACE. I am very proud of all that the FACE team has achieved and the place we hold as a leader in taking agriculture into schools. The exploration of this new phase, would allow us to maximise FACE's expertise in creating systemic change in education and the potential for this newly expanded organisation to offer

stakeholders and partners improved efficiencies, enhanced engagement and create even greater opportunities for educating and engaging the public.”

Both organisations have charitable status, have worked on projects together such as Countryside Classroom and LEAF’s Open Farm School Days and share many common goals. LEAF and FACE are working closely together to ensure that the proposed merger meets all necessary legal requirements and complies with all the required procedures and recommendations set out by the Charity Commission. It is currently anticipated that subject to contract, due diligence and the proposed merger meeting all the necessary legal requirements, that the agreement will be signed during the summer of 2017.

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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.

- **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. LEAF's twelfth annual Open Farm Sunday takes place on 11th June 2017.
- Alongside Open Farm Sunday, farms across Britain also host **Open Farm School Days** which run throughout June. They provide thousands of school children with the opportunity to visit a farm to learn more about where their food comes from and how it is produced.

FACE Editors' Notes:

- **FACE (Farming and Countryside Education)** is the leading educational charity working with schools to help children and young people understand the connection between farming and their daily lives. FACE creates high quality educational experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, that change perspectives and deepen understanding of the food we eat, the people who produce it and the choices we all make as citizens. As a result, FACE contributes to children flourishing, UK agriculture thriving, and the health of the planet. Teacher and farmer training are at the heart of FACE's work, alongside creation of educational resources and advice
- FACE manages a number of industry and educational initiatives, including:
 - **Access to Farms** A group of organisations committed to enabling safe and healthy farm visits. The group produces the industry's Code of Practice (Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions)
 - **CEVAS (Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme)** – a qualification for farm educators and care farmers, to develop professional approaches to health and safety, using the farm as an educational environment, and working with schools and other client groups.
 - **Countryside Classroom** – a 35-partner consortium with the single largest collection of teaching resources, outdoor venues and experts dedicated to food, farming and the countryside.