

# Let nature feed your senses

LEAF, WITH the support of Natural England's Access to Nature programme, has launched an exciting new project called 'Let nature feed your senses'.

In the farming industry so much of what is experienced every day tends to be taken for granted. The joys of the first lambs in spring, watching a storm approach, seeing the swallows prepare to leave Britain for the winter. Sharing these experiences is special.

Since LEAF started in 1991 one of its core objectives has been to encourage more people to get out in to the countryside. Through encouraging a better public understanding of farming and the countryside, trust and recognition of how farmers are looking after the environment can be developed. So they are pleased to announce the 'Let nature feed your senses' project, which is about providing opportunities for disabled and socially excluded groups to visit the countryside, to enable people to develop greater understanding of the relationship between nature, farming, food and our everyday lives.

LEAF are looking for farmers throughout England to get involved. In the south east region their regional co-ordinator will be Mariella Fleming.

Mariella explains: "I will be looking for farmers to open up their farm to young people (including those from rural and urban areas of multiple deprivation), disabled people and older people. It will be my responsibility to be the local point of contact and support for each participating farmer. I am looking for ten farms in my area to host two visits or so



per year. Each visit can be different and I will be looking for farmers with real enthusiasm for what they are doing and who want to do something positive for our industry. The farmers will need to demonstrate an awareness for environmental and animal welfare issues and have appropriate access and health and safety arrangements. There will be a payment for farmers of £100/£150 per visit to compensate for time spent organising the visit.

"I am inspired by this project and the training days at Southfields Farm in Warwickshire were a real eye opener. One of the activities involved putting together a 'sensory map'. Rather than walking around your farm and looking at the jobs that need doing, we walked accompanied by Robin Helby, chairman of Disabled Ramblers in his

tramper, placing sticks with labels whenever one of the senses was triggered. This can then be transferred to a map of the farm."

"I was keen to go back home to Southend Farm to do the same thing, rather than just seeing the aphids or the unsold celery sitting there ready for harvesting. To hear the rustling of the leaves, to touch the smooth conkers, to taste the berries in the hedge and to smell the freshly cut lettuce. We farmers are very lucky to be living in this environment and if we can make some people's lives a bit better, by giving them a love of nature through experiencing the environment where we produce the food we eat, that must be a good thing."

If you are interested in the above, please contact LEAF on 0247 641 3911 or email: [james.taylor@leafuk.org](mailto:james.taylor@leafuk.org).

## EVENT DATES

21 - 22 Oct Showman's Show - Newbury  
[www.showmans-directory.co.uk](http://www.showmans-directory.co.uk)

21 - 22 Oct National Fruit Show - Detling  
[www.nationalfruitshow.co.uk](http://www.nationalfruitshow.co.uk)

25 Oct Chichester Growmore Club ploughing match, Madam Green Farm, Oving, Chichester

31 Oct Stockbridge & District Growmore Club ploughing match, Stockbridge

**Please note: always check in advance – changes can happen after publication date**

## Double sitting at Midhurst

24 Nov at 7.30pm, Court Room, Angel Hotel, Midhurst, West Sussex.

All members affected by the South Downs national park are invited to hear Dr Richard Shaw, the interim chief executive of the national park authority, update them on the progress being made to establish the new national park.

Prior to the open meeting about the park, the North West Sussex local NFU branch agm will take place at the same location with a 5.45pm for 6.00pm start.



Dr Richard Shaw