



MEDIA RELEASE: November 23rd 2011

Farms Open for All

Free and accessible farm visits for community groups

A group of young people from Myerscough College enjoying a visit to New Laund Farm, near Clitheroe, on 21st November 2011. The group watched a cow being milked and let their fingers get sucked in a milking machine cluster, before having a go catching and ear-tagging lambs. They then enjoyed a trailer ride around the farm, stopping to admire some stunning hill top views before watching a new born calf take its first steps. In the afternoon a walk across a river's 'stepping stones' rounded off the visit.

"There is a great buzz today. They'll remember the tractor and trailer ride for years! The group has been out in the countryside before but this trailer ride is the pinnacle" explained Peter Trice from Myerscough College. "Their faces were a picture. The whole thing is a great experience, normally one lad in particular would be a real handful but they've all engaged today."

Joint project co-ordinator James Taylor explained that the project is keen to organise free visits for community groups who are currently unable to access the countryside due to age, ability or social circumstance. "Hands on sensory rich activities like this are great fun! We'd love as many groups as possible to have the opportunity to enjoy a farm visit and see where their food comes from. There are 75 farms and nature reserves around England hosting Let Nature Feed Your Senses visits, and hosts will adapt visits to suit different groups' requirements."

Many of the farms participating in the project are wheelchair accessible with plenty of things to see, smell and touch at wheelchair height. Some farms also



offer tramper access, and the project can also help subsidize groups' transport costs.

Visits can be booked from now until August 2012. You can search for farms near you via the website www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org or by calling 0247 6413 911 or 01726 222 900 to speak to a project coordinator.



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For more information, case studies, images and testimonials please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Let Nature Feed Your Senses is a Big Lottery funded project run in partnership between LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) and Sensory Trust, with the aim of engaging people with nature, food and farming on a network of farms and nature reserves across England.

There are 75 farmers and nature reserve managers hosting Let Nature Feed Your Senses visits. Every farm and nature reserve is unique and activity on each site will vary from week to week, season to season. Every host is passionate about encouraging a love of nature through food and farming and wants to share this with groups who may have found accessing the outdoors a challenge. The project is working with people that currently cannot or do not access the countryside because of age, ability or social situation.

Let Nature Feed Your Senses visits are available for:

- People who have a disability
- People who live in an area of high social deprivation (10 per cent most deprived Super Output Area, regionally),
- People aged 65 or over
- School children who either have a disability, who live in an area of high social deprivation or attend a school that has been unable to previously access farm visits

2. Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) is a national charity inspiring and enabling prosperous farming that enriches the environment and engages local communities. LEAF promotes **Integrated Farm Management (IFM)** and links production of wholesome, affordable food with care for the countryside. LEAF aims for a sustainable agriculture – a long-term thriving farming economy providing management tools for farmers and encouraging the public out on to farm through events and Open Farm Sunday. For further information on LEAF please visit www.leafuk.org, tel: 02476 413911 or email: enquiries@leafuk.org

3. Sensory Trust is a national charity that works to ensure that people can enjoy and engage with outdoor environments regardless of their age, ability or social circumstance, building stronger connections between people and place. Sensory Trust works with greenspace managers, policy makers, care professionals and disengaged communities, to influence policy and inform professional practice in order to remove the barriers that prevent many people from enjoying nature and natural environments. For more information on The Sensory Trust, please visit www.sensorytrust.org.uk, tel: 01726 222900 email: enquiries@sensorytrust.org.uk

4. This three and a half year project is funded by Access to Nature an open grants programme run by Natural England with £25 million funding from Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme. The Access to Nature grant programme was launched in April 2008 and has now been open to applications for a year. During this time, Access to Nature has awarded just over £7 million pounds to 23 projects, including three flagship projects and one national project



5. Access to Nature is run by Natural England and is part of the The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments

6. It manages this £25 million Lottery-funded programme on behalf of a consortium of twelve national environmental organisations comprising BTCV, British Waterways, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Greenspace, Groundwork UK, Land Restoration Trust, The National Trust, Natural England, RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts and the Woodland Trust

7. Through this programme, it is Natural England's ambition to create opportunities for people from all backgrounds to have greater access to our natural environment and bring a lasting change to their awareness and understanding as well as improved links to the natural world, which many of us can take for granted

8. For further information about Access to Nature visit www.naturalengland.org.uk/accesstonature

9. For further information about the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards visit www.biglotteryfund.org.uk