

## RETAIL LEAF Backgrounder

### History

- LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) was set up in 1991, by a group of key farming industry experts. The aim was to encourage farmers in the UK to produce food with care for the environment and to improve public understanding of food and farming
- The idea was inspired by Germany's farmers who were changing the way they farmed the land to make it more environmentally friendly
- Nowadays, LEAF promotes environmentally responsible farming. They support farmers to produce good food, with care and to high environmental standards, identified in-store by the LEAF Marque logo. They also build public understanding and trust of food and farming in a number of ways, including Open Farm Sunday and visits to a national network of Demonstration Farms

### LEAF's main activities

- *The LEAF Marque*: is a food label you and your customers can trust. The assurance scheme, developed by LEAF, is based on environmentally responsible farming principles which support farmers to produce good food, with care and to high environmental standards. Your customers can be reassured that they are enjoying food they can trust from farmers who care – not only about food but the countryside, and the wildlife it sustains.
- LEAF offers the whole story - an opportunity for farmers to embrace IFM and consumers to get involved - through buying produce or visiting one of LEAF's nationwide network of Demonstration Farms
- *Integrated Farm Management (IFM)*: LEAF's IFM ensures the highest standards of food production with the minimum environmental impact and encourages a better public understanding of farming and countryside matters. What makes LEAF's IFM different is its ability to balance quality production with the environment and social responsibility across the whole farm and considers each farm's specific requirements on an individual basis
- *Open Farm Sunday*: is a national, annual event which sees hundreds of farmers open their gates to the general public. It is a great opportunity for visitors to see at first hand how farmers produce the food they eat and care for the countryside. For more information visit [www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org)
- *Demonstration Farms*: Everyone can learn more about LEAF and IFM by visiting one of LEAF's nationwide network of Demonstration Farms. They are all volunteers, carrying out IFM and host visits for a wide range of groups – from farmers to politicians, teachers to WI groups, so they can see for themselves how IFM can produce affordable food in harmony with the environment.

LEAF also holds technical field days and training for farmers to help them adopt more sustainable farming practices

### **Key staff**

- *Caroline Drummond*, Chief Executive of LEAF, was awarded an MBE for Services to Agriculture in 2009 and has been leading LEAF since it was established in 1991
- *Jeremy Boxall*, Commercial Manager of LEAF, has been working for LEAF for over 10 years. Jeremy manages the LEAF Marque scheme, a respected global environmental standard offering consumers a wide range of products that have been produced in accordance with LEAF's environmental principles

### **What others have to say about LEAF**

"Our strategy is to offer our customers the very best quality fresh produce available, and our policy to source from LEAF Marque accredited farms underpins this. We know that LEAF farmers, wherever they are in the world, embrace an environmental and socially responsible way of farming to ensure future sustainability. As we understand how important it is for our customers to know where and how their produce is grown, we are now extending the LEAF Marque scheme to all of our overseas growers too. Many communities in the developing world rely on trade in fruit and vegetables for putting food on their table and keeping their children healthy, so this will also help to make a difference to the long-term future of those farming communities."

***Mary Vizoso, Waitrose, Director, Food Technology; Fruit, Vegetable, Horticulture Buying.***

For further information or to become a friend of LEAF and support the future of environmentally responsible farming visit [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org).

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For further information and images, to arrange an interview or to obtain industry comment:

Ailsa Jensen

LEAF Press Office

T: 01189 475 956

E: [ailsa.jensen@ceres-pr.co.uk](mailto:ailsa.jensen@ceres-pr.co.uk)

### **Editor's Notes:**

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- For more information on all LEAF's work and activities, visit [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org)