

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018

## **LEAF Appoints New LEAF Marque Certification and Assurance Manager**

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) has announced the appointment of Sue Whittington as LEAF Marque Certification and Assurance Manager.

Previously, Sue worked at NSF Certification, where she gained extensive knowledge and experience in the management and development of assurance schemes and standards in both the UK and overseas for national, international and individual clients.

Sue is from a farming background, with a degree in Crop Science and Crop Production from the University of Reading and is BASIS and FACTS qualified. Prior to her time at NSF Certification, Sue worked for growers and importers of fruit, salads, vegetables and flowers in various technical and agronomic roles, helping growers meet the requirements of their customers.

Speaking on her new position at LEAF, Sue commented: "I am hugely excited to have joined the LEAF team at this time of change within the agriculture industry, and relish the opportunity to play a role in the continued development of LEAF Marque. It is a great privilege to be part of such a robust, credible, and increasingly global, assurance system, which I have seen evolve during the time I was with NSF Certification."

Caroline Drummond, LEAF Chief Executive added: "We are delighted to welcome Sue as our new Certification and Assurance Manager. We have worked with Sue for many years in her previous role at NSF Certification, so not only is she familiar with LEAF Marque and our work, but also she brings a wealth of expertise and understanding around farm assurance, its governance, training and processes. At this critical time for the farming industry to demonstrate its quality, integrity and environmental responsibility, LEAF Marque is well placed to demonstrate farmers' commitment and Sue will play a pivotal role in helping us accelerate our work in this area."

Sue joined LEAF on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

**ENDS**

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**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.
- **LEAF Innovation Centres** are research organisations whose work supports the research, evidence, development and promotion of Integrated Farm Management. They investigate and communicate practices which underpin the continual improvement of the Integrated Farm Management approach to help deliver more sustainable food and farming.
- **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. Next year's LEAF Open Farm Sunday will take place on 10th June 2018. Alongside LEAF Open Farm Sunday, farms across Britain also host **LEAF 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.
- In June 2017, LEAF merged with **FACE (Farming And Countryside Education)** and is now leading a collaborative approach within the industry for better education and public engagement among consumers, children and young people.