



LEAF's Global Impacts Report 2021

LEAF

(Linking Environment And Farming)

LEAF is the leading organisation delivering and promoting **Climate Positive**, thriving, resilient and exemplar agro-ecological farming at an increasingly global level. Working with farmers, the food industry, scientists, environmentalists, teachers, young people and consumers, we are looking at new ways to deliver productivity and prosperity among our farmers, enrich the environment and engage young people and society in a valuable and meaningful way.

Our vision:

A global farming and food system that delivers Climate Positive action, builds resilience and supports the health, diversity and enrichment of our food, farms, the environment and society.

Our mission:

To inspire and enable more circular approaches to farming and food systems through integrated, regenerative and vibrant nature-based solutions, that deliver productivity and prosperity among farmers, enriches the environment and positively engages young people and wider society.





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Industry support



Catherine Boyd, Head of Stakeholder Engagement for ELM, Defra

“LEAF’s expertise, knowledge and experience is invaluable to the development of the new Environmental Land Management scheme as we continue to work closely with them. The insight we are capturing through their test and trial is vital to helping us reach the government’s goal towards environmentally sustainable farming.”



Ian Finlayson, Chairman, LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee

“The latest LEAF Marque revision moves us towards outcome-based control points which clearly demonstrate sustainability. Covid has helped us look at new approaches to complete audits which drive impact and use technology to make the process simpler for all.”



Eamon Fenlon, Managing Director, Jersey Dairy

“All of our Jersey Dairy farms are LEAF Marque certified. LEAF continues to empower and enable our dairy farmers to make positive and sustainable choices in their work. Jersey Dairy is proud to be the first dairy in the world to hold the LEAF Marque on our fresh milk cartons and to communicate this message to our customers both in Jersey and further afield.”



Barney Kay, Head of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Horticulture, Sainsbury’s

“Farmers and growers working with LEAF supports them to farm sustainably and helps ensure we have supply chains fit for the future. Our landscape is changing and our farmers and growers face new challenges, including the biggest one of all, climate change. Working with LEAF and their new 10-year strategy is an important part of being ready to embrace that change. We are patrons of LEAF Education and believe that engaging and informing the next generation about where their food comes from and agriculture’s role in protecting and enhancing the environment is more important than ever.”



Angus Davison, Eccentric Chairman, Haygrove Limited

“Haygrove in all countries in which we operate measure our results on a triple bottom line, with for example monthly carbon accounting. We have been LEAF Marque for years, I am a proud board member, and we remain hugely inspired by the sheer drive and practical holistic order that LEAF brings to the improvement of agriculture. In my experience this is unique in the world. Please promote LEAF wherever you can, locally and internationally.”



Clare Blackledge, Programme Manager, Market-led Approaches, Environment Agency

“We recognise the importance of public-private partnerships to encourage farmers to protect and enhance the natural resources they depend on, especially soil and water. This is why we value continuing our long-standing partnership with LEAF to offer formal earned recognition for LEAF Marque certified businesses allowing us to target our resources away from these low-risk farms. We also value our position on the LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee to actively contribute to shaping continuous improvement of the LEAF Marque Standard to ensure it continues to certify demonstrable environmental outcomes.”



Rebecca Hesketh, Partner & Agriculture Manager, Fresh Produce, Waitrose & Partners

“LEAF has led the way for environmental sustainability on farms for many years and their new strategy ensures they will continue to do that in years to come. We value our long partnership with LEAF and recognise the benefits that this brings for our business, the people we work with and our planet.”



Welcome

Tom Green

LEAF Marque Chairman

Welcome to LEAF's ninth **Global Impacts Report** which celebrates another year of great progress. This report tells an encouraging story and, as ever, is supported by numbers and statistics which illustrate both our mission and the collective achievements of our many farmers and supply chain partners.

Farmers from **21 countries** worldwide are certified LEAF Marque and, in 2020, **45% of UK fruit and vegetables** were produced on LEAF Marque farms. These numbers not only recognise the management practices used on those farms and the demonstrable incremental benefits for sustainability but, critically, they also provide independent assurance to the many brands, retailers and consumers that are supplied by those producers.

42% of LEAF Marque farmers now routinely measure their soil organic matter; **39%** of LEAF Marque farmers are using a carbon footprint tool; and **67%** of LEAF Marque farmers now use energy derived from one or more renewable sources. These indicators are increasing annually and reflect the extent of change in mindset and management practice that is underway in our sector. Thank goodness for that, and for the now widespread acknowledgement in society that tackling the **Climate Crisis** is our number one priority. The challenge for all of us is to turn the aspiration for more climate friendly operations and lifestyles into practice – this is what LEAF does for farmers, and thereby for the consumers of their produce.

Leveraging the depth of expertise and resources that reside amongst the LEAF team and our diverse network of supporters, members and collaborators, LEAF offers leadership, advice and the tools for farmers to **improve the sustainability** of their operations; and LEAF Marque recognises those achievements and provides the independent certification by which this is communicated to brands and consumers.

I take this opportunity to thank all of our team in LEAF together with our farmer members and many supply chain partners. The results celebrated in this report are your achievements and we can take real pride in sharing them.



Celebrating our grower's achievements

Caroline Drummond MBE

LEAF Chief Executive

This report is a tribute to the dedication, hard work and vision of our LEAF Marque growers across the globe. It shows what can be achieved for more **climate positive** farming through the collective efforts of farmers who are recognised and rewarded for their environmental achievements. Farmers who are supported by training and tools to continually improve and innovate, are incentivised in the marketplace through new and exciting partnerships with retailers, food brands, processors and grower groups and crucially, implement progressive and practical business policies that drive change.

COVID-19 has put into sharp focus the fragility of global food supply and distribution chains and revealed consumer's growing demand and expectation for **traceability** and **sustainability**. However, we also face the existential threat of **climate change** and the need to provide food for a growing global population, while restoring the health of the planet. Thriving, resilient and nature-based farming systems are a key part of the solution.

Protection and enhancement of the environment is the cornerstone of our work and England's new **Environmental Land Management** scheme presents huge opportunities for our LEAF Marque growers as **Beacons of Excellence** for sustainable farming. Globally, they are making important contributions to the delivery of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**.

LEAF Marque certification is grounded in rigour and transparency; it is data-driven and research led. This allows our growers to evidence the impact they are making, to our soils and water sources, biodiversity, energy efficiency, reducing carbon and sustainable livestock production.

I am extremely proud of what our growers continue to achieve. We face big challenges but this report clearly shows that those businesses that keep sustainability at the heart of their business strategies, emerge stronger and more resilient.



Leeks
98%



Broccoli
95%



Celery
95%



Lettuce
90%



Asparagus
86%



Watercress
83%



Onions
80%



Beetroot
78%



Tomatoes
76%



Cherries
75%

**45% of UK
fruit & vegetables are
grown on LEAF Marque
certified businesses**



Our global reach

299,185ha
on LEAF Marque
certified businesses

UK 237,465 ha
Spain 24,626 ha
France 13,841 ha
Italy 5,775 ha
Egypt 3,423 ha



Wheat
60,028ha



Potato
28,067ha



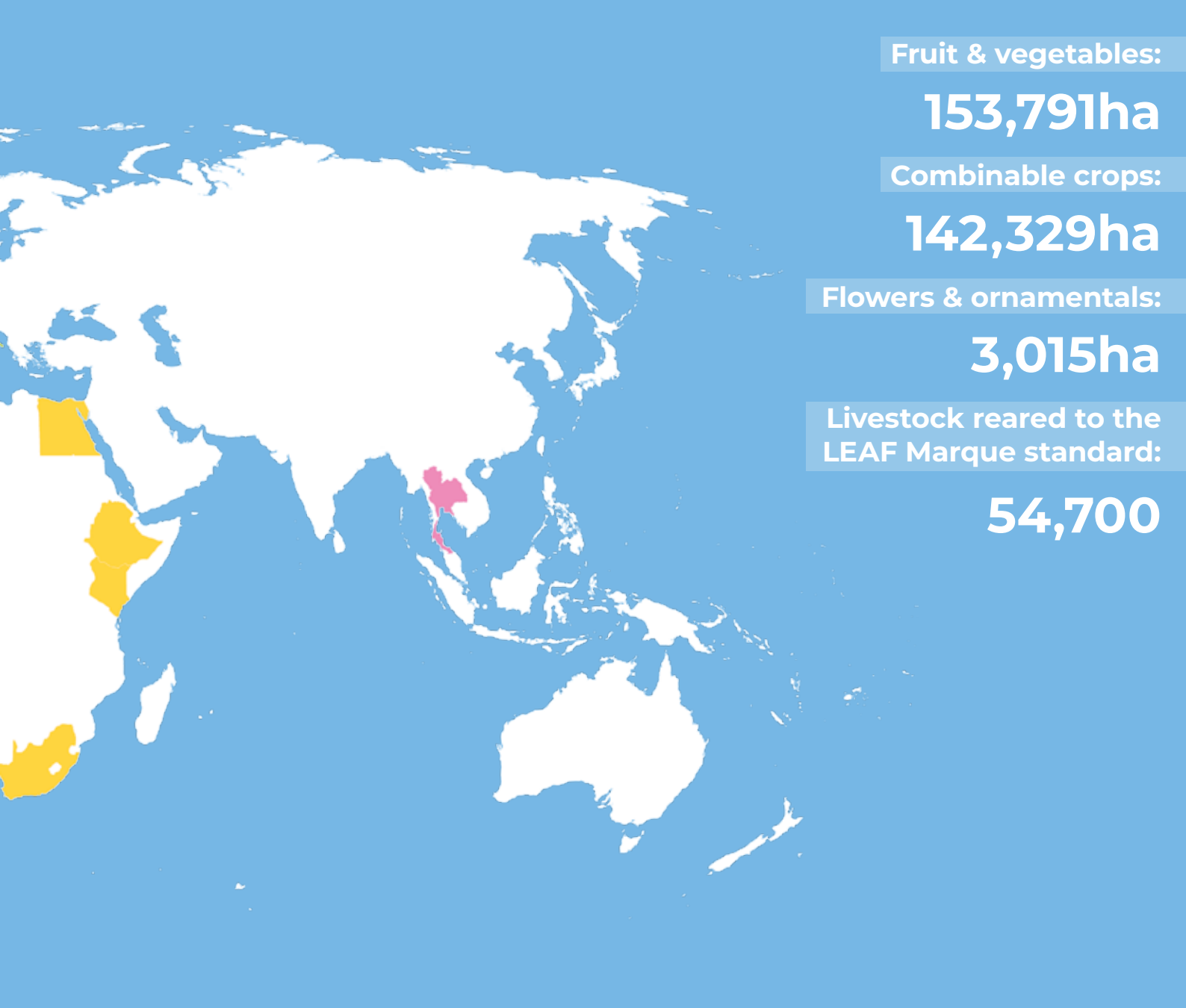
Barley
26,696ha



Lettuce
12,470ha



Rapeseed
10,273ha



Fruit & vegetables:

153,791ha

Combinable crops:

142,329ha

Flowers & ornamentals:

3,015ha

Livestock reared to the
LEAF Marque standard:

54,700



Broccoli
9,337ha



Maize
9,093ha



Sugar Beet
8,762ha



Onion
7,900ha



Cauliflower
7,374ha



Carrot
7,165ha



Sweetcorn
5,084ha

Case study:

Resilient & Ready

Routes to LEAF Marque: supporting emerging leaders in sustainable farming

The [Resilient & Ready](#) programme is a ground-breaking industry link up with **LEAF** and **Corteva Agriscience**, set up to find progressive farmers from across the UK who want to build greater business resilience.

The programme offers farmers access to sustainability experts, technical support and one-to-one mentoring. Participating farmers are also being supported to become LEAF Marque certified and undertaking communications training to provide them with the know-how, skills and confidence to go on to become industry leaders in sustainable farming.

“We all recognise that agriculture is changing with new government policy and a greater focus on protecting and enhancing the environment,” said **Simon Parker**, Corteva’s Head of Marketing. “Working with LEAF, we want to help our chosen **Resilient & Ready** farmers through that process while sharing their stories – warts and all – with the rest of the agricultural community.”





Four farms are now 16 months into a three-year programme of practical and theoretical training, professional consultancy and trials work. Each business is heading in its own direction, but they share many of the same goals around sustainability, productivity, biodiversity and profitability.

LEAF is leading the project, working with farmers through an Integrated Farm Management approach, introducing LEAF Marque, specialists in areas such as soil health, wildlife and carbon and Speak Out training to help effectively communicate their stories, whilst Corteve provides support including pipeline innovations, such as products to capture nitrogen and novel bio-stimulants.

Outreach and collaboration are cornerstones of the project and a string of successful digital events in 2020 and 2021 will be supported by physical farm tours in due course. A high-profile event in the House of Lords is also planned.

Simon said: “We are not yet halfway through this Resilient & Ready initiative and already the expertise and experiences the farmers have been exposed to are helping to shape their business decisions, which is great to see.”

Our COVID-19 response

Even before the outbreak of COVID-19, global food systems were faced with a formidable “triple challenge” of simultaneously providing food security and nutrition to a growing global population, keeping global warming below 1.5°C and protecting and enhancing the environment to reverse biodiversity loss.

COVID-19 both highlighted and exacerbated all the challenges and problems with the food system – access to food, labour, affordability, and lack of resilience. The unanticipated shock of the pandemic brought into sharp focus the urgency of moving away from “business as usual”.



385 remote audits completed



257 participants at online training & field days



16 online LEAF Surgeries





Our farmers, growers, auditors and the LEAF team have risen to the challenges of **remote working**, embraced **new technologies**, shown flexibility and been quick to respond to a changed world. Thanks to our close relationships with our **Certification and Accreditation Bodies** and in collaboration with other Standard-Setters and fellow **ISEAL** Code Compliant members, we were able to respond swiftly at the beginning of the pandemic. We re-engineered our audit approach to ensure the health and safety of our growers and auditors by introducing **remote audits**. Moving our operations and interactions online has sparked innovation and created real opportunities to become more inclusive, flexible, and responsive. We are committed to harnessing new and emerging technologies to evolve our assurance model going forward to become more resilient and better prepared for future crises.

Throughout 2020, we ran an extensive programme of **online LEAF Surgeries**, bringing together LEAF Marque stakeholders to share insights into industry trends, opportunities and innovations around a range of issues such as Brexit, grassland management, biodiversity and, effective communication. In addition, we adapted our two-day **BASIS Introduction to IFM and LEAF Marque Training** to an online format and introduced new bespoke **Certification Body Training** modules, enabling growers, advisors and auditors to examine IFM in detail and the processes involved in LEAF Marque certification.



YOUR FIRST CHOICE PRODUCE PARTNER

LEAF really matters to the companies in Fresca Group. We're growers ourselves, and we buy fresh produce from many more farmers both in the UK and around the world.

We see first hand the benefits of integrated farm management and best practice at work.

The technical teams in our companies are strong advocates of the LEAF Marque scheme. We introduce, encourage and support growers with the scheme and indeed, we adopt IFM and LEAF principles on our own sites. That's why we're pleased to be associated with this publication and with LEAF.

To learn more about Fresca Group and our constituent businesses, please see www.frescagroup.co.uk





Case study:

Hugh Lowe Farms

Remote Auditing: the 'new normal'?

Hugh Lowe Farms grow strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries in polytunnels and glasshouses in Kent, England. The business had their first Remote Audit in Summer 2020 and have praised the process.

The first stage of the **LEAF Marque Remote Audit** required Hugh Lowe Farms to gather all their management plans and policies and other documentation required for the audit and upload them onto the **LEAF Marque Data Room**. The time they invested into this process will be extremely beneficial for future audits as now all the required documentation is in one place and can be easily found and updated.

The day of the audit was much more relaxed as the auditor was able to review the documents beforehand and prepare any questions or follow ups in advance. Not only did this make the audit less onerous, but saved a lot of time as well. The auditor could shape the audit around what they had assessed in the documentation and come prepared with questions or queries. The audit took place on a video call as a farm tour and discussion to provide visual and verbal evidence.

Overall, Hugh Lowe Farms found the Remote Auditing experience extremely positive and welcomes the process, hoping it will continue to be an aspect of the **LEAF Marque audit process** in the future.





Driving policy change

For **30 years**, LEAF has been a leading voice in pushing for a more **climate positive** farming future. The policy measures needed for farmers to meet national and global **net zero carbon emissions** and the ambitions of the **Sustainable Development Goals**, the **Paris Agreement** and the **Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework**, require a partnership approach. By working with government departments and agencies, we look to drive a more interconnected approach; creating opportunities and incentives for farmers to be recognised and rewarded for their environmental commitments.

The Government's commitment to prioritise the environment and 'public goods' in the new **Environmental Land Management (E.L.M)** scheme is encouraging. Throughout 2020, **LEAF** has been working with the **Defra Regulation and Enforcement** and **E.L.M** teams looking at how support, training and advice can best be provided to help farmers to deliver these public goods or be recognised for those they already deliver, through transition to **Integrated Farm Management** and progression towards **LEAF Marque certification**. This is allowing farming businesses to have a positive impact on the development of a future payment system that works for their businesses.



LEAF Marque certification is also being used to leverage practical change on the ground by the **States of Jersey**. Under their **Rural Support Scheme**, LEAF Marque farmers receive payments for the environmental and social goods they offer. This earned recognition model is also being used by the Environment Agency, with **LEAF Marque certified businesses** recognised for their enhanced water quality management and pollution control measures.

We engage frequently in government consultations and represent the voice of our farmers at many industry and government groups, including the **UK Trade and Agricultural Commission**. This enables us to push the case for protection of trade deals which address environmental concerns and champion LEAF Marque certification as a **global assurance system**, recognising high environmental standards of food production.

By working with government and industry stakeholders, we aim to create strong market incentives to drive uptake of more **regenerative** and **nature-based** farming and food systems, delivered through LEAF Marque certification.



39% use a carbon footprint tool



42% record soil organic matter



67% have one or more types of renewable energy generation on-farm



278 monitor energy consumption



Case study:

Duncan Farrington, Bottom Farm Becoming carbon neutral

Bottom Farm is an arable business, growing a range of combinable crops, most specifically **oilseed rape** which goes into the **Farrington's Mellow Yellow** cold pressed rapeseed oil range. Sustainability is at the core of the business; not only are they **LEAF Marque certified**, but the Farrington's Mellow Yellow range has recently been **certified carbon and plastic neutral**. Duncan Farrington explains that being LEAF Marque certified and adopting the **LEAF Integrated Farm Management ethos** was a huge step in becoming carbon neutral due to the vast amount of data he had collected on energy use, soil organic matter, and carbon emissions.

Effective **soil management** is essential in becoming carbon neutral and has huge potential in terms of **carbon sequestration**. In order to maximise this, Duncan does not plough, and the crop rotation is planned to enhance soil health and replenish nutrients. These measures improve carbon stores, save costs, and reduce field applications and therefore fuel. Duncan believes that farmers and landowners will play a huge role in carbon sequestration in the future, through more **regenerative** practices focusing on soil health, managing trees, and creating more inviting wildlife habitats such as hedges and wildflower areas.

By implementing more **integrated, agroecological** approaches and always looking at ways to improve, Duncan's commitment to managing the farm in a genuinely sustainable way is leading to greater efficiencies and reductions in **energy use** and **carbon emissions**.



We are **Proud To Be** the **World's First...**

- ✓ Carbon Neutral
- ✓ Plastic Neutral
- ✓ LEAF Marque



Saving the world tastes good.

Our award-winning range is made with Farrington's Mellow Yellow Cold Pressed Rapeseed Oil. With a subtle, buttery taste, it is fantastically versatile; brilliant for roasting, frying, baking and dressing.

The environment is at the heart of everything we do. We are proud that Farrington's Mellow Yellow is the world's first certified carbon & plastic neutral food brand!



www.farrington-oils.co.uk



Food: value & perspective

Whether in terms of **health, economics, environment, or culture**, food is fundamental. Yet it is often only considered from a single perspective. **LEAF Marque's** position within the food system enables it to recognise the value of food from a variety of perspectives. It can therefore demonstrate the wide-ranging impact of LEAF Marque certified businesses and help address the imbalance between the value society places on food compared to the perceived value from food producers.

The value of food from a producer's perspective is mostly **economic and environmental**. Implementing **Integrated Farm Management (IFM)** addresses a range of sustainability issues and its context-specific approach enables management practices to be incorporated into an **economically viable business model**. **Societal values**, whilst less obvious, are vitally important, as society's understanding and support of how IFM delivers sustainability is essential for its continued adoption and success. LEAF Marque provides a framework for scaling up these values and recognising the combined positive impact of certified businesses, ranging from **supporting healthy diets**, to **health and wellbeing** through access to the environment.

The value of food from a consumer perspective is complex and dependent on a wide range of factors, with **socio-economic** and **cultural contexts** influencing food choices. LEAF Marque is not an opinion, campaign, or mandate; it is a tool to enable informed decisions and a mechanism to support businesses farming more sustainably. As such, it is respectful of an individual's food choices by framing sustainability as a core component of their decision making rather than a conflicting factor. LEAF Marque actively engages with decision makers and researchers to advocate for the role of certified businesses in a sustainable food system. In addition, LEAF Marque is complementary to LEAF's other charitable activities which focus on providing society with **information** and **opportunities for education and engagement** with more sustainable farming and food.

Feeding a hungry planet

The world's population is expected to increase by 2 billion in the next 30 years, rising to **9.7 billion in 2050**. It has been estimated that we need to produce more food than we have ever produced in human history. Added to this, the expanding global population is getting wealthier and diets are changing.

This presents profound challenges to food security – across both production and consumption. **Climate change** will only make things worse, with rising levels of CO₂ reducing the nutritional value of certain crops, increasing competition for land due to urbanisation, rising sea levels and the growing need for bioenergy, carbon capture and storage.

Food production is entirely dependent on other ecosystem services – **water, soil and biodiversity**. It is essential that these are maintained and enhanced for a food system that delivers **climate positive action**, is more resilient to change and supports the health, diversity and enrichment of our food, farms, environment, and wider society.

LEAF Marque certification empowers and enables farmers to make positive changes towards more regenerative, sustainable farming systems – more productive soils, cleaner water and air, greater biodiversity, and more efficient energy use – whilst still producing food. Through their collective efforts, they are making meaningful contributions to the delivery of important UK and global targets particularly in relation to the objectives of **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2** - to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.





Case study:

The New Forest Fruit Company Pathways to productivity

The **New Forest Fruit Company** are a soft fruit growing business who grow, pack, and distribute strawberries, and other soft fruit. Each year margins are squeezed, so they continually look at ways to improve productivity and increase efficiencies with **innovative** and **sustainable methods**.

Soft fruit production is very labour intensive so implementing methods that improve worker efficiency, such as **assisting technology** and better **fruit varieties** is essential. One method The New Forest Fruit Company have implemented is to use a tractor and trailer between the rows of strawberries to collect the picked fruit which reduces the amount of time staff spent transporting the trays of strawberries.

The business also implements **Integrated Pest Management** approaches by applying beneficial insects which predate on harmful pests. This reduces costs on plant protection products as well as reduces the labour time required for their application.

Classhouse Manager, **Ashley Wensak** said that adopting the **Integrated Farm Management** mindset, required of being a **LEAF Marque certified business**, it really helps to improve productivity by implementing sustainable practices. He feels it is essential to look after the resources in order to grow produce whilst enhancing the local area to improve **biodiversity**. The future is not about increasing the size of the business, rather **increasing yield per hectare** by introducing better varieties and mechanising as many processes as possible to improve efficiencies whilst remaining environmentally sustainable.



Case study:

Elveden Estates

Planning for productivity

Elveden Estates is a **9,100ha** business, renowned for growing root vegetables and cereals. Productivity is a key part of the management at Elveden, and is focused on increasing and improving net food production. **Andrew Francis** comments that because farming businesses are continuously squeezed and challenged to produce affordable, high quality, and sustainable food it means planning is essential to produce a quality product with the right inputs whilst protecting and having a positive effect environmentally.

LEAF Marque certification has a big influence on this by implementing the nine sections of **Integrated Farm Management** and **continuous improvement**. Andrew said that **planning** is an essential part of how the businesses is run, with benchmarking and reviewing what has been done to identify new pathways to produce a better crop, more sustainably and efficiently, in the future.

Key aspects of Integrated Farm Management and LEAF Marque certification help to improve net food production. By implementing strategies such as reduced field cultivations and more precision chemical applications, it helps improve both soil and crop health for this years and future production. This also has an **economic impact** and can reduce costs by reduced tractor use, fuel, and input costs, whilst improving the soil for the future. Andrew says it is important to plan to be as efficient as possible, to have more directed inputs and as minimal artificial interventions as possible. With this in mind, it is essential to choose the right **crop protection and nutrient product** to get the correct effect and ensure there is no waste in order to improve crop and soil health and reduce pollution risks and costs.






225,846ha

of crop on LEAF Marque
certified businesses
where nature based
crop protection
strategies are being
used to support
productivity

including **270**
different crop classes



LEAF Marque certified businesses: delivering more climate positive farming & food systems



13%
average
habitat area

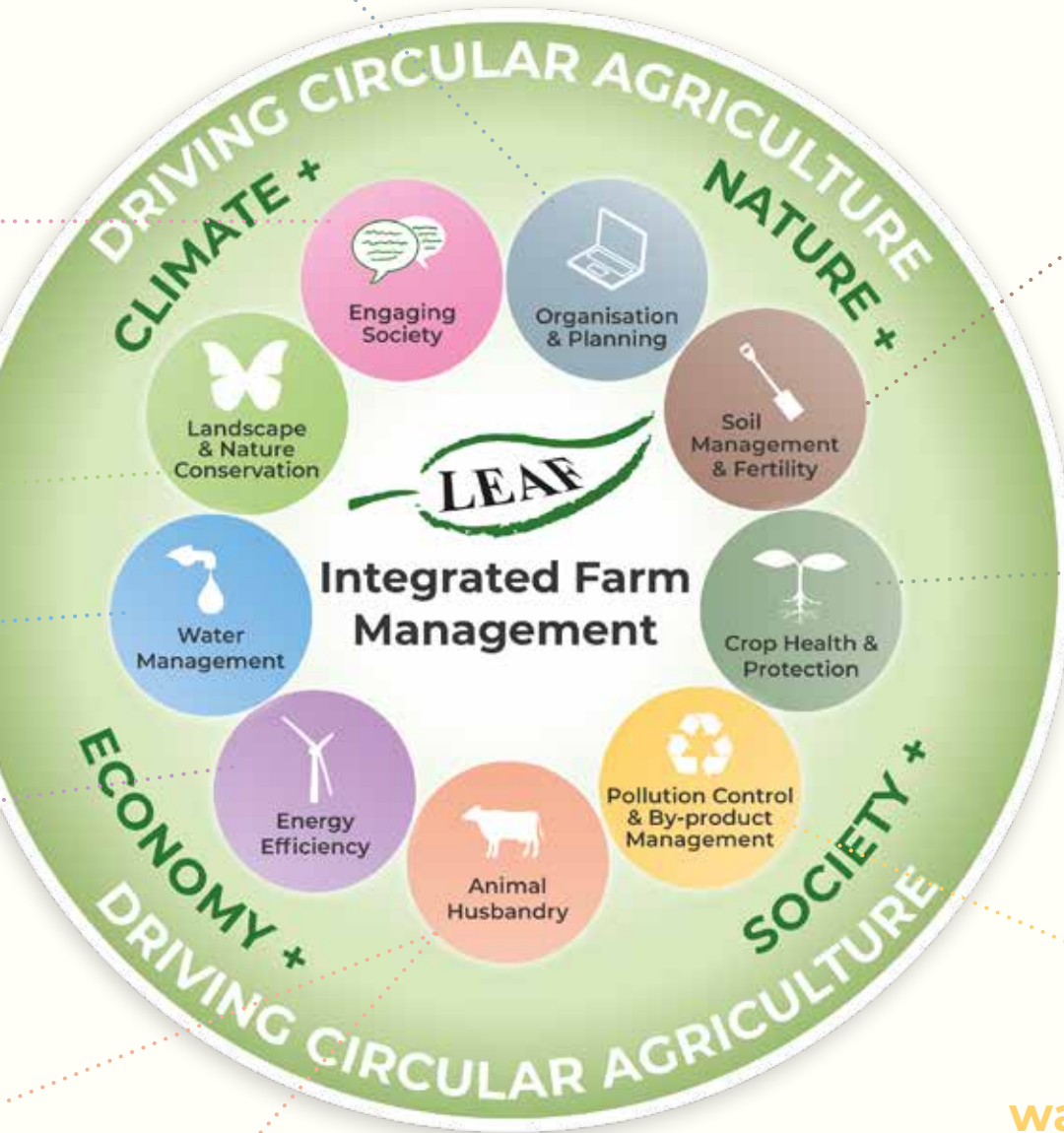
51%
working with others in the catchment
to improve water quality and water
management

67%
have one or more types
of renewable energy
generation on-farm

30%
engaging with a
wider audience
through social media,
websites & written
material

84%
with livestock regularly
monitoring animal welfare
indicators to assess
performance

73% staff on LEAF Marque certified businesses have appropriate awareness of IFM



42% recording soil organic matter

45% carrying out all 8 aspects of IPM best practice

44% carrying out waste management best practice

57% with livestock carrying out antibiotic best practice

Boosting biodiversity through partnerships

Biodiversity underpins processes and ecosystem services essential for agriculture, such as soil formation, pest control, maintaining soil fertility and helping alleviate flooding and drought pressures.

Through careful, joined up and integrated land management, that works with rather than against nature, **LEAF Marque** farmers aim to strike a balance between producing sufficient food with maintaining **agro-ecosystems that are rich in biodiversity** – both above and below ground. We continue to see our growers taking active steps to improve habitats and the farmed environment through a range of measures including **tree** and **hedgerow planting**, creation of **habitat banks**, and sensitive management of **water sources**.

Meeting both national and global biodiversity targets cannot be achieved by growers alone. It requires the sharing of expertise, resources and competencies of different stakeholders working to achieve common goals in a more effective manner, than when working separately.





Now in its fifth year, The [Jordans Farm Partnership](#), an alliance between **LEAF**, **Jordans Cereals**, **The Wildlife Trusts** and **The Princes Countryside Fund** is pioneering a new model of how biodiversity changes can be delivered on the ground. This is being delivered through **LEAF Marque certification** and the provision of long term and holistic conservation plans looking at soil health, species management and flora and fauna assessment.

Similarly, [The Vitacress Farm Excellence Programme](#) is an outcomes-based approach to measuring environmental improvements within the leaf crop, protected growing and aquaculture sector, with LEAF Marque providing assurance and credibility to Vitacress' sustainability credentials. LEAF Marque's expertise in upskilling farmers facilitates the longevity of the project, in addition to enabling an approach that is tailored to each farm.

These alliances allow us to maximise resources and competencies; they also offer important models for future replication, helping to build capacity and may lead to policy level impact on biodiversity enhancement.

7,228,444m
of hedges

From the UK to Kenya

1,062 ponds

221,860m
of habitat banks

From London to Sheffield

383,768
in-field trees

1,999,434m
of non-hedge
boundaries

629 reservoirs
that benefited
biodiversity

83% managing
reservoirs for
water quality, safety & wildlife



Case study:

Jordans Farm Partnership

At **Jordans Cereals**, we are all about loving, growing and protecting nature, and the [Jordans Farm Partnership \(JFP\)](#) forms the cornerstone of this, building on a 30 year legacy of protecting nature.

Founded in 2016, the JFP involves over 30 farmers that grow oats for Jordans who combined farm over 15,000 hectares of the countryside! This industry-leading standard for land management has been developed in partnership between **Jordans, LEAF, The Wildlife Trusts** and **The Prince's Countryside Fund**.

Every one of these farmers is **LEAF Marque certified** and committed to protecting and managing an area equal to at least 10% of their farmed land for wildlife — a core principle of the JFP. Currently, our farmers manage an average of 17% of land for wildlife.

Their local **Wildlife Trusts Advisor** will then create a bespoke plan for their patch. This all adds up, and over the last 5 years of the JFP, we've managed to protect 4,060 ha for wildlife – roughly the same size as Oxford... or over 5,000 football pitches! We're also proud of the variety of habitats the JFP helps to protect including hedgerows, waterways, woodlands and grasslands.

More than
30 farmers
over **15,000ha**
of land
with an
average of
17%
protected for
wildlife
equal to
4,060ha
or
5,000
football pitches!

The JFP also allows us to have a closer relationship with our oat farmers. The **LEAF Sustainable Farming Review** ensures that all of our farmers are thinking holistically about how they manage their farm and allows us to understand what they are working on and how we can support them. It also helps our farmers to spot opportunities that can then be shared as best practice.

LEAF Marque underpins the JFP standard by providing the assurance that farms are managed in a holistically sustainable way. We want this partnership to be seen as a **model of sustainable agriculture**, inspiring more businesses to put biodiversity first in their supply chains.





Case study:

Vitacress Farm Excellence Programme

In June 2020, the [Vitacress Farm Excellence \(VFE\)](#) programme was launched in partnership with **LEAF Marque certification** to prove our commitment to sustainable farming. With a clear understanding of what we want to achieve, it will measure environmental improvements through ecological surveys, incorporate tailored **10-year biodiversity management plans** and utilise bespoke **LEAF Sustainable Farming Review** reporting. It is a unique collaboration between **Vitacress, LEAF** and **the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust**.

Vitacress Farm Excellence will apply to all **11** of our UK growing sites. It will help us to identify all wildlife currently inhabiting our land; understand what action we need to take to improve it; and report on increased biodiversity because of improved habitat quality and better species diversity. Through training, and with support from our local wildlife groups and ecologists, our people will be well placed to monitor habitats and species on our farms.

Our partners:



LEAF Marque provides assurance and credibility to Vitacress' sustainability credentials, as part of Vitacress Farm Excellence. LEAF Marque delivers bespoke reporting to give recognition to Vitacress' inspiring and innovative progress in sustainable farming. LEAF Marque's expertise in upskilling farmers facilitates the longevity of the project, in addition to enabling an approach that is tailored to each farm.



Vitacress Runcton Nursery: a focus on protected growing

Surrounding **12 hectares of glasshouse** in West Sussex, we have a small area of land which is now being actively managed for the benefit of wildlife and our growing operation.

We are managing **wildflower** areas to provide nectar and pollen for insects. Some of these insects provide natural pest control for the crop growing under the glass. We are now only cutting our **hedgerows** every other year to promote the growth of fruits and nuts which will provide food for birds and other wildlife.

We manage a **reedbed and ditch system** for the benefit of a transient population of water voles, which we hope will become a permanent population. We have also recorded evidence of harvest mice nesting in these areas and an array of farmland birds.

All the **conservation management** work provides food and shelter for wildlife and forms corridors to link with the wider landscape. **Team Vitacress** actively monitor biodiversity by regularly walking the designated wildlife walking routes across the site.

Working with



Arcadian



Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) is the leading conservation body across the two counties. HIWWT is proud to partner with Vitacress on the Farm Excellence programme in line with their Wilder strategy to promote sustainable farming and nature's recovery.

Arcadian Ecology and Consulting is a wholly owned subsidiary of HIWWT who have worked with Vitacress Farm Excellence to provide professional ecological and farm advice.

Engaging society

People are increasingly interested in the food they eat, where it comes from and how it is produced. We approach the twin issues of sustainable production and sustainable consumption by raising awareness and **improving engagement, knowledge and understanding of sustainable, healthy food systems and diets**, so that more informed choices can be made.

Giving people opportunities to see the realities of farming – how animals are reared, how crops are protected, what our certified businesses do to boost biodiversity, enhance wildlife and care for soils – are incredibly powerful experiences in leveraging more climate positive food decisions. **LEAF Marque farmers** reach out to a wide range of audiences through social media, engaging with the press, farm events – both live and virtual and through a range of industry outreach initiatives.



30%

engaging with a wider audience through social media, websites & written material



21%

engaging with the media, television & radio



4,732

on & off farm events to a variety of audiences

(including school children, farmers, colleges & universities, industry representatives & community groups)



During 2020, when farm visits were not possible due to the pandemic, we saw **LEAF Marque growers** take to social media to open their gates virtually for [LEAF Online Farm Sunday](#). Visitors were able to get a glimpse into a wide range of different businesses and enterprises, including vegetable production at **G's Fresh in Cambridgeshire**, dairy farming at **Westlands Farm in Jersey**, potato growing at the **Jersey Royal Company**, stawberry production at **AJ and CI Snell in Herefordshire** and for the first time, an **international** perspective into pineapple growing at **Blue Skies Zulu Farm in Ghana**.

Young people are more involved in the sustainable food agenda than ever before and LEAF Marque is embedded across our education programmes. Our extensive range of educational resources across all key stages, outline the importance of LEAF Marque certification in driving more climate positive farming and food systems. Last year, LEAF Marque business, **The Green House Sussex** worked with [LEAF Education](#) to produce a series of videos for a virtual careers fair. We also developed a **Global Citizen workshop**, featuring videos of LEAF Marque growers.

LEAF Marque farmers regularly take part in [Farmer Time](#) - linking up with schools through fortnightly video calls giving children a 'real-time' insight into sustainable farming and opening up dialogue around food production, the environment, climate change and healthy eating.

Our shared path forward

The achievements of our growers highlighted in this report demonstrate that collectively, **LEAF Marque certified businesses** are making steady and incremental improvements to boost climate resilience, conserve and enhance biodiversity, build resilience, and support the **health, diversity and enrichment** of our food, farms, the environment, and society.

LEAF reaches its **30th anniversary** at a time of immense change, both in the UK and globally. There are big challenges ahead – economically, politically and climatically. LEAF Marque growers are building on three decades of pioneering more sustainable farming through **Integrated Farm Management**. They are pivotal to the delivery of our new [**10-Year Strategy 2021-2031**](#) in driving collective action for more regenerative, nature-based farming and food systems.





Change will be delivered at farm-level; LEAF Marque certification is not an end in itself, but a powerful tool for advancing sustainability. Gaining insight into the impact of LEAF Marque certification is crucial for continuous improvement of our Standard. We continue to invest in our monitoring and evaluation programme and have commissioned an **independent study** to look into the ‘added value’ benefits of certification. In addition, we will be conducting a **public consultation** of the next version of the LEAF Marque Standard at the end of 2021. Better insight into impact eventually leads to better results of our work to the benefit of our certified farmers.

The path towards more sustainable farming is a shared one. The responsibility is not on the shoulders of our growers alone. Our work with government, industry, NGO's and citizens serves to strengthen and inform our work and impact. We are determined to build on these alliances. As we look forward, our focus is on delivering and promoting climate positive action - thriving, resilient and exemplar agro-ecological farming and scaling this up in new sectors and at a global level. **LEAF Marque certification remains at the heart of all we do as we embark on our next exciting chapter.**



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Digital Tools

Appendix

The key data used in LEAF's Global Impacts Report 2021 includes information from the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review¹ and Independent Evaluations². The data is provided to the best of our knowledge.

¹LEAF Sustainable Farming Review

The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review is an online self-assessment resource for LEAF members to support their implementation of Integrated Farm Management. The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review replaced the LEAF Audit in December 2014. The completion of the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review is a requirement of the LEAF Marque Standard (v12.0 onwards) and this completion is independently verified. However, the specific responses within the Review are self-assessed and not verified through third party inspection.

The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review is composed of around 90 principles based around the nine sections of Integrated Farm Management along with further guidance information and links to support the user. Each question must be answered in one of the following five ways: Fully Achieved; Considerable Progress; Some Progress; Not Started; or Not Applicable. Additionally, the user indicates which of the supporting practices, which are associated with the principle, they carry out.

For the purposes of this report, analysis of this data only includes LEAF members who held a current, full LEAF Marque certificate at 31st December 2020 for the 2021 data.

Due to updates to the product list at the beginning of 2020, there was production data missing for farmers who had filled in the information before the changes were made. In these circumstances, data from 2019 was used instead.

Unless otherwise stated, the data shows the total crop area (not farm business area) for LEAF members that answered, "Fully Achieved". It should be noted that LEAF members who responded "Considerable Progress" or "Some Progress" may still meet the criteria required within the LEAF Marque Standard; however, this is not represented within this report. The LEAF Sustainable Farming Review can be completed at any point during the year.

²Independent Evaluations

Data from the following independent evaluations were included:

FAO (2017). The future of food and agriculture. Trends and Challenges. *Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations*. Rome.

Full details of evaluator, methodology, key findings, conclusions, limitations, and recommendation can be found in the full report.

For more information, please contact LEAF (see back cover for contact details).

We would like to thank all members that provided photography for this LEAF Global Impacts Report 2021!

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