

Maths on the Farm

John Warren of FACE explains how teachers are donning their wellies to explore opportunities to learn maths on a farm

Maths is a subject that often makes many adults turn up their noses. But the farming community has joined forces with the educational community to take an inspiring step towards overcoming this barrier to learning at a grass roots level.



Dr. Steve Humble from the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Maths (NCETM) led an engaging and informative seminar aptly named 'Maths on the Farm'. The seminar, organised by Farming and Countryside Education (FACE), was held at Spring Barrow Lodge Farm, Leicestershire. The multi-award winning farm is famous for their finest Longhorn Beef, Blackbrook Lamb and Rare Breed Pork.

Steve introduced the topic and demonstrated some of the resources available on the NCETM website, especially in the new 'Learning Maths Outside the Classroom' section. Throughout his presentation he encouraged the attendees to share their own experiences, and there were several 'moments of clarity' for teachers and farmers alike. Everyone present was then encouraged to participate in a hand-on exercise, donning their wellies to explore the opportunities to learn maths around a farm. Spring Barrow Lodge was the perfect location so that attendees soon had plenty of maths activities to use with children visiting a farm.

Our hosts John and Pat Stanley laid out a splendid feast, much of which was their own produce and in the spirit of the day the sun came out so the afternoon could be completed sitting out in the sun. Thanks to the varied backgrounds of the 18 delegates, by the end of the day key activities had been identified for all age groups ranging from primary to GCSE and beyond. All who attended left with a positive and enlightened feeling about Maths on the Farm, and a bagful of fresh produce from the farm shop!

Farming and Countryside Education (FACE) helps young people learn more about food and farming in a sustainable countryside. FACE promotes visits to farms and local producers as part of the school curriculum and provides easy access to resources and activities to complement these visits. Regional coordinators organise a variety of seminars across England and Wales to enable farmers and teachers to help children and young people learn more about where their food comes from.

For more information about FACE and future seminars visit: www.face-online.org.uk

National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Maths Website: www.ncetm.org.uk/home