

## Discover the rich language of Britain's farms

With hundreds of farms opening their gates this Sunday (12 June), families across the country will have a chance to discover life on Britain's farms. But as well as seeing real farming at first hand it appears there is something else to discover – the wonderful dialect of Britain's countryside. Local words and phrases are often nowadays toned down or forgotten completely, but a survey of LEAF farmers ahead of Open Farm Sunday ([www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org)) reveals that farms are truly keeping regional dialect alive.

We all know farms have barns, but did you know they're also known as 'steadings' in Scotland, or 'hovels' in the Midlands? Want to find where the cows are housed? If you're in the South West you'll be looking out for a 'shippen', in the North West a 'shippon' and in Scotland a 'byre'.

And it's not just buildings, the survey also found an array of colourful language for the animals, wildlife and even the people on the farms. For example, did you know that before modern techniques were introduced your potatoes would have found their way to your plate with the help of 'tattie howkers' in Scotland, 'Spud Bashers' in Wales, and 'tater pickers' in the East of England? Or that in Yorkshire you can find a 'fuzzock' (donkey), and if you look close enough in the Norfolk countryside you might be lucky enough to see a 'Bishy Bushy Barnabee' (ladybird)?

We can all recognise the smell of manure – but would you know what to look out for if someone warned you to avoid the 'maxtall' (South East) 'mixon' (Midlands) or 'miden' (East of England and Wales), 'midden' (North West and Scotland) or 'misken' (Wales)?

Some of these words and phrases have been around for hundreds of years, some are relevant to one particular region, while others are slightly wider spread. The survey revealed this and so much more – just take a look at our farmtastic dictionary and

discover what to look, **and listen**, out for at an Open Farm Sunday event in your area:

### South West

**Mott** = Stump

**Liney** = Shed

**Dashel** = Thistle

**Stupping stashes with a visgeee** =

Digging thistles

**Mowhay** = Farm yard

**Shardway** = Gate made from fence

### Midlands

**Boosey** = Cow Trough

**Starved** = Cold

**Ga-wood** = Term for calling cattle

**Break** = Bait

**Snigglebogs** = Reeds

**Peewitts** = Lapwings

### North East

**Cundy / lonnen** = Lane

**Ramm** = Tupp

**Shed** = Hemmel

### South East

**Seasoning** = Sowing seeds

**Guv'na** = Man in charge

**Rew** = Clump of trees in a meadow

**Stooking** = Stacking bales

**Chook** = Chicken

**Ol' screw** = Cull cow

### Wales

**Evil** = Dung fork

**Moiling** = Taking potatoes without the plant

**Thieves** = Sheep (yearling)

**Swoffing the hay** = Making hay

**Hobbler** = Casual worker

**Slop** = Gap in Hedge

**Pyart** = Magpie

### Lincolnshire

**Raves / Gaumers** = Extensions on trailers

**Plashing** = Hedge laying

**Tillaging** = Fertilising

## Yorkshire and the Humber

**Woofing and tonning** = Making hay

**Sippeting** = Potato shovelling

**Gair or gairing** = Field corner

**Ings** = Watermeadow

**Manishment** = Fertiliser

**Bot tree** = Elderflower

**Jump dykes** = Sheep

## East of England

**Scutes of Skutes** = Irregular shaped fields

**Pippin** = Runt in litter of pigs

**Scotch mist or a smur** = Drizzling rain

**Hodmedod** = Snail

**Harnser** = Heron

**Roguer** = Someone hand weeding crops

**Loke** = Lane

**Tump** = Hill

**Bullace Bush** = Plum Tree

**Knotgrass** = Iron weed

**Peewit** = Lapwings

## North West

**Midden** = Manure

**Spring Cows** = Lancashire

**Lonnie** = Farm track

**Walking over** = Weeding

**Boozie** = Feed trough

**Sowing bagmuck** = Sowing fertiliser

**Cat muck** = Wild chrysanthemum

## Scotland

**Hairst** = Harvest

**Helian Cow** = Highland Cow

**Neeps** = Turnips

**Bottery Bush** = Elderflower tree

**Hakes / Shelvings** = Trailers extensions

**Orraman** = Odd jobs man

**Grieve** = Farm manger

**Buchts** = Sheep pens

**Diting the byre** = Cleaning the cattle shed

**Pikel** = Pitchfork

**Shepster** = Starling

-ENDS-

For further information and images, or to arrange an interview please contact:

**David Gough / Laura Bates:** Open Farm Sunday Press Office

T: 01189 475956 / 07884 353474

E: [david.gough@ceres-pr.co.uk](mailto:david.gough@ceres-pr.co.uk) E: [laura.bates@ceres-pr.co.uk](mailto:laura.bates@ceres-pr.co.uk)

([www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org), [www.twitter.com/openfarmsunday](http://www.twitter.com/openfarmsunday))

**Editor's note:**

- LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) [www.leafuk.org](http://www.leafuk.org) is a national charity that helps farmers produce food with care for the environment, while working with their local community
- The sixth annual Open Farm Sunday on 12 June 2011 provides a great opportunity for the public to truly get to know how their food is produced and how the countryside around them is cared for
- Visitors will be able to learn from farmers themselves how natural plant and insect species are encouraged to thrive alongside crops, they will get a close-up look at farm animals and see how the needs of wildlife are balanced with modern food production
- LEAF organises Open Farm Sunday and supports farmers with putting on an event that is not only enjoyable, but gives visitors a really fascinating insight into aspects of the countryside that they would not usually see or experience on an average day out
- LEAF supports both LEAF and non-LEAF member farmers by hosting a number of workshops across the country with practical advice and tips for organising successful events. LEAF also provides free promotional support materials and an interactive online event database to register details of farmer events
- Food carrying the LEAF Marque logo shows that it has been grown by farmers who are committed to looking after the countryside and the environment. LEAF farmers are subject to an independent LEAF Audit, designed to help them meet the change in demands placed on operations by legislation, the marketplace, community and the industry
- An increasing number of farmers are signing up to support LEAF, to demonstrate how they are integrating modern farming with environmental conservation
- Principal sponsors for Open Farm Sunday 2011 are: ASDA, Defra, Farmers Weekly, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, Natural England, National Farmers Union, Syngenta, Waitrose, Warburtons. Additional sponsors include: M&S, DairyCo, EBLEX, GrowHow, HGCA.