

The Virtual Farm Walk



Fascinating farm facts

- Crops are grown on four and a half million hectares of land in the UK.
- Each year, two-thirds of British people make at least one visit to the countryside.
- There is growing evidence that being in the countryside makes us feel good.
- There are 20 million hectares of farmland in the UK - that's the equivalent of 30 million football pitches.
- A fifth of UK farmland grows crops, a lot of the rest of it grows grass to feed animals.
- There are nearly 280,000 farms in the UK.

shop facts

- 60% of all food eaten in the UK is grown on British farms.
- Every day, British farms supply 20 million eggs and the grain to make nine million loaves of bread.

hedge facts

- The more types of plant you find in a hedge, then the older it is.
- Put all the UK's hedges together and they would circle the Earth 20 times.

Crop facts

- Wheat is the most common crop in the UK, with two million hectares planted every year.
- Farms produce over five and a half million tonnes of potatoes a year - enough to cover 120,000 football pitches.

livestock facts

- Chicken's eggs vary in size and colour. Some are white, others brown and some are even green.
- Sheep can recognise up to 20 different human faces, and they prefer a smiling face to an unhappy one!
- Sheep can remember the faces of up to 50 other sheep for more than two years.
- The UK produces more sheep than any other country in Europe.
- The UK is the third-largest beef producer in Europe.
- Each day, UK dairy cows produce 60 million pints of milk. That's enough to fill over 15 Olympic swimming pools!
- There are over 10 million cattle and calves in the UK.
- There are over 35 million sheep and lambs in the UK.
- There are nearly five million pigs in the UK.
- There are over 160 million chickens in the UK.

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machine facts

- A large tractor can do in a day what used to take 100 men a whole week.

pond facts

- If you go pond dipping, make sure you scoop through the water in a figure of eight to catch the most creepy crawlies.
- A lot of ponds in farms, gardens and parks have disappeared in the last 100 years. So every pond, large or small, is now special.
- In a really good pond, you could find up to 40 different types of plant and over 100 types of animal.
- Ponds are home to more types of plants and creatures than rivers or lakes.
- Frogs, toads and newts all need ponds to breed in. They can't use rivers or streams.
- Ponds don't have to have water in them all the time. Ponds that dry up in the summer can still be very good for wildlife.
- Dragonfly nymphs live in ponds for two to three years before turning into adults and flying around for just a few months.
- Dragonflies beat their wings up to 40 times a second.
- To find a nice home for the winter, newts can travel up to 500 metres from the pond where they live.

wood facts

- Woodlands and trees can stimulate the senses.
- Trees need to spread their seed. Birds' favourite food colour is often red. Can you see why a lot of trees put their seed in shiny, red berries?
- A fully-grown oak tree in the UK grows 250,000 leaves every year and produces 50,000 acorns.
- A healthy mature birch tree can produce up to a million seeds a year.
- To make one tonne of paper you need two tonnes of timber.
- Two mature trees produce enough oxygen for a family of four people.
- Trees help reduce the 'greenhouse effect' by absorbing carbon dioxide. One acre of trees absorbs 2.6 tons of carbon dioxide per year.
- Shhh! Trees keep noise down. Their size, shape and texture create a barrier to sound. In the countryside or the city, they keep things quieter.
- Two tonnes of timber gives off the same heat as one tonne of coal.
- Trees are the largest and longest living organisms on earth.
- Birds and animals use trees for their homes, for shelter and as a source of food.
- Hospital patients heal faster, require shorter stays and fewer painkillers if they can see trees from the windows of the ward.