**Date:**

**Activity:**

Photography

**Objectives:**

Capture photos on an Exmoor Farm which will be exhibited as part of a project called ‘Exmoor Farms’.

**Equipment:**

Clipboards and pens

Tree book

Fact cards – trees, water, grass, soil

Soil sheets

Spade

Teaspoon

Bird book

Pond life in tubs

Pond life sheets

Spring flowers

Cattle/sheep feed

**Main activity**

1. The bus will park in Exford car park, next to Exford C of E Primary School

(Post code – TA24 7PP).

Students will congregate on the grassed area for the introduction to the session.

Students will be asked to split into groups to discuss and write their answers on a clip board to the following questions; (start) What do farmers do? What happens on a farm?

Students will follow Serena, as marked on the attached map, heading North East towards ‘Exmoor Trees’.

1. Trees next to the tree nursery.

Facts (on cards):

* Tree planting is a key part of the Government's plan to combat climate change and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. By 2050 their aim is to ensure that 16.5% of land in covered in trees. That means we have to plant 30,000ha (49,500 football pitches) of trees annually, which equates to approximately 33 million trees each year.
* The benefits of planting new trees:

1. It combats climate change as new woodland will absorb more carbon (each tree absorbs 25kg of CO2 per year)
2. It contributes to nature recovery by creating new woodland habitat
3. It improves water quality
4. It reduces flood risk
5. It provides climate change mitigation by cooling watercourses
6. It increases and improves recreational access in new woodland

* Farmers are needed to ensure these ambitions are met; however, it is important to remember that there must be a balance between environmental benefits and food production. It is also significant to note that certain land is suited to woodland creation compared to other areas of land.

Students will be encouraged to take photos of the trees with Emily’s guidance as we walk along the path,

1. Water – Headwaters of the river Exe

Facts (on cards):

* There are ‘Farming Rules for Water’, which were introduced to reduce and prevent diffuse water pollution from agricultural sources.  It covers how we should apply and store fertilisers and how we should manage our soil and livestock.
* Healthy rivers are vital for biodiversity and to human health and well-being. Rivers provide habitats for a range of wildlife, protect against flooding and provide beautiful places for recreations and reflection.
* One project we have recently undertaken is to install new drinking troughs in fields, this provides the livestock with an alternative to drinking from the watercourses and reduces bank erosion, sediment pollution and faecal contamination of watercourses.

Photo session

1. Grass

Facts (on cards)

* We care for permanent grassland - flowering grass and wildflowers, and a varied sward structure will provide nectar food and shelter for invertebrates. The grassland habitat will attract increased numbers of ground-nesting and feeding birds.
* We plant new herbal leys, which are temporary grasslands made up of legume, herb and grass species. A vigorous sward with abundant legumes and herbs, suitable for productive cattle and sheep, will also provide habitat and food for invertebrates, including crop pollinators, and improve soil structure and water infiltration.
* We rotationally graze our livestock, which means we frequently rotate them around our fields, ensuring each field has a rest, to allow the grass to recover. Rotational grazing has lots of benefits including increasing the quantity of grass and improving soil health and fertility.
* Fertiliser use contributes to climate change, on our farm, like many other Exmoor farms we operate a low input system, meaning we use a small amount of fertiliser.

Extra – Dry stone wall – we traditionally restore dry stone walls – we strongly believe in carrying out traditional practises but adding new technology and research into our farming practises.

Photo taking opportunity

1. Soil

Facts (on cards)

* We care for the soil; this ensures that we can grow the best grass possible which will help our animals grow and thrive
* Healthy soil also sequesters more carbon and mitigates the risks of flooding and droughts.
* It’s also good for the worms and micro – organisms living in the soil. Did you know that 4 billion organisms live in 1 teaspoon of soil – that’s half the population of the world!
* Different areas of our farmland in the UK will have different types of soil, which is why for example some farms can grow crops and other farms are more suited to livestock.
* To improve our knowledge on the soil we regularly test it, we consider how animals graze our land, we spread manure, we reduce vehicle movement and we may use implements such as aerators, which let air into the soil.

A couple of holes will be dug for students to be given the opportunity to look at our soil and take photographs:

1. Look at the structure of the soil – is it all the same or are there differences? – Is it crumbly, intact, firm, compact or very compact? – Children will be given the opportunity to smell the soil as well.
2. Look at the plant roots – are the long or short? Are they following a straight line? Are they covered in soil at the tips or white?
3. Earth worms – How many worms can we find? Where are the worms and what type of burrowers are they? Did you know there are three main earthworm lifestyles in the soil.
4. Landscape/view point

Facts (on cards)

* We as farmers manage the landscape.
* Some areas we leave wild and other areas we farm; this creates varied habitats for a number of different species.
* We maintain a mosaic of different height hedges, which again encourages different species. We traditionally lay our hedges. This creates better connectivity which will allow wildlife to move/colonise freely to access water, food, shelter and breeding habitat, and will allow natural communities of both animals and plants to adapt in response to environmental and climate change.
* We have a footpath or bridleway in nearly every field that we own, creating a view like the one you can see provides opportunities for people to discover, enjoy, and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage.
* How much money does the British countryside, which farmers manage, make every year from tourism? £21 Billion

Photography

1. The farm

Facts (on cards)

* Coombe Farm is well-placed in a sheltered valley, or coombe, with a stream running through it. The farm buildings were first plotted on the map in 1830, the farm and land were purchased in 1939 by my Great Grandfather, meaning that I am the fourth generation of my family to farm here. I grew up at here and moved back with my family in the Spring of 2020.
* What percentage of farm are family-run? 70%
* Orchard
* Traditional and modern farm buildings
* Sheepdogs, cat, pony
* Farm machinery
* Birds – wild and chickens (chicks)
* Pond life (in a viewing tub)
* Lambs

Photographers to freely move around the farm

1. Wild flowers and hedgerows

* We are not allowed to cut the hedges between 1st March and 31st August to protect nesting birds, this also helps the wildflowers to thrive, encourage more wildlife.
* Did you know that farmers cut some road hedges as well, ensuring you are kept safe whilst on the road.
* If you put all of the UK hedges together, how many times would they circle the Earth? 20 times

Photos will be taken during a walk down the lane.

1. Cattle (in the shed)

Facts (on cards)

* At present we have 82 cattle on the farm.
* Our cattle are cared for, weighed and sold for meat. We are trying to lower the carbon footprint with our cattle by attempting to keep them outside grazing for slightly longer. Our food miles are also low as our cattle are all sold for meat locally.

Photos

1. Sheep (this will be dependant on the field they are in)

Facts (on cards)

* At present we have 15 rams, 660 breeding ewes and 1,100 lambs on the farm
* During the year our sheep have lambs, we care for the sheep which includes shearing them, vaccinating them and weighing them. We keep some lambs for our own flock as replacements as the older sheep (mutton) are sold. Other lambs are sold for meat.
* Our sheep enterprise has a very low input as the lambs are grass fed so our carbon footprint is low, one way we are trying to become net zero is by grazing our sheep more efficiently as mentioned before – with rotational grazing. Our food miles are also very low as our sheep are all sold locally within Somerset / Devon / sometimes into Wales.
* What percentage of food that we eat in the UK is grown in Britain? 60%

Photos

The end will take part at point ‘A’.

Students will receive their clipboards back at the end of the session and will be asked the same questions; (finish) What do farmers do? What happens on a farm?

They will also be asked to write feedback on the session.