

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE USE
29/03/2017**



Bringing the wonders of lambing into the classroom

Educational charity The Country Trust install a “LambCam” on a working farm in Kent to bring the wonders of the lambing shed to city children.

Every year dynamic education charity The Country Trust brings the working countryside alive for nearly 25,000 disadvantaged primary school children through day visits to real working farms. Now, thanks to support from Fidelity Weston, one of the charity’s host farmers, a video camera has been installed in the lambing shed on Romshed Farm near Sevenoaks in Kent to capture fantastic footage of some of the farm’s 150 pregnant sheep as they deliver their lambs.

The webcam means that for the first time the charity can bring the reality of farm and country life into the classrooms of thousands of schools, providing compelling real-time viewing for children and a valuable resource for teachers to support the Science curriculum. Recorded footage already available on The Country Trust website includes the first lamb born on the farm this season and some fun footage of a litter of lively one week old piglets and their mum running around their sty and outdoor pen.

Jill Attenborough, Chief Executive of The Country Trust said *“This is a first for the charity and something we are immensely excited about. We are acutely aware that there are many thousands of children who aren’t yet able to take part in our farm visit programme. The webcam opens up so many wonderful possibilities for us to bring the farm into urban homes and classrooms. Springtime on the farm is full of new life and as well as lambing we plan to show swallows nesting, piglets in their sty and calves being born too. Our mission is to bring the countryside alive for those children who are least likely to be able to access it – we think our LambCam is going to be a great step forward!”*

Farmer Fidelity Weston agrees, *“When we were first approached by The Country Trust to be involved in this terrific project, we jumped at the chance as we had already been thinking about how to deepen our engagement with our existing schools and to bring farming life to a greater number of schools. Of the 20 farm visits we host each year, we currently hold six for The Country Trust and would like to do more but the constraints of running a busy working farm means it is not possible. With the webcam schools that already have a visit can continue to see what is going on at the farm when they are back at school and we can also engage with more schools. Over time we would like to install more cameras to show all of the wonderful things that happen on the farm and in doing so, I hope we are encouraging children to develop an understanding of farming and where their food comes from.”*

The Country Trust webcam at Romshed Farm can be viewed at www.countrytrust.org.uk/webcam

To find out more about The Country Trust, become a host farmer or a regular supporter of the charity, go to www.countrytrust.org.uk

Editors' notes

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About Romshed Farm

Romshed Farm is a small farm run by Martin and Fidelity Weston in Underriver near Sevenoaks in Kent. It supplies exceptional, tasty meat to local people and the farms' 175 acres are managed to maximise the historic, conservation and wildlife value of the land and is registered as organic with the Soil Association.

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About The Country Trust

- Founded in 1978, The Country Trust is the leading national educational charity that brings the working countryside alive for those children least able to access it, whether through disadvantage or disability. Every year we support hundreds of volunteer farmers and landowners to welcome thousands of disadvantaged children from all backgrounds and faiths onto their farms.
- The Country Trust has 3 main strands of activities:
 1. Farm Discovery - day visits to real working farms
 2. Countryside Discovery - residential visits to the countryside
 3. Food Discovery - yearlong programmes exploring every aspect of growing, cooking and even selling food
- The Country Trust focuses on working with the following:
 - Primary age children from schools with an above average percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals
 - Schools catering for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
 - Looked After Children and Pupil Referral Units
- In 2015 The Country Trust enabled
 - 18,079 children to go on a farm or estate visit
 - 6,650 children took part in farm led assemblies and food and farming workshops
 - 1,113 children took part in Food Discovery Programmes
 - 918 children went on 29 Residential visits
 - 361 children with Special Educational Needs took part in Countryside Adventure days in Hampshire.
- The Country Trust currently works with schools in and around London, Essex, East Anglia, Hampshire, Birmingham and the East and West Midlands, Yorkshire, the North West, North Wales and Northumberland.

What we do

- We make it easy and safe for children to visit farms and for farmers to share their knowledge and passion.
- We bring urban and rural communities together, increasing communication, respect and understanding of the countryside as a place of possibilities but also a place on which livelihoods depend.
- We facilitate children's cultural understanding about the life and work of the British countryside through visits and talking with those who live and work there.
- We enable children to experience the wonder of the countryside:- open space, breathing space, the people who live and work there, habitats, farm animals and wildlife.
- We enable children to understand the possibilities of food, what a variety there is, why and how it grows, who grows it and where, what it tastes like, why all this matters.
- We introduce adult role models who nurture and take responsibility for crops and animals. People who often work in strong family units.
- We bring two interdependent but disconnected communities together for a stronger future. Our school community includes many urban children and a significant number of children from ethnic minorities.
- We can help schools to meet the new Ofsted common inspection framework which now includes a judgement on 'personal development, behaviour and welfare'. Ofsted states that the first-hand experiences of learning outside the classroom can help to make subjects more vivid and interesting for pupils and enhance their understanding. It can also contribute significantly to pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

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