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Arla dairy farmer meets children 'worlds away' from countryside

A dairy farmer has welcomed youngsters onto his farm to learn about where their food comes from.

Pupils from Whitehouse Community Primary School in Ipswich visited Robin Richards at Rodwell Dairy Farm in Baylham, near Needham Market, as part of educational charity The Country Trust's Food Discovery Programme, which teaches pupils with less access to the countryside about growing and cooking their own food.

The third generation farmer welcomed 29 of the school's year three students. He is one of 2,500 farmer owners of UK dairy cooperative Arla, and introduced the children to his herd of 110 cows. They witnessed milking first hand and had a go at feeding them, and explored where cows sleep, graze and what they eat.

Robin, who regularly hosts primary and secondary school pupils on his farm in a bid to introduce them to the different aspects of farming and give them a hands on experience of the

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dairy industry, also explained nutritional value of dairy products.

The visits to the farm - which produces dairy for Arla brands including Cravendale and Anchor Butter, have been such a success that they are now being used as a model for other school visits taking place across the country.

"It was a pleasure to welcome the children from Whitehouse Primary School, and give them the chance to learn about life as a dairy farmer," said Robin. "As a passionate farmer-owner of dairy cooperative Arla, it's important to me to show them where our food and drink comes from and the nutritional value of dairy. Arla farmers up and down the country are always more than happy to host school visits so that we can help the younger generation understand where their milk, butter and cheese come from."



Whitehouse Community Primary School pupils at Rodwell Dairy Farm at Baylham with Robin Richards, farm owner, Nick McLaughlin, herdsman, and Steven Potter, teacher at Whitehouse Community Primary School
Picture: ARLA

Sally Hetherington-Aherne, farm discovery co-ordinator at Country Trust, said: "Though Robin's farm is just 15 minutes from Whitehouse Community Primary School, it's worlds away in terms of people's access to an understanding of farming and how their food is produced.

"Being able to host visits with dairy farmers like Robin really gives these young consumers of the future an awareness of the products they are eating and drinking plus the work that goes into that production. Children attending these visits remember them for years to come."