

News Release
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*For immediate use*

**Industry’s New Year efforts to spread positive messages keeps red meat on the menu**

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) is encouraging farmers to continue engaging and sharing the positive conversations around Scotland’s red meat industry, with recent data from Kantar, analysed by QMS, revealing that 912,000 more retail meat purchases were made in Scotland in the four weeks to 24 January 21 vs the same period last year.

Data from Kantar for January 2021 shows meat sales in Scotland exceeded £31.6million, £7million higher (29%) than the same period last year. In comparison, with less than 1%[[1]](#footnote-1) of the UK population participating in Veganuary and a completion rate of 18% [[2]](#footnote-2), total sales of meat substitute purchases in Scotland in January 2021 only saw a 7.6% increase compared to 2020.

Kate Rowell, Chair of QMS, said:

“There’s always a lot of noise around Veganuary, and off the back of a politically, socially and economically challenging year, January 2021 brought a sense of trepidation around anti-red meat sentiments escalating on social media, but our industry can be proud of the united front presented which spread the positive messages of Scotland’s red meat industry.

“Consumers are hearing more about the industry from the industry, particularly in relation to our welfare standards and sustainability, as well as the role of red meat in a healthy balanced diet.

“Within this data is a real acknowledgement that producers do a good job and are widely respected with 92% of shoppers agreeing that the Scotch labels mean the meat is produced according to higher standards of animal welfare and 93% of shoppers agree the Scotch labels mean they can be more supportive of local farmers[[3]](#footnote-3).

“This is very encouraging for the industry, particularly in a year where a number of significant events have impacted the red meat industry across Scotland including Brexit and the global COVID-19 pandemic.”

In December 2020, QMS distributed an industry toolkit to support all stages of the supply chain to communicate with confidence and drive positive messages around red meat throughout January and keep consumer confidence high.

QMS has launched an updated toolkit ‘Veganuary Unwrapped’ which contains key stats and facts that the industry, from producers to marts, processors, and retailers, can use to share the positive messages around red meat consumption.

Launching ‘Veganuary Unwrapped’, Director of Marketing and Communications Lesley Cameron said:

“Our strategy is not to be defensive; it is to promote the benefits of our industry and support the red meat supply chain to be bold and take pride in what they do, which is clearly making an impact reflected in strong red meat sales.

“January’s consumer insights reflected a growing acknowledgement of Scotland’s red meat producers and the positive work of the industry among metropolitan consumers. This is something we all need, as an industry, to continue to build on and to remain relevant and important to consumers.”

Additional activity to complement the toolkit will include videos filmed with industry leaders to substantiate key messages; using social media influencers who have a large reach to spread the industry’s positive messages; and continuing seasonal campaigns to protect the sales of red meat, inspire consumers and keep consumer perception high.

“Our updated toolkit, which includes infographics with impactful statistics, will further empower all parts of Scotland’s red meat supply chain to engage with, and promote, Scotch Beef PGI, Scotch Lamb PGI and Specially Selected Pork,” said Mrs Cameron.

For more information on the toolkit or Scotch Beef PGI, Scotch Lamb PGI and Specially Selected Pork, visit [www.qmscotland.co.uk](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk).

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

QMS is the public body responsible for promoting the PGI labelled Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb brands in the UK and abroad and also promoting Scottish pork products under the Specially Selected Pork logo.

Please note that the use of the word Scotch in the Scotch Beef PGI and Scotch Lamb PGI brands is correct and should not be substituted for an alternative such as Scots or Scottish. The history of the use of the word Scotch in this way, traces back to the 18th century.

QMS also helps the Scottish red meat sector improve its sustainability, efficiency and profitability and maximise its contribution to Scotland's economy.

The quality assurance schemes run by QMS cover more than 90% of livestock farmed for red meat in Scotland. They offer consumers in the UK and overseas the legal guarantee that the meat they buy has come from animals that have spent their whole lives being raised to some of the world’s strictest welfare standards.

Scotland’s beef, lamb and pork producers make an important contribution to the country’s economic, social and environmental sustainability, contributing over £2 billion to the annual GDP of Scotland and supporting around 50,000 jobs (many in fragile rural areas) in the farming, agricultural supply and processing sectors.

For more information visit www.qmscotland.co.uk or follow QMS on Facebook or Twitter.

1. Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jan/05/veganuary-record-number-people-pledge-eat-vegan-food-january> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Source: Based on a February 2020 World Panel Plus LinkQ survey of 56,177 responses [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Stats from agency research – Guy & Co [↑](#footnote-ref-3)