

News Release  
date

*For immediate use*

**Looking back on the legacy of Scotland’s Monitor Farm Programme**

The Monitor Farm initiative has pioneered new ways of working, experimented with new ideas and, most importantly, measured the inputs and outputs of host farms to improve their productivity and profitability. Reflecting on the lasting impact of the programme is the focus of the next series of Quality Meat Scotland’s (QMS) podcast.

Launched on Tuesday 17 August, the podcast will welcome the current Monitor Farm Legacy farmers, alongside special guests, to discuss the changes made on farm and highlight the importance of such knowledge exchange programmes.

Released weekly, the first episode features Iain MacKay, from Torloisk Farm on the Isle of Mull, who is a host farm for the Monitor Farm Legacy programme.

Iain runs 950 predominantly North Country Cheviots and some Blackface ewes and 55 highland cows across 3200 hectares of rough hill ground producing commercial and pedigree stock for the breeding and store market.

“We’re really limited to what we can grow as a food source as the short growing season and poor soil quality do not support crop production. Even growing trees is extremely difficult. There are very few land uses opportunities out here apart from rearing livestock, and that was the challenge with the monitor farms programme,” said Iain.

When asked what difference the Monitor Farm Programme had on him and his business, Iain said:

“It expanded my mind. I was brought up on a hill farm which was very traditional, and you can get into a mindset that this is how it is.

“Luckily, the meetings were held on farm, and it was a relaxed atmosphere. The experts that came out challenged us about traditional farming methods and we, in turn, were able to challenge them about modern technologies and practices that are more applicable to lowland systems. It opened up our minds to what can be achieved out here.”

Beth Alexander, QMS Cattle and Sheep Specialist and podcast producer said:

“The reflective nature of this podcast series means that we can gain an understanding of the impact that changes in management practices and mindset have on a business nearly a decade on. Knowledge exchange through programmes such as the Monitor Farm Legacy programme are important to Scotland’s farm building resilience and improving their productivity and profitability.”

The upbeat series will share the positive benefits of farming in Scotland and will feature the following guests:

* Hugh Broad and Bill Gray
* Kenny Adams and Robert Ramsay
* Kate Rowell and Poppy Frater
* Robbie Newlands and Kirsten Williams
* Andrew Booth and Peter Chapman

The Monitor Farm Legacy Programme is producing in-depth video case studies on each host farm and the Torloisk Farm episode is now available to view via the QMS YouTube channel. The podcast series is available through Apple Podcast, Buzzsprout, and Spotify, as well as via the Quality Meat Scotland website and social channels.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

This press release was issued by Jane Craigie Marketing on behalf of Quality Meat Scotland. For additional press information, please contact Alana on 07596 122184 or [alana@janecraigie.com](mailto:alana@janecraigie.com).

To download a word version of this press release, please click here.

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.