

News Release
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*For immediate use*

**New face-to-face meetings will help farmers weather the storm**

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) is relaunching their Sustainable Red Meat Action and Young Producer Groups with a series of free on-farm events. Members of the groups are invited to attend the introductory meetings, with a small number of places still available, which will focus on planning for unpredictable weather patterns.

The face-to-face meetings, which will be held on farms across Scotland between 30 August and 14 September, are open to members with a virtual meeting taking place for members of the Orkney and Shetland groups. Rhidian Jones from RJ Livestock Systems, will be the key speaker at each event focusing on ‘Planning for Extremes’.

RJ Livestock Systems was set up in June 2016 by Rhidian Jones after nearly a decade as a sheep and beef specialist for SAC Consulting. Bringing a wealth of experience, Rhidian will support the two knowledge exchange groups to review the year so far, what went well, what didn’t, challenges and opportunities and strategies that can be put in place for the years ahead.

“In recent years, farmers have dealt with more extreme weather patterns shown by this year’s dry cold spring followed by a hot dry summer. As our climate becomes more extreme, these meetings look to help farmers reflect on the weather of the past year, their actions and to support them to forward plan for the future,” said Rhidian.

Although the events will be focused on planning ahead, Bruce McConachie, QMS Head of Industry Development, said that it is important for attendees to engage with their peers and participate in valuable knowledge exchange.

He said: “It’s fantastic to be able to get back to our on-farm events with the introductory meetings of the Sustainable Red Meat Action and Young Producer groups. Groups like these are vital to support farmers and help improve the profitability and productivity of Scotland’s primary producers.”

Attendance at these workshops is free commencing with light refreshments. Attendees much ensure they have clean, disinfectable footwear for the farm visit.

The Sustainable Red Meat Action Group meetings will take place on the following dates:

* **North:** Monday 30 August, hosted by David Girvan, Corrimony, Inverness
* **North East:** Tuesday 31 August, hosted by Duncan Morison, Meikle Maldron, Banchory
* **Central meeting:** Wednesday 1 September. hosted by John Ritchie, Montalt Farm, Dunning, Perthshire,
* **Lothians & Borders meeting:** Monday 13 September hosted by Andrew Tullie, Whitchesters Farm, Scottish Borders
* **South West meeting:** Tuesday 14 September, hosted by Stuart Graham, Uppercleuch Farm, Lockerbie
* **Orkney & Shetland Meeting: [date] hosted virtually via Zoom.**

Young Producer Group Dates:

* **North**: Monday 30 August, hosted by David Girvan, Corrimony, Inverness
* **East:** Wednesday 1 September. hosted by John Ritchie, Montalt Farm, Dunning, Perthshire
* **West:** Tuesday 14 September, hosted by Stuart Graham, Uppercleuch Farm, Lockerbie

To sign up to the groups and secure your place, please email Beth Alexander balexander@qmscotland.co.uk

**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.

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.