****News Release
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*For immediate use*

**New report highlights how farms have embraced a legacy of change**

The profound and lasting impact of the Monitor Farm programme on farm businesses and communities has been celebrated with the launch of the ‘Legacy Project Impact Report’. The report provides a snapshot of each of the legacy farms and highlights the key changes they have made in the years following their time as Monitor Farmers.

Influencing management practices, mindset and overall farm profitability since the Monitor Farm programme began in 2003, the Legacy Project, which is managed jointly by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), revisited six of the participating farms again in 2021 and involved a series of virtual events.

During the Legacy Project, each farm hosted ‘walk & talks’, webinars, Facebook live events and podcasts to update the farming community on their progress. Carbon audits and an Integrated Land Management Plan also commenced as part of the initiative, and strategic operational and management groups were established to review and develop the key aims and objectives of the programme.

Beef and sheep farmer Robbie Newlands, from Cluny Farm near Forres, Morayshire, explains: “Our original management group has continued to meet after the Monitor Farm programme ended eight years ago.

“There’s a dozen of us and it is all very informal and has become more of a social group. We meet up when we can and visit each other’s farms to look around to see what each of us is doing and offer advice and constructive criticism.”

The report showcases the various projects pursued by each of the Monitor farmers over the years, and the performance gains that have emerged from benchmarking, recording, and monitoring farm data. Some include overhauled feeding strategies to improve sustainability, enhanced grain marketing efforts, upped herd and flock productivity or embraced agri-environmental schemes.

Bruce McConachie, Head of Industry Development at QMS said: “The success of the Monitor Farm and subsequent Legacy programme in driving the industry forward is evidenced through the farmer collaboration and knowledge exchange that we have witnessed to date.”

“In order to meet the future challenges facing farm and rural businesses, our industry must continue to embrace such progressive and valuable initiatives.”

Paul Flanagan, Director of AHDB Scotland said: ”The Monitor Farm Programme is part of AHDB’s Farm Excellence platform and helps farmers and growers drive innovation and increase productivity by sharing ideas and learning from each other.

Revisiting the ‘legacy’ farmers has allowed us to check in on their progress to see how they have improved their businesses and reaped the benefits from their involvement. We are looking forward to working with the next cohort of monitor farmers and continuing to support the programme in Scotland.”

To read the full Legacy Project impact report and learn about the farmers and their projects, head to: <https://www.monitorfarms.co.uk/monitor-farm-legacy-project-impact-report/>

 **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.

AHDB

AHDB is a statutory levy board, funded by farmers, growers and others in the supply chain. Its purpose is to equip levy payers with independent, evidence-based information and tools to grow, become more competitive and sustainable. Established in 2008 and classified as a Non-Departmental Public Body, it supports the following industries: meat and livestock (cattle, sheep and pigs) in England; horticulture, milk and potatoes in Great Britain; and cereals and oilseeds in the UK. AHDB’s remit covers 75 percent of total UK agricultural output. Further information on AHDB can be found at [www.ahdb.org.uk](http://www.ahdb.org.uk)

Have your say on AHDB’s future

In April 2022, levy payers will get to have a say on the challenges AHDB should focus on and the services they will deliver in the future. Levy payers need to register before March 31 in order to vote: [ahdb.org.uk/shape-the-future](https://www.pig-world.co.uk/news/ahdb.org.uk/shape-the-future)