

****



**Press release**

\*for immediate release\*

[28 June 2022]

**Could you be a contender for this year’s AgriScot Scottish Sheep or Beef Farm of the Year?**

The prestigious awards have opened for the 2022 round of applications and organisers at AgriScot are hoping for a bumper year of interest, as enthusiasm for the UK’s leading agribusiness event builds.

Despite two years of upheaval due to Covid, Scotland’s sheep and beef farmers have been busier than ever, adding value to their farms, turning their hand to new ventures and building on their sustainability credentials, and the awards are a great opportunity to showcase and reward all of their hard work.

Interested participants have until Monday, 5 September, to submit their entries and three finalists within both categories will be chosen thereafter, to take part in an on-farm visit at the end of September.

AgriScot Chair, Robert Neill, explained that the awards play an important role in recognising and rewarding the efforts of Scotland’s sheep and beef farmers.

“The agricultural industry is under increasing pressure to strike a balance between tackling emissions, boosting biodiversity, and bolstering productivity, and Scotland’s beef and sheep farmers have a brilliant story to share, not only with the rest of the UK, but the world,” said Mr Neill.

“These awards are a way to shine a light on the great work being carried out by the nation’s farmers and to recognise their endless commitment to their livestock and the land. With big changes ahead in terms of agricultural policy, it is imperative that we identify countryside champions to showcase to the public, the good that farming has to offer.”

Assessing the AgriScot Scottish Sheep Farm of the Year Award for 2022 will be in the hands of Kate Rowell, Chair of Quality Meat Scotland, past recipient of the 2021 award from Saughland Farm, Owen Gray and coordinating the award on behalf of AgriScot, Hamish Dykes.

Owen Gray reflected on receiving the award in 2021 and what he is looking for in this year’s selection of entries: “We at Saughland Farm were delighted to take home the title of AgriScot Sheep Farm of the Year. It was a great acknowledgement for everyone in the team after the hard work that’s been put in.

“I will be looking for forward thinking businesses with a strong focus on controlling cost of production, reducing their environmental impact and a positive attitude towards bringing young people into the industry.”

Encouraging farmers to throw their hat in to the ring he added: “It is a great way to show the good work carried out by Scottish farmers along with the enjoyment of the competition, for those with a competitive nature.”

Selecting the recipient of the AgriScot Scotch Beef Farm of the Year Award for 2022 will be the tough task of AgriScot Chair Robert Neill, past recipient of the award Daniel Hair of Drumbreddan Farm and Quality Meat Scotland Head of Industry Development, Bruce McConachie.

Daniel Hair shared what it had meant to him and his family to receive the accolade: “Receiving the AgriScot Scotch Beef Farm of the Year Award was a real honour, and something we were immensely proud of. In difficult times it has been a massive boost to the whole family to be recognised for our hard work.

“I would encourage anyone to take part as it has been very beneficial, even to the point of having a closer look at your own farming system and connecting with other people in the industry,” he continued. “We have thoroughly enjoyed the process from start to finish, and think many more would feel the same."

Commenting on what he is looking for amongst this year’s entries, assessor Bruce McConachie added: “Now more than ever, beef and sheep farmers are having to demonstrate why Scottish beef and lamb is not only a delicious and healthy choice but has a great sustainability tale behind it.

“It doesn’t matter how big or small your farming enterprise, we are looking for those forward-thinking farmers who are embracing change and making adjustments on-farm which will improve their efficiency and green credentials, whilst also helping drive the industry forward.”

Both awards are supported by Quality Meat Scotland and sponsored by Thorntons Solicitors. Kenneth Mackay, Partner and Head of the Land and Rural Business team at Thorntons, added: “We understand the challenges and opportunities for businesses in the ever-changing rural sector in Scotland.

“Awards like these from AgriScot, really shine a light on the exceptional and raise the profile of the dedication and innovative stock management skills behind quality beef and sheep production in Scotland. It’s a real honour for each of the businesses shortlisted.

“We’ve been supporting the awards for six years and look forward to recognising the achievements of those within the agricultural sector once again.”

Farms that have received the award of AgriScot Scottish Sheep Farm of the Year include:

* 2017 Charley and Andrea Walker, Barnside Farm
* 2018 Neil and Debbie McGowan, Incheoch near Alyth
* 2019 Kevin Stewart, Shapitlaw Farm
* 2021 Owen Gray and Peter Eccles, Saughland Farm

Farms that have received the award of AgriScot Scotch Beef Farm of the Year include:

* 2017 Robert Fleming, Castle Sinniness,
* 2018 Niall Jeffrey, Bielgrange Farm
* 2019 Alistair Kingan, Kingan Farm
* 2021 Lamont and Daniel Hair, Drumbreddan Farm

If you wish to nominate a farm, email info@agriscot.co.uk

Or to fill out an application form and apply, download them at [www.agriscot.co.uk](http://www.agriscot.co.uk/) with a deadline for submission of 5 September.

**- Ends-**

For more information, to arrange an interview or press enquiries, please contact Claire Taylor via  claire@janecraigie.com or 07726 219687

**Notes to editors:**

The AgriScot Scottish Sheep Farm and Scotch Beef Farm of the Year Awards are sponsored by Thorntons Law LLP and supported by QMS.

AgriScot takes place on Wednesday, 16th November 2022, at the Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston. The awards will be presented at this event.

Exhibitor stands for AgriScot 2022 have now sold out, but space for seminars is still available. Contact info@agriscot.co.uk for more information

AgriScot is free to attend, and registration is open at [www.agriscot.co.uk](http://www.agriscot.co.uk/)

The event is organised by Rural Projects.

**AgriScot sponsors include**: Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society, ABP, Ayrshire Cattle Services, Arla, Brodies LLP, CIS, Cogent, CowAlert, Datamars, Davidsons Animal Feeds, Farmplan, Harbro, Holstein UK, Kilpatrick & Walker, Krone, McCaskie Farm Supplies, Merlo, McCormick, Moredun, NFUS, NFU Mutual, Norvite, NWF, Power Washer Services, SAC Consulting, Scottish Farmer, Scot Agri, QMS, Semex, Soil Essentials, Spaldings, Thomas Sherriff, Thorntons Law LLP, Watson Seeds, Yara UK

**Follow AgriScot online:**

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/AgriScot/>

Twitter -  <https://twitter.com/agriscot>