**Focus on red meat sector ambition with new appointments at Quality Meat Scotland**

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) has today announced the results of a restructure to its senior team as it builds its delivery plan for the new five-year strategy launched at the Royal Highland Show in June.

The restructure supports the highly-focussed strategy, Scotland; the choice for premium red meat, which has three key pillars: Provenance, Productivity and Profitability, and Planet and Place. “These appointments will ensure that QMS is fit to fight the challenges we have ahead of us, and to deliver this ambition that has been set out,” said QMS chair Kate Rowell, speaking at Friday’s SAMW conference.

Tom Gibson, formerly QMS Director of Market Development, has taken on a new role as Director of Business Development. He will lead on delivering QMS’s Productivity and Profitability pillar, which will bring the Market Development and Industry Development teams together under one director.

“This will align our supply chain development activity to ensure that we are focused on delivering activity that benefits the whole supply chain, ensuring that we are able to prime and embrace innovation,” said Kate.

The newly created role of Communications and External Affairs Director will be filled by Tom Maxwell, who has spent the last six years at SRUC as its Communications Manager.

Kate added: “This new role recognises the need to tell our industry’s story - to trade, to levy payers, and to decision makers. Growing up on the family farm in the Scottish Borders, Tom is no stranger to telling the story of rural Scotland, and he will lead our Planet and Place strategic pillar developing innovative new ways to communicate our stories to the people that matter.”

The third senior appointment is Emma Heath, who becomes Marketing Director, and will also manage the Brands Integrity Team who run QMS’s Quality Assurance schemes. Emma comes with over 25 years of experience in food and drink marketing in Scotland, latterly being head of marketing at Nairns.

“Emma will lead on QMS’s Provenance strategic pillar, and will be pivotal in ensuring that quality assurance remains first and foremost a tool to allow us to market the Scotch and Specially Selected Pork brands. Taken together these are our biggest asset, and by aligning them under one leader we are excited to see how this can further develop the Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specially Selected Pork brands as assets for the whole supply chain,” said Kate.

To further strengthen areas of delivery, QMS has made some additional appointments into the new teams.

Gemma Wark has joined QMS as Cattle and Sheep Specialist within the Industry Development team. Gemma joins from Genus ABS where she has worked for the last five years as a Key Account Manager. Living in Hawick, she studied at SRUC, Edinburgh where she gained an HND in Animal Science and Bachelor of Science with Honours in Agriculture.

Emma McGowan has also joined the organisation as Trade Development Executive within the Market Development team. Originally from Colorado, USA, she has lived in Scotland for five years, and is completing her PhD in Agriculture and Food Security, having also covered topics such as animal welfare and meat-eating quality as part of her studies.

Sarah Millar, QMS chief executive said: “I am delighted to have these high calibre, talented individuals joining QMS at a time when we are embarking on our new five-year strategy. These roles are key in ensuring we are arrow-focussed about achieving our ambition and mission to make Scotland the choice for premium red meat.”