New Release

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*For immediate use*

**Scottish exports of red meat sizzle to new record high of over £93m**

As Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) prepares to go to Germany for Anuga - the world’s leading food and beverage trade fair - a new report reveals Scottish exports of red meat and offal rocketed to a new record high of over £93 million in the year from August 2022 to July 2023.

The figures are up 16 per cent on QMS’s survey statistics from the same period last year, pushing 14 per cent ahead of their pre-Covid peak in 2018/19.

“These results buck any negative trends that could have crept in because of the additional cost and complexity involved in accessing the EU market following Brexit,” said Iain Macdonald, Market Intelligence Manager at QMS, who noted Scottish exporters’ long-established relationships with European importers had a large part to play in the successful set of figures.

However, some of the growth did reflect higher export prices, while it was also a strong year for trade in manufacturing grade beef.

“Thanks to our long-running relationships with importers built on trust in high-quality products, export sales remain heavily dominated by trade with customers in EU countries,” said Iain.

“Those relationships are built and strengthened by our presence at events like Anuga, where we’ll be providing visitors with a comprehensive understanding of what sets Scottish red meat apart - Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), quality assurance, provenance, sustainability, and animal welfare, for example.”

The report shows that almost 95 per cent of overall export revenues were generated in EU markets, climbing to 98 per cent for Scotch Lamb.

While QMS says tight supply has made it hard to grow export sales to new customers, the results did show some emergence of new markets in Africa and Asia and 11 non-EU countries were exported to, up from seven in the previous year.

Main export destinations for Scotch Beef remain France, Italy and The Netherlands, collectively accounting for nearly 75 per cent of the total, with Belgium, Germany, Portugal and Hong Kong also proving important.

The Irish Republic is the primary destination for exported non-Scotch Beef and, when combined with shipments to The Netherlands and France, they accounted for close to 90 per cent of this trade. Switzerland remains an important outlet for high-value cuts of beef and lamb.

“The exports of Scotch Beef to Belgium, France, Germany and Scandinavia trade at well-above average prices,” said Iain, adding some small volume markets are showing trade in high-value cuts of Scotch beef averaging well above £20/kg.

“This indicates the opportunity that exists for sales of premium cuts of Scotch Beef to buyers seeking out the highest quality beef in a competitive global market.”

Although EU demand for lamb remained firm in the year to July 2023, Iain warned export sales are likely to have been limited by reduced abattoir throughput in Scotland.

However, including trade in offal, lamb export revenues are still estimated to have risen towards £21m. Lamb exports are also believed to have accounted for an increased 17 per cent share of abattoir turnover during the period, up from 15 per cent in the previous year. By comparison, beef sales are estimated to have risen to around 9.5 per cent of turnover for abattoirs from 8 per cent a year earlier. France remains the most important overseas market for Scotch Lamb, with Belgium and Italy continuing as important destinations.

Sales of offal to overseas customers continue to make an important contribution to carcase balance for Scotland’s red meat processors. Overall offal sales were estimated to have risen beyond £9m with close to 80 per cent of this being from beef offal. France leads the list of important outlets for offal, with other significant demands coming from the Irish Republic, Poland and Germany. Hong Kong, Japan and Africa are the main outlets outside the EU.

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.