New Release

5 October 2023

*For immediate use*

**Thousands of pupils tucking in thanks to Tasty QMS initiative**

Quality Meat Scotland’s (QMS) ‘Tasty Little Weeks’ initiative is back, with schools receiving £180 worth of vouchers to spend with their local Scotch-assured butchers, as well as a bank of resources packed with ideas and tools to inspire children and teachers.

In 2022, 320 secondary schools were involved in the initiative. Covering every local authority across Scotland, it gave students an opportunity to learn and experience some of the country’s finest produce in new and innovative ways. So far, 315 schools have signed up to this year’s initiative and received their vouchers last month.

“The vouchers, combined with our recipes, lesson plans and worksheets, gives educators nearly everything they need for the three ‘Tasty Little Weeks’,” explained Alix Richie, QMS's Health and Education Manager.

“At a time when young people have a wide variety of influences, it’s important that we discuss the nutritional, environmental and societal benefits of locally sourced red meat, and the meat voucher scheme combined with the Tasty Little Weeks are the perfect platform on which to have those conversations.”

The initiative aims to spotlight the exceptional quality and versatility of Scotch meat brands. Specially Selected Pork kicked off this year’s programme in September, Scotch Lamb will take centre stage from 27 November, to coincide with the Institute of Auctioneers and Appraisers Scotland (IAAS)’ Lamb for St Andrew’s Day, and Scotch Beef will take its turn the week starting 5 February 2024.

“Red meat is a nutrient and energy rich product,” said Alix. “It’s a great source of iron, zinc and vitamin B12 as well as protein. All of which are important for healthy growth and development, as part of a balanced diet.”

Home economics departments will have the opportunity to claim vouchers worth up to £180, which can be redeemed at their local Scotch Butcher Club member.

“Through this initiative we hope to give more school children the opportunity to taste the various sustainably produced red meats that Scotland is renowned for, while simultaneously teaching them valuable lifelong skills and knowledge.

“Our comprehensive resources cover a spectrum of topics, ranging from the world-leading animal welfare standards adhered to in our farming practices, to the sustainable attributes of Scottish red meat, and how it harmoniously fits within a healthy diet.”

To apply for your voucher visit: <https://bit.ly/MVS23-24> and for the worksheets that accompany the three ‘Tasty Little Weeks’ head to [www.farmingfoodsteps.co.uk](http://www.farmingfoodsteps.co.uk)

For the recipes and further insights into the health and education team's comprehensive suite of resources, please visit [www.qmscotland.co.uk/healthy-eating/schools](https://www.qmscotland.co.uk/healthy-eating/schools) or listen to the latest episode of the QMS podcast.

ENDS

Words count 418

**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.