

News Release
1 December 2023

**Scotch Lamb goes to Parliament for St Andrew’s Day**

Lamb took centre stage at the Scottish Parliament as part of Lamb for St Andrew’s Day, an initiative to encourage people across Scotland to celebrate with Scotch Lamb on the patron saint’s day.

Scotch Lamb was served, and sold out, in the canteen for Members of Parliament and staff at Holyrood, while the two key industry organisations driving the industry-wide campaign #LambForStAndrewsDay met with MSPs.

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), which promotes the sustainable production, integrity and quality of red meat in Scotland, and the Institute of Auctioneers and Appraisers in Scotland (IAAS), the representative body for livestock marts in Scotland are behind the campaign, now in its 13th year, to make lamb synonymous with 30 November, as turkey is for Christmas and haggis for Burns’ Night.

At parliament, they spoke to a number of MSPs, highlighting the growing success of the Lamb for St Andrew’s Day campaign, which was celebrated internationally this year, both ahead of COP28 in Dubai and at the Ambassador’s Residence in Paris, and the need to support such an indigenous industry.

Sarah Millar, Chief Executive of QMS, said it was also an opportunity to discuss the economic, social and environmental influence of the £290m lamb sector in Scotland and areas for market growth.

“The export market is strong and growing due to a global appreciation of the quality of Scotch Lamb and its environmental credentials, but there is great opportunity to bring more UK consumers back to lamb to consolidate the home market,” she said. “It ticks a number of boxes around nutrition, food miles and sustainability. Lamb production is a natural fit with Scotland’s high rainfall and plenty of available grass, producing a tasty, versatile homegrown red meat packed with nutrients. Every year the awareness built from the #LambForStAndrewsDay campaign has a tangible impact, boosting sales in the livestock rings as well as from retail shelves.”

Compared to beef, which in 2022 saw 19.2kg consumption per capita in Scotland, the equivalent in lamb is 2.2kg. Scotland is 186% self-sufficient in sheep meat so QMS is looking to maximise every possible market potential.

The #LambForStAndrewsDay campaign illustrates that lamb can be enjoyed on any budget and works well with different cuisines from across the world, promoted through QMS’s advertising and social media campaigns, as well as recipe inspiration on the Scotch Kitchen website.

In 2020, IAAS introduced The Lamb Bank, gathering financial and ‘lamb’ donations from across the industry to deliver lamb into schools, for free, in the last week of November. To date, 89,000 school children across Scotland have had the chance to cook, eat and learn about lamb in school canteens and Home Economics classes with 114 schools participating this year.

In the last three years, figures show that sales in the livestock marts to butchers and processors have increased every year in the month of November, demonstrating the growing impact of the campaign.

Neil Wilson said: “Our visit to Parliament today was another platform to demonstrate the positive impact of the lamb sector across the supply chain on Scotland’s economy, rural livelihoods and food security and why we need to drive lamb sales to protect and promote the profitable future of our industry. We had some really interesting, constructive conversations with Members of the Scottish Parliament, and it was a great that many of those we spoke to knew about the campaign, more than ever before – and that the canteen sold out of lamb!”

Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Mairi Gougeon, who met at AgriScot with both the Chair of QMS, Kate Rowell, and the President of IAAS, Alan Hutcheon, as part of Lamb for St Andrew’s Day, said: “I am pleased to be involved in this year’s Lamb for St Andrew’ Day campaign.

“This year, Scotch Lamb will be on the plates of decision-makers from Paris to Dubai. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase the very best that our sheep producers have to offer.

“The high quality of Scottish lamb gives it mass appeal to customers, and I know that this year’s campaign will help to enhance this message across the globe.”

The initiative is also supported by National Farmers Union (NFU) Scotland and the National Sheep Association (NSA). QMS provided Scotch Lamb for The National Sheep Association in Scotland St Andrew’s Dinner in Lauder this week, held for 100 people from across the industry.

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**Editor’s Notes**

QMS PLUS

* With some of the world’s highest welfare standards, the red meat sector is worth over £x and supports over 50,000 jobs.
* Scotland is 186% self-sufficient in sheepmeat.
* QMS is also pleased to be supporting Woodhead Brothers access a new market in the Middle East, estimated worth around up to £2 million to the Scottish sheep industry. Woodhead Bros is the first processor in Scotland to receive accreditation to supply the market in the Middle East.