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News release

Date: 16/1/24

*For immediate use*

**Find out how small changes make big impacts at latest**

**Banff and Buchan Monitor Farm meeting**

Bruce Irvine, the Banff and Buchan Monitor Farmer is welcoming North East farmers to an on-farm event on Wednesday 31 January. The meeting will focus on how small changes, using readily available farm information, can impact positively on late winter management of cattle and sheep.

The meeting offers the opportunity for attendees to have practical discussions on livestock operations at Sauchentree Farm, before heading to New Aberdour Hall for more on nutrition and decision-making using blood and forage analyses, led by the Monitor Farm Management Group.

Using his farm as a starting point, Bruce will explain how he makes outwintering his livestock work on the exposed Buchan coast, while agricultural data specialist Andrew Ward-Smith will hold an interactive session on Sauchentree’s store beasts and the value of knowing feed values in planning performance.

Buchan Vets’ Seb Batchelor will bring his large animal veterinary experience to the meeting. He has a particular interest in using blood analyses to drive decision-making for mineral supplementation.

For a pregnant cow or ewe, the north-east weather, forage quality and the animal’s overall condition impacts hugely on its ability to calve or lamb and then rear a newborn successfully. David McClelland and Euan Munro from feed supplier Norvite will discuss how to plan nutrition for pregnant livestock at this critical time as calving and lambing approaches.

Attendees who bring their own forage analyses will have an opportunity to gain a fuller understanding of how to use them in drawing up nutrition plans for their livestock.

Peter Beattie, North regional adviser, said: “This is a Monitor Farm meeting which encapsulates the programme’s ethos of being ‘Farmer Led, Farmer Driven’. The speakers are all part of the Monitor Farm Management Group, and bring with them expertise and experience with livestock across the area. They are each passionate about using information to drive decision-making on farms.”

Monitor Farmer Bruce Irvine added: “This is an important time at Sauchentree, leading up to a larger number of cows calving and good scanning results from the ewes. The Monitor Farm programme has helped me plan feeding better and be more accurate in assessing my livestock’s needs. This meeting is an opportunity to share with local farmers in a real-farm situation.”

* The event is on Wednesday 31 January from 2pm-6pm, starting at Sauchentree Farm, New Aberdour, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, AB43 7LN. Booking is essential – sign up here; <http://bit.ly/buchan_mf>
* All visitors are asked to come with clean cars, footwear and clothing for biosecurity reasons, and to car share wherever possible to help with limited parking.
* For further information on each Monitor Farm, see [www.monitorfarms.co.uk](http://www.monitorfarms.co.uk) or contact North cluster adviser Peter Beattie on 07769 366614 or email monitorfarm@qmscotland.co.uk

**Ends**

**Notes to editors:**

About Monitor Farm Scotland:

· The Monitor Farm Scotland programme is managed by Quality Meat Scotland with support from AHDB.

· The programme is fully funded by the Scottish Government Knowledge Transfer Innovation Fund.

· The nine farms chosen to take part in this four-year programme reflect the diverse tapestry of livestock and mixed farming across Scotland.

· The aim of the programme is to help to farms reach full economic, social, and environmental sustainability by optimising production.

· The programme is farmer led and farmer driven with support from specialists and experts to assess farm performance, explore opportunities, and develop solutions to the challenges faced.

· Each Monitor Farm will be steered by a management group of 10 to 12 farming businesses with support from the local community group.

· The learnings and the example set by Monitor farms aims to benefit farmers across the whole of Scotland.

· The programme is managed by an in-house delivery team, who are funded through the programme and managed by QMS.

· For more information visit: https://www.monitorfarms.co.uk/

About QMS:

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.