**Press release**
**For immediate use**
**12 January 2024**

**Challenges facing store lambs to be tackled in free SAC Consulting webinar**

Scotland’s sheep farming community are invited to join a special webinar addressing issues that have faced the 2023 lamb crop - including high worm burdens, feed costs and extremely wet weather conditions - that have led many 2023-born lambs to underperform.

SAC Consulting, part of Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC), will hold an online webinar on Thursday 18 January in response to the particularly problematic year many have had with growing and finishing lambs.

An annual series of Lamb Crop webinars is already planned for February, to look at the coming 2024 crop of lambs. However, the SAC Consulting team wanted to share and discuss information for producers who have faced these challenges in 2023, helping them to enhance efficiency and production before taking them to market over the coming weeks and months.

Kirsten Williams, Senior Sheep and Beef Consultant at SAC Consulting, says that the health and nutrition experts speaking at the webinar will offer assistance and guidance to producers, who have faced challenges throughout their growing year, in maximising the potential from the 2023 lambs.

“It’s just been one of those years with numerous challenges,” says Kirsten, who ranks an especially high parasite burden, the quality and price of feedstuffs following last year’s challenging harvest, and the ongoing wet weather as key factors in many lambs struggling to thrive as they would usually.

“When it comes to parasites, a large part of the problem has been the weather pattern. The warm and moist weather we have experienced in Scotland has provided ideal conditions for a continuous worm cycle. It has also contributed to the high number of cases of fly strike, which has set many lambs back in their growth.”

Kirsten adds that producers looking to reduce input costs may have delayed introducing concentrate feed, or tried cheaper food sources which have resulted in nutritional requirements not being quite as balanced as they might have otherwise.

“Some farmers will have either planned to keep lambs later or purchased long keep lambs to finish for the Ramadan and Easter markets in late March or early April, which will be here before we know it. Ensuring lambs are growing on for this requires really good health and nutrition, and we hope the experts we have speaking at this webinar will help farmers to put that into place.”

Thursday’s webinar, entitled Lamb Finishing, starts at 7.30pm. Speakers will include Fiona Crowden, SRUC Veterinary Investigation Officer, and Lorna Shaw, SAC Consulting Ruminant Nutritionist. It’s free to join, but prior registration is necessary via: <https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_15A_sy0qRtiHfWOyP07pQA>

After registration, a confirmation email will be sent containing further information.

A further three webinars will take place on February 8th, 15th and 22nd with the titles Increasing Flock Output, Reducing Flock Input (Grassland) and Reducing Flock Input (Labour).

**-ENDS-**

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Jane jane@janecraigie.com or 01466 780078.

**Notes to Editors:**

Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC) was established in 2012 through the merger of the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) with Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge Colleges. Through these institutions, we can trace our lineage back over 100 years.

Today, SRUC is on a journey to become Scotland’s enterprise university at the heart of our sustainable natural economy.  Our mission is to create and mobilise knowledge and talent - partnering locally and globally to benefit Scotland’s natural economy.

As part of SRUC, SAC Consulting provides independent, research-driven, industry-leading expertise, advice, and solutions for agricultural, food, and land-based businesses. With 24 offices and an experienced, expert team, it provides local support, tailored to its customers, nationally.

[www.sac.co.uk](http://tracking.janecraigie.com/tracking/click?d=9i8NH0YxugT77q2FrIW15Y-1ryO8M1iEKPnNjbfhaF8S0ImpnVEsqaR1sJfcpB8GwHMp2Pe2NDzQoxFbH500rw-cYfTMvGl8RBq-NWbgw4EI6QY8wntDCIoDonyd-iRFgA2)