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News release

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*For immediate use*

**Free practical meeting on tech and software for livestock producers**

Livestock farmers are invited to a free day of discussions and practical demonstrations to find out what farm management software and technology is right for their farming business.

The meeting on 23January, at United Auctions, Stirling, is being organised by Monitor Farm Scotland in partnership with the EU-funded Sm@RT project (led by SRUC and involving SAC Consulting and Moredun).

Christine Cuthbertson, Monitor Farm West region adviser said: “The first year of the Monitor Farm Scotland programme highlighted the opportunities for using farm software to assist with on-farm recording to make business decisions easier. Novel farm technologies can also help ease management of livestock and improve the bottom line of your business”.

SRUC’s Ann McLaren, UK National Facilitator for the Sm@RT project, added: “The overall aim of the project is to encourage uptake of technologies across both sheep and goat farms. Since we began in early 2021, feedback received from farmers attending our events has highlighted the benefits of being able to see and try different software and technologies before deciding which ones would suit their system.”

During the event attendees will hear from speakers who have a wealth of experience of using different technology and software packages, see practical demonstrations of the products and have the opportunity to speak to suppliers directly.

Speakers include Matt Blyth, an experienced innovator in the sheep and beef industry specialising in data recording and software, who has just completed a Nuffield Scholarship. As Blyth Livestock Advisory Services (BLAS) Matt works closely with livestock businesses to set targets and then manage collection and interpretation of data through EID recording systems and farm management software packages to realise their goals.

Christine said: “Matt is quite the ‘guru’ on farm software and will cover thinking about what you need the software to do for you and what questions to ask. He will also be available throughout the day for any queries you may have about farm software, whether you are looking to purchase a system or have an issue with an existing one.”

Ross Robertson, Head of Agri-Tech (Mixed) with the Agri-EPI Centre, will also speak, sharing his experiences of implementing practical livestock technology on commercial farms. He will also talk about innovations being trialled on the Agri-EPI farm network, and developing precision technology that will improve the sustainability, welfare and productivity of livestock systems.

Attendees will also hear latest updates from the Monitor Farm Scotland programme, and the ongoing Sm@RT project.

“We expect this to be a very popular day, designed to help livestock producers make decisions and make the most of systems they already have. Booking is essential, and we look forward to welcoming people to a really practical, helpful day,” said Christine.

* ‘Talking Tech and Software Solutions for Livestock Producers’ Tuesday 23 January, 10am-4pm at United Auctions, Stirling, FK9 4RN. Booking is essential – use this link to book; <https://bit.ly/3ttAV8r> or visit

<https://www.monitorfarms.co.uk/events/>

**Ends**

***Photo caption:***

*Farmers, including the Duncan family, the Stirlingshire Monitor Farm, will hear from a variety of speakers at the meeting on 23 January.*

**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.