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**Press Release**

**[22 March 2024]**

**Dunlop steps into her wellies for a new role with a Scottish farming and crofting wellbeing programme.**

A farmer’s daughter and former P.E teacher has strengthened the Farmstrong Scotland team by taking on the role of Programme Co-ordinator.

Anna Dunlop and her family farm beef cattle and sheep in Annan, Dumfriesshire, however, her passion for farming stems from her childhood, where she would spend time at home and on her grandparents’ mixed enterprise in Stranraer, in particular helping with the lambing.

Alongside the livestock, Anna breeds and trains horses, as well as competing and participating in the Dumfriesshire Hunt Pony Club and British Showjumping events. Ensuring she has a strong social network and spends time away from the farm is something she continues to prioritise today and is an active member of her local Young Farmers Club, Annandale Young Farmers as well as supporting Dumfries and Lockerbie, and Moffat Agricultural Shows.

Following school, she decided to follow a career in education, studying physical education at University including a probation year in Fraserburgh. She has recently spent two years working in Wigton, Cumbria but was looking for a better work-life balance where she could spend more time helping on the farm, as well as giving something back to the agricultural sector.

“I’m thrilled to join the Farmstrong Scotland team as I really wanted a career that allowed me to return to the industry whilst also supporting the most important asset within our sector, our farmers and crofters.” Explains Anna.

“Through the Pony Club and Young Farmers, I have had the opportunity to take part in events and competitions that allow me to connect with other people, be active and continue learning. When I first heard of Farmstrong Scotland, I realised these were all key messages of the programme so they really aligned with my own values.

“It was a difficult decision to give up teaching but when the opportunity came up to join the team at Farmstrong, I knew it would be an ideal role for me.”

Commenting on the appointment, Alix Ritchie, Programme Director for Farmstrong Scotland, said;

 “Anna’s understanding and enthusiasm for the industry, as well as her active involvement in the rural community, makes her a brilliant addition to our team. We really wanted someone who would be familiar with the challenges those working in the industry face, whilst also bringing a fresh perspective and new ideas for how we can support and promote positive wellbeing.

“Her skills and experience managing events will help the team and board, ensure we continue to build momentum and put processes in place to support farmers and crofters across Scotland.”

Anna’s Tried and Tested Tips for positive wellbeing

1. Finding a local club to join, allowed me to share new experiences, make new friends and take time away from the farm.
2. Taking a few minutes to notice the small things such as seeing new buds forming in the hedges and associating it with spring, helps me appreciate the positives.
3. Physical exercise, whether it is a short walk, riding my horse or playing a team sport, really helps lift my mood.

**-Ends-**

**For more information or to arrange an interview, contact Rebecca Dawes on 07792 467730 or email comms@farmstrongscotland.org.uk**

**Notes to editors:**

**Farmstrong Scotland is supported by RHASS, the Movember Foundation and NFU Mutual, who supported the launch of the organisation.**

**Movember Foundation are matching every £1 raised by Farmstrong Scotland, to the sum of £350,000. Anyone wishing to donate or find out more about supporting the charity, can get in touch via** **hello@farmstrongscotland.org.uk**

**A core principle of Farmstrong Scotland is its five ways to wellbeing. These are:**

 • Connect - developing new friendships and spending time with friends. Prioritising time away from work.

• Give - Giving your time to others, be that through supporting those having a tough time or spending quality time with family.

• Take notice - Take time to pause and think about what you appreciate. Find the simple things that make you happy and pay attention to them, if only for a few moments.

• Keep learning - Be curious on and off the farm. Learning new things is good for your brain, will keep your mind active and help you farm smarter.

• Be active - Working up a sweat releases endorphins that make you feel alert and better able to cope with challenges. Make physical activity a habit, aim for at least 30 minutes of movement a day.