

**Press Release**

For immediate release

**Biggest agricultural influencer on the planet to open commonwealth conference’s Next Generation programme**

**Getting the conference off on the right foot: Cattle hoof trimmer with over six million social media followers named as star speaker**

Professional cattle hoof trimmer Graeme Parker - renowned globally as “The Hoof GP” - has been announced as the person who will open the special programme for under 45s at the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) Conference.

Known as the Next Generation (NG) Programme, the special sessions for the younger delegates representing agricultural show societies from around the world, runs before the main RASC Conference which is being hosted in Edinburgh between Tuesday 25th to Thursday 27th June 2024.

The event, which was launched by the late Duke of Edinburgh in 1957 - who remained president for 50 years until he handed over the reins to his daughter HRH The Princess Royal - is hosted by different countries every two years. This year’s conference, timed so delegates have the option of visiting the Royal Highland Show, will be the first for six years because of the covid pandemic.

Rebecca Dawes, who will be co-chairing the jam-packed programme with fellow NG Trustee, Breyton Milford from South Africa, said: “We are absolutely thrilled that Graeme has accepted our invitation to open our Next Generation programme for those across the globe who share a common interest and passion for agriculture.

“Graeme holds the distinction of being the largest agricultural influencer on the planet, with a following of over 6 million people on his social media platforms. In fact, Graeme's videos have amassed an astounding total of nearly 3 billion views.”

Over the course of the past 13 years, Graeme and his team have expertly trimmed close to 260,000 cows' feet, while also delivering insightful presentations at conferences and speaking engagements spanning the globe, thus significantly raising the profile of the hoof trimming industry

41-year-old Graeme lives near Wigtown, in South West Scotland, with his wife and children.

“What is fascinating is that in spite of all the billions of people who have watched his videos trimming the feet of cattle, Graeme has stayed loyal to what he started out to do - promoting education and good animal welfare within the industry,” added Rebecca.

The NG session will be closed by **Michael Duxbury**, the first blind person to go to agricultural College back in the 1980s. Before going on to become the global head of diversity for the Vodafone group, he was a pig specialist and feed specialist for an animal feed company for many years. Due to the continuous problems facing the needs and facilities of disabled people, he and his partner, Ness, decided to set up the project ‘Inclusive Farm.’ designed to teach agriculture to other disabled students.

Cambridgeshire farmer **Tom Martin** - founder of the hugely successful Farmer Time project which connects classrooms with farmers is also among the speakers, along with **Jim Shanks,** a 5th generation dairy farmer from the Scottish Borders. From growing up on the family dairy, Jim has now become Scotland's only producer of tomatoes… something many doubted was even possible.

**Anna Jones** is a rural affairs journalist, author, broadcaster and television producer. She is also a Nuffield Farming Scholar and a farmer’s daughter from the Welsh Borders. In 2018, she quit her staff job at the BBC to set up Just Farmers - an agri-communications project aimed at connecting journalists and programme makers with independent, authentic voices at the grassroots of farming. Anna’s first book 'Divide: The relationship crisis between town and country' was published in 2022.

Joining Anna on the speakers’ list is **Claire Taylor,** an Agriculture Commentator, Nuffield Farming Scholar and International Speaker. She comes from a beef farm in the south-west of Scotland and began working life at the BBC, before going on to lead the political coverage at Scotland’s national farming paper.  After clocking up a decade of experience working across TV, radio and print, Claire is now a sought-after conference host and columnist.  As part of her Nuffield Farming Scholarship, she has travelled to 15 countries around the world, exploring how farming narratives are changing and researching ways to build more collaborative and positive global dialogues around food production. She is now taking her findings on the road and through international speaking opportunities and working one-on-one with farming businesses, hopes to reinvigorate how farmers and industry organisations are communicating their story.

The RASC’s Next Generation programme will run on Monday 24th and the morning of Tuesday 25th June, including a wide range of speakers, a farm visit, an interactive session and a special dinner at Scotland’s renowned **Murrayfield Stadium**.

Delegates can purchase a ticket for the full programme (NG session and RASC main conference), or just for the NG session. [**Click here to find out more.**](https://www.therasc.com/conference-2024/)

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**Notes to Editors:**

The 30th Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) Conference will take place in Edinburgh between Tuesday 25th to Thursday 27th June 2024.

The conference will be made up of four themed sessions, each one appropriately initialled to spell out RASC – Relevant, Adaptable, Sustainable, Connected. In addition, there will be a session for CEO’s and Next Generation delegates, prior to the main conference commencing.