New Release

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*For immediate use*

**Quality Meat Scotland drives innovation within the butchery sector**

Scotland’s apprentice butchers are benefiting from a focus on innovation provided through the Scotch Butchers Club, run by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS). It recently partnered with industry leaders to provide learning and development opportunities for 24 apprentice butchers across Scotland, with a focus on value-added products.

The events, at Yorkes of Dundee and Strachans Craft Butchers in Larkhall, were led by industry experts Erin Conroy from herbs and spices specialist Verstegen, and Peter Rushforth from butchery supplier Innovative Food Ingredients.

After Erin and Peter demonstrated creating the value-added products, apprentices had hands-on experience making them. These included Scotch Beef chilli enchiladas, Specially Selected Pork peppercorn tenderloin, and a Scotch Lamb balti, allowing them to gain insights and skills to enhance their craft.

Gordon Newlands, Brand Manager at QMS said: “Product innovation remains key to enhancing profitability for Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb, and Specially Selected Pork. By aligning with consumer preferences and offering innovative meal solutions, the butchery sector continues to thrive.

“Collaboration with industry partners, including Verstegen and Innovative Food Ingredients, highlights QMS's commitment to empowering young butchers and driving sales within independent butcher shops.”

Sarah McLauchlan, an apprentice butcher from Strachan Craft Butchers in East Kilbride attended the event. She said: “It was great meet other apprentices and share ideas. Being able to learn from each other was motivating.

“I've noticed a growing demand from consumers for kitchen-ready products, which fits in perfectly with my role within the butcher shop and I have a real passion for it. I'm really excited about making dishes that customers want.

“Younger consumers are finding new recipes on TikTok and social media, then coming to the butcher shop for the ingredients to make them at home using their ovens or air fryers. It is great to see young people use their local butcher shop, and we need to make sure we are providing them with what they want.”

Another attendee, Hayley Glen from The Butcher, The Baker in Dundee, said: “Participating in the Scotch Butchers Club event inspired me. Returning to the butchery sector after a break, I saw a growing demand for value-added products. Our shop is in a student area, we're seeing young customers come into the shop looking for easy meals they can take home and cook.

“Experimenting with new products, sauces and ingredients excites me, and the event provided me with new ways of using Scotch Beef mince and other ingredients. I am looking forward to trying the recipes from the event and trialling ready meals like Scotch Beef Lasagne and Scotch Lamb Cottage Pie.

“The event showed me how easy it was to try new things and how these could be made in different portion sizes for families or for a meal for one. Meeting other butcher apprentices at the event was fantastic and allowed us to share lots of ideas.”

Later in the year, Quality Meat Scotland plans to host additional Value Added events, focusing on the North East and Highlands regions of Scotland.

For more information about careers in butchery, visit the Butchery Careers programme website at https://butcherycareers.co.uk/

For additional details regarding Scotch Butchers Club events and membership, please contact Gordon Newlands at gnewlands@qmscotland.co.uk

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Words count 528

**Notes to editors:**

QMS is the public body responsible for promoting the Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb brands in the UK and PGI labelled Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb branded products abroad, and for promoting Scottish pork products under the Specially Selected Pork logo.

Please note that the use of the word Scotch in the Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb 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](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk) or follow QMS on Facebook or Twitter.