New Release

26 June

*For immediate use*

**Key appointment puts final meat on the bone in Scotland’s bid to become global red meat leader**

A final piece in the jigsaw of Quality Meat Scotland’s (QMS’s) reorganisation around its ambitious strategy to make Scotland *the* choice for premium red meat has been fixed into place with a new Senior Management Team appointment.

Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) accredited public relations practitioner, Holly McLennan has been named as the Director of Communications and External Affairs. This role will lead QMS’s work in promoting the benefits of red meat as part of a sustainable Scotland, as well as showcasing its important role in supporting Scotland’s economy.

QMS Chief Executive, Sarah Millar said:

“Effectively telling the whole red meat supply chain story to trade businesses, levy payers, industry organisations, government and other decision-makers will support recognition of the socio-economic value of our industry.

“Working alongside with the Marketing Team, which focusses on raising awareness and purchase of the quality assurance brands, the Communications and External Affairs Team will protect the reputation of the iconic Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specially Selected Pork brands at home and across the globe.”

Holly’s appointment bolsters QMS’s leadership to a team of four – under Sarah’s management, Emma Heath and Tom Gibson were appointed as Director of Marketing and Director of Business respectively in September.

Holly brings more than a decade of public relations experience, including leading on communications for the Scottish seafood sector at the Scottish Government’s Marine Directorate and overseeing internal and external communications at Food Standards Scotland. This included communicating complex and challenging messages to industry, some based remotely and non-English speaking, after events such as EU Exit and the coronavirus pandemic.

Holly said:

“I am delighted to be joining QMS at such a pivotal time in the organisation’s development as we drive forward our competitive ambitions, and amid the calendar event of the year in the Royal Highland Show.

“It’s been great getting a first-hand feel from QMS members, colleagues and other partners on the current red meat hot topics and future opportunities in areas such as education, nutrition, innovation and environment. Sampling the delicious red meat produce on offer hasn’t been too bad either.

“I look forward to developing a Communications and External Affairs Strategy for the red meat industry that will focus our efforts on building relationships and highlighting the fantastic work and potential of the red meat sector to influential stakeholders and decision-makers.”

Holly will be responsible for leading a team of seven communications professionals, across a broad suite of specialist functions including market intelligence, reputational risk management, media relations and corporate, stakeholder and public engagement.

Sarah Millar added:

“We have a strong calibre of talented, tenacious and passionate individuals at QMS, many of which come from a farming and food-industry background, who are committed to delivering meaningful activity to maximise impact and return on investment for levy payers.

“It was a great feeling to arrive at the Royal Highland Show a year on from when we launched our new five-year strategy with our strategic restructure formally completed. I prefer to look forward than back, but it was amazing to take some time at the show to reflect on how much transformation has already been achieved over the last 12 months.”

ENDS

**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.