****

News release

Date: xx/7/24

*For immediate use*

**Growing for optimum output at Dumfriesshire Monitor Farm summer meeting**

‘Growing for optimum output’ is the focus of this summer’s Dumfriesshire Monitor Farm open meeting on Tuesday 30 July at Barnbackle, Lochfoot. Booking for the meeting, which runs from 3.30pm-6.30pm, is now [open](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dumfries-monitor-farm-summer-meeting-tickets-923670582577).

Visitors will be able to focus on sheep and cattle performance as they discuss latest findings and farm options with a number of experts. Speakers will include John Smith, auctioneer from Wallets Marts, who will run a workshop on selecting lambs. This will include practical guidance on selecting lambs for market to maximise profitability and meet market demands.

John will be discussing weight and size requirements, conformation and muscling, plus health and condition of lambs. He will also look at current market trends and demands, as well as focussing on understanding buyer preferences and specifications.

Ali Haggerty from Stewartry Vets will discuss the importance of Body Condition Scoring (BCS) sheep, including a live demo, optimal BCS targets and nutrition for different stages of the sheep production cycle and the impact on fertility, lambing success, and overall flock health.

She will also give an update on an on-going research project at the Dumfriesshire Monitor Farm which involves Stewartry Vets and Glasgow University. So far, the research has identified a variance in BCS of ewes from tupping through to lambing. Ali will discuss these findings, the consequences and actions taken as a result at Barnbackle.

Paddy Jack from DLF Seeds will be talking about weaning lambs onto clover, including timing, minimising stress and grazing management for optimum clover use. He will provide insights into the benefits and drawbacks, as well as discussing establishing and managing clover – and how it stacks up financially.

Visitors will also hear an update from Monitor Farmer Richard McCornick, with a focus on the farm’s cattle enterprise. He will be discussing the farm’s production and marketing targets, its breed choice and a move to spring calving.

Monitor Farm regional advisor Maura Wilson said: “This will be a great meeting, focussing on growing for optimum output. The speakers will all provide practical information and advice, whether it’s thinking about weaning, selling this year’s lambs or planning for next spring.”

The meeting runs from 3.30pm-6.30pm, and booking is essential to secure a space. Car parking is limited, so car share if possible. Please wear suitable outdoor clothing, and clean vehicles, footwear, and clothing before attending for biosecurity. No children under 16 or dogs are allowed.

* *Dumfriesshire Monitor Farm summer meeting - Tuesday 30 July, 3.30pm-6.30pm at Barnbackle Farm, Lochfoot DG2 8NX. Booking:* [*https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dumfries-monitor-farm-summer-meeting-tickets-923670582577*](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dumfries-monitor-farm-summer-meeting-tickets-923670582577)

**Ends**

*Photo caption: Richard McCornick will update visitors at the Dumfriesshire Monitor Farm summer meeting on Tuesday 30 July.*

**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 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 X.