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News release

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*For immediate use*

**Resilience for farms and farmers key discussion at Roxburghshire Monitor Farm**

Building resilience – for farms and anyone in farming – is the theme for the Roxburghshire Monitor Farm summer meeting, being held jointly with Farmstrong Scotland. Booking for the event, on Thursday 18 July, is now open.

Farmers are invited to come along and hear the latest from Monitor Farmer Robert Wilson about progress at Cowbog, which he farms with his wife Lucy and his parents. They run 70 pure-bred Hereford suckler cows plus followers and a sheep flock, as well as growing arable and forage crops. Robert will be focussing on resilience and what it means to his business.

Visitors will also hear from Gerard Vaughan, programme director of Farmstrong in New Zealand, who is currently visiting the UK and spending time working with Farmstrong Scotland. He will be sharing tips about how to improve personal wellbeing and resilience, and discussing the impact that the Farmstrong programme has had in New Zealand.

Alix Ritchie, programme director of Farmstrong Scotland added: “Gerard will be looking at the practical steps everyone in farming can take to help build resilience to cope with some of the changes we are facing such as unpredictable weather, policy changes and fluctuating input costs and commodity prices. He’ll be encouraging attendees to consider their own personal resilience and to invest in the number one asset on their farms - themselves.”

Stuart Johnson from West Wharmley Farm near Hexham, will discuss his focus on building a resilient farming business. He will talk about how he has spent the last decade focussing on reducing his reliance on fertiliser, chemicals and other external inputs, while increasing the farm’s resilience to fluctuations in the weather and economy.

Visitors will also hear from Eric Anderson from Scottish Agronomy about future weather patterns and building resilient soils.

Maura Wilson, Monitor Farm regional adviser, said: “With many challenges facing farmers, resilience is becoming something we all talk about much more. This Monitor Farm and Farmstrong meeting will look at how farmers and farms can develop a more resilient approach, with some really great practical examples for discussion. We will be aiming to help everyone think about what resilience might mean for them and their businesses.”

The meeting starts at 10.30am, and lunch is included. Booking is essential. Car parking is limited - car share if possible, please wear suitable outdoor clothing and sturdy/waterproof footwear and ensure good biosecurity - clean vehicles, footwear and clothing before attending. Children under 16 and dogs are not permitted.

* *Roxburghshire Monitor Farm summer meeting Thursday 18 July 10.30am-2.30pm at Cowbog Farm, Morebattle, Kelso TD5 8EH. Booking:* [*https://buildingresilienceonfarm.eventbrite.co.uk*](https://buildingresilienceonfarm.eventbrite.co.uk/)

**Ends**

***Photo caption:*** *Gerard Vaughan, programme director of Farmstrong in New Zealand, will be speaking at the Monitor Farm meeting on Thursday 18 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 the whole of 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 Twitter.

About Farmstrong Scotland:

Farmstrong Scotland is an initiative to help farmers, crofters and their families to cope with the ups and downs of farming and crofting by sharing things they can do to look after themselves and the people in their business. It is a peer-to-peer led programme, driven by scientific information and real-life stories, so together we can share, learn and support our wellbeing.

The organisation is supported by RHASS, the Movember Foundation and The NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, who supported the launch of the organisation.

Movember Foundation is 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

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