New Release

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*For immediate use*

**Red meat education on the menu for Scottish school pupils in 2024 and beyond**

Throughout May and June, thousands of school children across Scotland have been getting hands-on with understanding where their beef, lamb and pork comes from, how to cook it, and what having Scotch really means for them, their families, and Scottish farmers.

Tracy Martin is Quality Meat Scotland’s (QMS’s) Health and Education Co-ordinator and, having been a schoolteacher for 15 years, knows how to ignite and develop interest and understanding within school-age children. Tracy joined QMS earlier this year and since then she has been visiting schools, colleges and educational events across Scotland to help spread the word about where Scottish red meat comes from and how well it is produced. In her first six months, Tracy reached more than 3000 young people and in May alone, she was at 11 different events highlighting the good work of farmers, butchers and meat processors.

Five ‘[Make it with Meat’](https://farmingfoodsteps.co.uk/lesson-3/make-it-with-meat) cookery demonstrations were held at primary and secondary schools and colleges in Glasgow, Ayrshire and The Borders. She says: “Going into schools to teach children about food labelling, assurance, how their food is produced and how to cook it is fantastic and rewarding. Sessions are focussed on what they have been learning in class, we explain the origins of the Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specially Selected Pork brands, and relate the products that we are cooking with to the animal that produced it.

“Some eat lamb for the first time at our demonstrations, and many don’t have pork at home and when they try the stir-fry we make together they comment on how tasty it is.

“I often take a cattle passport and ear tag in to demonstrate traceability and the farm to fork journey. Sometimes a vet joins to explain animal welfare, and we also link with chefs.”

QMS has joined up with the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) to revitalise the red meat educational programme and inspire young people to cook with our produce and learn more about the industry.

Tracy said: “QMS have been delighted to work alongside RHET as their primary teaching focus this year has been ‘The Journey of Sheep and Wool’. RHET have provided wool craft activities to pupils, whilst QMS have engaged with youngsters to focus on the ‘Farm to Fork’ element of the year’s focus.”

The Dumfries House and RHET Festival of Farming saw Ayrshire primary school pupils visit Dumfries House Educational Farm to learn more about agricultural produce and take part in fun, interactive activities throughout the day, with QMS getting involved to explain the journey of red meat from Scottish farms to pupils’ plates.

A health and wellbeing event held at the High School of Dundee saw QMS and expert partners illustrate to students how Scotch quality produce can lead to better nutrition and therefore better health and wellbeing overall. QMS also attended the career event, Bang Goes DG 2024, held in Dumfries, and highlighted the exciting career opportunities that the red meat sector can offer.

Tracy continued: “Throughout the events we attended in May we reached young people who may otherwise not have had these learning opportunities.

“Building on this, we have just launched a QMS Scotch Ambassadors programme, enhancing what QMS can offer directly to reach children right across Scotland. Our ambassadors will be a mix of people with an interest in sharing learning about the red meat sector – including but not limited to chefs, farmers, butchers, vets and teachers, highlighting the benefits of Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specially Selected Pork to communities around Scotland. From food and farming events to classroom demonstrations, I am excited for the next academic year.”

ENDS

Words count 604

**Notes to editors:**

QMS is looking to upskill teachers who would like to learn more about food production and farming, to educate schoolchildren. Teacher training will be available in the coming academic year, with the aim that it will enable more children to understand Scottish agriculture, tell their families, and consider a career in farming or butchery.

More information on the Scotch Ambassador Programme can be found [here](https://qmscotland.co.uk/news/quality-meat-scotland-starts-search-for-new-scotch-ambassadors-2) and Farming Foodsteps information and resources can be found [here](https://farmingfoodsteps.co.uk/).

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.