New Release

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*For immediate use*

**HRH The Princess Royal** **honours Scotch Butcher Club member during visit to esteemed butchery business**

On Tuesday 24 September 2024, Her Royal Highness (HRH) The Princess Royal visited the Stirling branch of Hugh Black & Sons; one of Scotland’s most celebrated independent butchers. The visit marks a significant milestone for the company, which has grown from a single retail unit in 1987 to a network of 13 high street shops, a cutting plant, and a factory employing over 150 local people.

As patron of the Scotch Chef's Club, run by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), The Princess Royal toured the Stirling premises to gain firsthand insight into Hugh Black & Sons' dedication to quality, traceability, and sustainable local sourcing practices. A member of the Scotch Butchers Club run by QMS, the family-run business has established itself as a key player in Scotland’s food industry, sourcing high-quality Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specially Selected Pork from local farms and auction markets.

The Princess Royal’s visit highlighted Hugh Black & Sons' commitment to Scottish farming, its links to local auction markets, and the success of its expansion, including the acquisition of Castlehill Farm in 2017, which supplies Scotch Lamb directly to its customers. The company’s continued investment in local sourcing, apprenticeships, and animal welfare was demonstrated through their cutting plant at Wishaw Abattoir and Bathgate factory, where they have made significant improvements in refrigeration and packaging, ensuring the highest standards in production.

The visit also provided an opportunity to explore the company's transition from a family farm to one of Scotland's largest independent butchers. In 2023, Hugh Black & Sons received the prestigious Best for Scottish Sourcing (Multiple Retailer) award at the Scotland Food and Drink Awards. Their innovative approach to product development and their dedication to reducing food miles by investing in local farms and markets has made them a model for high-street retailers facing competition from large supermarkets and online retailers.

**Hugh Black, Director of Hugh Black & Sons Ltd, said:** “It was an honour to have Her Royal Highness visit our Stirling shop.

“Together with our amazing team of colleagues, we are committed to supporting our local communities and providing our customers with the best, locally produced products and service possible. I feel incredibly proud that we were able to tell our story to the Princess Royal, and it will go down as a very memorable day in the history of our business.”

HRH unveiled a commemorative plaque during the visit and received a small hamper of products in appreciation of her visit. She also took time to sign the visitor book, marking the historic occasion for Hugh Black & Sons and the Stirling community.

The event was attended by Alan Simpson, Esq, OBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Stirling and Falkirk, alongside key members of the Hugh Black & Sons team, including Hugh Black, Director; Laura Black, Business Development Manager; Cameron Black, General Manager; John Harvey and Agnes Lindsay, Area Managers; Ivon Pinkerton, Head Butcher for the Stirling branch; and Kate Rowell, Chair of Quality Meat Scotland.

**Kate Rowell, Chair of Quality Meat Scotland, commented:** “With an unparalleled reputation for high quality products, stemming from robust supply chains and passion for their craft, Hugh Black & Sons exist as a pillar of the Scottish red meat industry.

“As champions of Scotch and key members of the communities they tirelessly serve, we wish them continued success for many years to come.”

Hugh Black & Sons is proud to remain a family-run business, with the third generation now actively involved in the company’s operations. Their farm-to-fork philosophy, strong ties to the farming community, and their championing of Scottish farming and butchery practices remain central to their continued success.

Hugh Black & Sons continues to play an active role in the community, supporting local initiatives, sponsoring events, and installing public access defibrillators across their network of shops. By focusing on local sourcing and investing in apprenticeship programmes, they are ensuring the future of Scotland’s butchery industry and providing high-quality products for customers across the country.

For more information on Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb, and Specially Selected Pork, visit: [QMS | Our Brands (qmscotland.co.uk)](https://qmscotland.co.uk/marketing-development/our-brands)

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**Notes to editors:**

**Contact information**

Laura Clark, Communications Manager – lclark@qmscotland.co.uk | 07876 797018
Holly McLennan, Director of Communications and External Affairs – hmclennan@qmscotland.co.uk | 07823 417598

**About QMS**

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) is the public body which helps Scotland’s £2.8 billion red meat sector maximise its positive role in our wealth, health and environment. This includes supporting productivity and profitability, sustainability and integrity, as well as around 50,000 jobs across the red meat supply chain including in some of our most rural areas.

90% of Scotland’s cattle, sheep and pig livestock farmed for red meat are part of our internationally recognised and approved [assurance schemes](https://qmscotland.co.uk/integrity-assurance/quality-assurance), under the Scotch Beef UK geographical indicator (UKGI), Scotch Lamb UKGI and Specially Selected Pork brands. They give people at home and overseas the legal guarantee that the meat they buy has come from animals that have spent their whole lives being raised to the highest of standards.

The suite of assurance schemes extends across the supply chain including feeds, haulage, auction-market and processing. Together the six livestock and non-livestock schemes make sure Scotland’s red meat is among the worlds-best for quality, animal welfare standards, production and traceability.

We are evidence-informed and work closely with partners across the supply chain to [track developments](https://qmscotland.co.uk/markets-prices) in the beef, pork and lamb markets, sharing latest market prices, market developments and commentary with industry.

QMS also:

* runs major marketing and advertising campaigns to promote the brands and drive demand
* supports product development and innovation for profitable supply chains
* works on projects which support environmentally friendly practice for a sustainable sector that plays a key part in protecting our planet
* educates young and aspiring people across classrooms, sports clubs and communities in Scotland on the health benefits of red meat and career opportunity in the sector

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.

**Useful info**

* [QMS 5-year Strategy to 2028](https://heyzine.com/flip-book/4ee0786293.html)
* [Red Meat Industry Profile 2024](https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/quality-meat-scotland/documents/Publications/QMS-RMIP-2024.pdf) – for key statistics across the red meat supply chain
* [QMS website](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk/)
* QMS social media - [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/QualityMeatScotland) / [Twitter](https://x.com/qmscotland) / [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/quality-meat-scotland/posts/?feedView=all)
* [QMS Podcast](https://qmscotland.co.uk/news-media/qms-podcast)