



NEWS RELEASE

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Market research indicates significant opportunities for 'crofting' branded produce – Scottish Crofting Federation say they are pleased by the findings...

'Crofts' and 'crofting' are terms understood by nearly four fifths of the population of Scotland with a third to a half of Scottish people indicating they would be more likely to buy a product if they know it comes from a croft.

These are some of the findings of a recent piece of market research commissioned by the Scottish Crofting Federation into the commercial potential of the crofting brand.

SCF member Russell Smith, who has been leading work to promote the crofting brand, said: "We commissioned this research to test the idea that the croft mark and croft tourism will 'add value' to crofting. That is, we want to know if they will allow crofters to sell more or achieve a higher price for products because the brand is intrinsically worth something to the consumer.

"The findings give a statistical confirmation for what we already suspected: that there is a broad understanding of crofting in Scotland but to a lesser extent throughout the UK." In Scotland 49 per cent of people polled said they would be more likely to buy vegetables or fruit that was marked from the croft while more than forty per cent said they would be more likely to buy croft branded meat. Almost forty per cent of Scottish respondents said they would be more likely to buy craft products that were marked 'crofting'. Although around five per cent of Scottish respondents said they would be less likely to go on a holiday which was promoted as crofting, more than thirty per cent of Scottish people who were polled said they would be more likely to take such a holiday. The SCF believe this can be taken as a testament to the perceived quality of what crofters produce and the support that people have for the crofting system.

Russell Smith said that while the brand is starting from high levels of recognition in Scotland, there is still room for improvement. He said: "Although recognition of crofting in Scotland was high at nearly 80 per cent, throughout the UK it was significantly lower – at only 42 per cent. This suggests that we can market croft produce in Scotland where the concept is well known and understood. The SCF is currently promoting the Scottish Crofting Produce Mark which signifies that the product is from a croft and conforms to laid-down standards of quality in order to tap into this demand. But, as we get further away from the Crofting Counties, we need to add an element of education to our marketing effort to say what crofting is and what its benefits are and we have plans to help crofters with this."

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

1. The survey was carried out as part of the Crofting Resource Programme funded by the Scottish Government, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and the Esme Fairbairn Foundation. Over 2,000 people in the UK were surveyed in an online poll by Progressive Scottish Opinion and YouGov plc. The results are representative of the UK adult population as a whole. The survey was carried out in September this year.

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