



NEWS RELEASE

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Crofting Federation endorses support to Scottish lamb marketing

Scottish Crofting Federation has welcomed government support to promotion of Scotch Lamb PGI and has emphasised the need for local abattoirs, to assure total traceability and provenance.

“It is very encouraging that Rural Affairs Minister Mairi Gougeon has announced £200,000 of new funding to Quality Meat Scotland to promote Scotch Lamb PGI”, said Russell Smith, SCF’s lead on agriculture. “It demonstrates faith in our sheep sector and the high quality meat that we produce, much of which starts life on croft grazings. High animal welfare, provenance and total traceability are essential for us to maintain our reputation for the very best quality lamb.”

Mr Smith went on to say, “Consumers are much more aware of the food chain and want to know exactly what their meat is and where it comes from. Local abattoirs can be a vital link in the chain, providing accountability for high animal welfare and traceability. Scotland has unfortunately lost most of its local, smaller-scale abattoirs in favour of large centralised plants. This necessitates long distances for transporting livestock to slaughter, increased costs for producers and an uncertainty that producers are getting their animals back. If we want to provide meat to the discerning market we have to reverse that policy and reinstate local abattoirs so that the consumer can be assured of their meat’s provenance and traceability. We should be able to provide ‘Croft-reared Lamb’, or ‘Skye Lamb’ or ‘Heather-fed Lamb’, with the confidence that we can trace the meat from birth, through a good life to a good death. The ability to sell direct from the croft to the consumer benefits both the crofter and the consumer.

“The Scottish sheep industry is facing uncertainty and possible calamity due to leaving the European Union without a deal, so we must do everything we can to bolster the quality local, Scottish and UK market we supply to,” concluded Mr Smith. “High quality croft lambs can be supplied for fattening under the ‘Scotch lamb PGI’ mark or can be sold direct as croft-reared. What is essential is that consumers have a product that they have complete confidence in.”

END

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Notes to editors: Please contact SCF office for high resolution photos