



NEWS RELEASE

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Events to explain what new livestock assurance standards mean to crofters

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) will host a series of events with Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) to explain what the changes to sheep and cattle assurance standards that go live in April will mean to crofting.

"Health planning is a useful way of proactively managing livestock health and welfare", said Russell Smith, chair of the SCF agriculture working group, "helping to avoid disease and optimising productivity. In line with other UK assurance schemes, QMS introduced a requirement for annual veterinary visits and veterinary sign-off of health plans, to their cattle and sheep standards, in 2020. Veterinary input helps to ensure such plans are effective and strategic.

"However, recognising that the new standards could be a big change for crofts, a dispensation was made to provide additional time to adapt. Two years have passed and these changes are due to be implemented in full when the new cattle and sheep standards go live in April 2022.

"To give an overview of the changes and what they mean to crofters, SCF will host a series of meetings. We will start with an online event on Monday 28th February at 7pm, at which Eilidh Corr, Animal Health and Welfare Specialist for QMS, will explain the changes and take questions. This will be an opportunity for crofters to ask QMS to justify the need for these changes and the additional costs. It is important we know how the changes can be made to work in practice.

"And for those who don't go online, we will run some 'village hall' meetings following lambing." Mr Smith added.
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