Federation News

The Newsletter for Scotland's Craft Butchers

SCOTTISH CRAFT BUTCHERS
SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF MEAT TRADERS

JANUARY 2013

BSE testing of cattle reduced

The Food Standards Agency has accepted a recommendation by its European counterparts to cease testing of healthy cattle. This is because there was no scientific evidence to support this testing.

A total of only 12 healthy animals slaughtered for human consumption have tested positive for BSE in the whole of the UK since November 2005 out of 3.3 million cattle tested. Conclusion that the protection to consumers provided by testing of healthy cattle, if any, is therefore negligible. In contrast the savings to abattoirs from stopping testing healthy cattle would be £3.3 million!

In future there would be sample testing of "risk cattle" only. This is likely to number about 160,000 cattle e.g. Fallen cattle and emergency slaughtered.

The current BSE testing system is designed to monitor Classical BSE. At the current level of risk, there is no need to test healthy cattle as testing of risk cattle provides sufficient data for this purpose.

Should there be a re-emergence of Classical BSE, then stopping the testing of healthy cattle would reduce the sensitivity of the monitoring system to detect it. However, a re-emergence of BSE, which has been in continuous steep decline since the peak of the epidemic and is now at very low levels, is not expected while effective BSE controls (feed ban and SRM removal) remain in force.

Moreover, the continued testing of risk cattle only would maintain effective monitoring of the sub-population of cattle in which BSE-positive animals are most likely to occur. Should there be any indication from the results of monitoring of risk cattle that prevalence of BSE may have increased, then testing of healthy cattle could be resumed.

The food supply is protected by SRM controls and testing of healthy cattle provides no or negligible additional risk reduction.

Happy New Year from President Ian Faulds and everyone at SFMTA

Featured this month:-

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Telephone advice on Health & Safety is available to SFMTA members by phoning 0560 3468085 or by email: **SFMTA@nhasco.com**
You will need the reference number on the yellow introductory sheet that was enclosed in the November newsletter on phone SFMTA on 01738 637472 for it.

President's Christmas Message

I write this at a time when it is good to be a butcher, after the onslaught of what I hope was a happy and busy Christmas for you all. It's great that this time of the year the community needs a traditional butcher. Quality, personal service and the willingness to go that extra mile appears to be much appreciated.

There is no denying that this past year has been challenging for our trade. Lack of quality stock and ever rising prices have made trading conditions difficult, with margins we have enjoyed in the past not being achievable.

I look forward very much to meeting as many of you as I can in the coming year at the many regional meetings around the country. To those of you who have never attended these forums I would encourage you to come along. Everyone's input and views are very important. It's always good to talk to your colleagues in the trade and we can all learn off each other. A problem shared is a problem halved, or is it doubled.....

I wish you all, your staff and customers a happy, prosperous and peaceful New Year.

Ian Faulds
President

Provost's Prize for Young Butcher

Steven Smith of Hollerans in Laurieston and Linlithgow not only picked up the Trainee of the Year Award at the Backing Falkirk's Future Awards 2012 but also walked off with the Provost's Award for exceptional achievement

The 20 year old butcher came through the Falkirk ETU (Employment Training Unit) and has made great progress to achieve an SVQ Level 2 in Meat and Poultry Processing but also a Modern Apprenticeship and Craftsman Certificate. Well done, Steven.

Steven is pictured with his employer, Billy Holleran

Meat Managers Hygiene and HACCP Training Course

Legislation sets out general rules that make clear that primary responsibility for food safety within a food business lies with the operator. It is therefore necessary to ensure that food safety procedures prevail in the business and are being carried out effectively.

Food safety management using HACCP provides the best way to achieve this.

This course is delivered as a one day option for candidates who have already received basic food hygiene training as a minimum. It is certificated by Meat Training Council.

Two courses will be delivered in January by Paul Bache on behalf of Scottish Meat Training.

Tuesday 22nd January at Premier Inn, Bathgate
Wednesday 23rd January at venue to be determined by interested parties.

In other words if there is lots of interest from one particular area, that is where it can be held. So please register your interest now with
Claire at Scottish Meat Training - telephone: 01738 637785

The content is specific to the retail Butcher / farm shop operation.
Course content outlines:

- Overview to Principles of Food Safety and Hygiene
- Understanding HACCP Terminology
- The Seven HACCP Principles
- Identifying Hazards
- Identifying Controls and CCPs
- The HACCP Template
- Monitoring Procedures and Corrective Actions
- Validation, Verification and Review Procedures
- Group Workshop
- Multiple-Choice Paper and Work Based Assessment

A training pack is provided for each business.

The pack contains:

- **Guidance notes.**
- **Blank HACCP template.**
- **Example cooked meat HACCP Plan**
- **CD ROM containing blank HACCP template and forms**
- **Paper Master copies of blank HACCP template and forms**

The assessment is by a short multiple choice test and a HACCP assignment which has to be sent in for the tutor to mark.

Cost of the full day course including certification and lunch is £160. In most cases this can be paid using Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) which Claire can help you with.

Trade feeling a bit like Christmas in Angus

There was a lot of it about in the run up to Christmas – water that is, but the rain did not seem to dampen sales.

As far as SFMTA could ascertain through reports coming back to them things were slow to start but then from the week beginning 17th December there was a marked upturn in sales.

With Christmas falling on a Tuesday and a great many butchers opening on Sunday 23rd December the rush was spread over good trading days on the Friday and Saturday and then steady collection of orders over the final two days before Christmas.

Members experiences were varied with no one claiming to be over the moon with their sales but then expectations were possibly not aimed that high. There follows a list of comments received on email on Christmas Day and Boxing Day! These views cover shops from the very south to the far north.

"Sales seem as good as previous years', trade was certainly spread over four days, turkey as popular as ever, good beef sales especially on roasts."

"Was very busy period, sales well up on last year's. Turkey butterfly sales up. Sold a lot of beef: roasts, rib roast. Lots of fillet steaks, strange as normally don't sell as much beef at Christmas time, more at New Year. Stir frys, currys ,easy foods sold well too as the 23rd landed on a Sunday. It helped as we had an extra day of work. Flavoured stuffings sold well, cranberry, apricot etc."

"Great days trading; turkey sales up, red meat down."

"Trading pretty much same as last year fewer turkeys more rolled turkey breast, boneless crowns."

"So far this month is about 8 % down on last year. This is in-line with what we were expecting given that customers are cutting back their spending. However Christmas week sales appear to be slightly ahead of last year. Next week will be a better indicator as the Supermarkets can't sell steak pies as good as ours!

"About 10% down on last year. Turkeys pork and lamb all down. Sirloins and rib on bone slightly up. Copas turkeys half of last year. Think people were watching their money."

"Not so much call for the bigger Turkeys people seem more appreciative of the waste aspect, big call for Capons and Venison and we think everyone has now discovered a Sirloin Roast and Rib on the Bone. Sales a bit down on last year but we do have the new Tesco to contend with."

"Trade has been very good this year up on last year, a lot of beef sold , usual turkeys sold, double the amount of Copas turkeys as last year, so all in all a good year, let's hope the new year is as busy!"

Thanks to everybody who gave such speedy feedback and a big thank you to all who took time to pose for photos on the Saturday before Christmas. That includes the unfortunate member whose chill compressor had packed up the previous day.

Christmas in Blairgowrie

SpongeBob SquarePants in elf 'n safety Christmas lights ban

Kids flocking to glimpse SpongeBob SquarePants turning on Christmas lights sobbed as he was suddenly banned — on health and safety grounds. Bob's cartoon costume, which cost a city £2,000 to hire, was deemed too **WIDE** for him to climb the five steps up to the outdoor stage so he could flick the switch.

A vehicle tailgate lift was then ruled out in case someone got hurt. Bob had to stay at ground level as Corrie's Sherrie Hewson flicked the switch — meaning most of the crowd couldn't see him. Fuming dad John Williamson, 45, told how daughter Lola, nine, was in tears at the fiasco in Wolverhampton. He branded it "ridiculous".

The council said it was also mindful that Bob's costume could only be worn for 40 minutes at a time — "again for health and safety reasons".

HSE responds to media coverage of SpongeBob SquarePants Christmas lights ban

Dear Editor
I feel for the children who were in tears at the switch on of the Wolverhampton Christmas lights, and can understand their parents' anger. Childhood memories of Christmas are supposed to be about happiness and excitement, not full of disappointment.
The truth is that health and safety did not prevent SpongeBob Squarepants taking to the stage to switch the lights on. With a bit of common sense and proper forward planning it would have been perfectly possible to get SpongeBob up on the stage, bulky costume or not.
If I could have a Christmas wish for myself it would be that we hear a lot less of these ridiculous excuses in future. That would be a gift we can all enjoy.
Yours faithfully
Judith Hackitt**,** Chair**,** Health and Safety Executive

June Lomax

It is with immense sadness that SFMTA learned of the death on Boxing Day of June Lomax. June was well known to members of the Scotch Butchers Club and those butchers who have been involved with the QMS stands at the Royal Highland Show and the BBC Good Food Show. She was passionate about her job and will be fondly remembered by all. She is survived by her husband, Allan.

A great friend to butchers and to the Scottish Federation, June had surgery in October and sadly that did not have the success that everyone had hoped for.

John Davidson from Inverurie was one of the first to register respect:- "I would like to pass on my sincere condolences to a wonderful woman. A woman who has been a credit to our industry for many years. This is a sad and great loss of such a professional and will be sorely missed."

June left a message for all of us conveyed by her colleague Laurent Vernet: "Death is nothing at all I have only slipped away into the next room. All is well".

Armed to Serve
Qualified to Cut

Brian Petrie was a chef for 22 years in the army but on leaving was happy to turn to the meat trade and tackle a Modern Apprenticeship in Butchery Retail Skills.

Having experienced service throughout the world Brian was ready for any challenge and he got that when he joined T&R Skinner the butchers in Kippen in 2009.

Initially employed to work in their production kitchen he created and made the numerous culinary delights on offer in the shop. The owner of the business, Cameron Skinner, agreed that it would be a good idea to develop his skills into the butchery side of the shop as it would allow Brian to be used in this area if and when required.

He had been given some basic butchery lessons when he joined the army as a chef but he found that there was much more to learn when starting with bone in beef in quarters. First he had to learn how to recognise a forequarter from a hindquarter but watching his colleagues in the butchery area gave him an interest in expanding his knowledge and skills.

He explained:- "Coming from a chef's background I found the qualification really interesting. Remembering the names of all the cuts was tricky and learning your way around the forequarter bones the most difficult."

Skinner's new recruit developed his skills under the guidance and instruction of his employer with additional input from his experienced colleagues. The 8 units in Brian's portfolio covered knife skills such as primal cutting, boning, seam cutting and trimming. Other skills assessed were order production and manufacture. At all times Brian had to display working practices which were in line with food hygiene and heath and safety regulations.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

Brian also completed additional units plus the core skills assessments which make up the Modern Apprentice Programme. Having started his SVQ level 2 Modern Apprentice Qualification in Butchery Retail Skills in April 2011, he achieved in August 2012 and received his certificate in front of his peers at the Scottish Federation regional meeting held in Perth in October. It should be recorded that Brian worked on his qualification with enthusiasm and was never shy to ask advice from his colleagues.

His army chef skills-took him all over the world to the likes of Northern Ireland, Kenya, Belize, USA, and Germany, to name but a few. Now those skills have been used to transfer knowledge to his new customers and those he works beside after his daily commute from Tillicoultry. The three full time staff and four part timers now have a resident expert and the clients in the traditional butchers shop in the village High Street have no need for cookery books when Brian is around.

The 44 year olds' chefs skills are being used to develop new products, cook hog roasts at functions, weddings - "there is nothing we can't do "he proudly proclaims "It's good to give customers and even the guys in the shop an insight into cooking and giving advice."

Brian Petrie receiving his MA qualification from his assessor Gordon King (left) and Billy McFarlane, Immediate Past President of the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders (right).

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Tasty Jobs

Co-Investment from
UKCES
UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
Employer Investment Fund

For a group of four unemployed youngsters, Friday 7th December was passing out day at McIntosh Donald in Portlethen. The great news at the end of a five week course organised and funded by the National Food and Drink Academy, was that all four course participants were told that they would be starting full time jobs within the Aberdeenshire meat plant on the following Monday morning.

Darren Klos, Ian Clark and Greg Drysder started in the Further Processing and Packing section and Lauren Hoon was employed in the Technical Department. Over the duration of the course, the four teenagers were given a full induction into the meat industry and into McIntosh Donald's own procedures. The training undertaken by Helen Johnston and Malachi McCann from the Perth based, Scottish Meat Training, included food safety, health and safety, communication, confidence building and knife skills.

The course also involved work experience for all four in the meat plant, starting work in a busy department at 6.00am each day. The participants got involved with bagging, vac packing, labelling, palletising meat and processing offal as well as putting into practice the specialised training in knife skills.

All four have been unemployed for up to six months and freely admitted it was tough finding a job in the current labour market. The course aptly named 'Tasty Jobs' addresses the issues which prevent the unemployed person from securing a long-term employment opportunity, gets them ready for work with the objective of creating a pool of local people who can fill local jobs.

McIntosh Donald immediately emptied this newly formed pool as their Managing Director, Alan McNaughton explained:- "We recognised four willing guys who had shown that they were keen to progress. Let's give them a chance we thought and although there were no immediate vacancies we will slot them in ready to fill gaps when they appear."

Helen Johnston of Scottish Meat Training added:- "These young people could have decided it was easier not to come and complete the course because they did face real problems due to the Job Centre wrongly cutting their benefits and insisting they attend for interviews with their advisors during working hours.

"This group of young people started of as six in number. We lost the first member after lunch on the first day and the second left at the end of his third week training. However this member, Chris, left to take up a new job. After being unemployed for 13 years he said that the course had given him the confidence to apply for a full time position which came vacant with another food company, our first success."

Good habits breed success the team was given the support they needed from SMT Assessor Malachi McCann and Helen, to learn good habits such as attending work every day and on time. There was a 6.00am start and the team worked on the shop floor beside people who were earning four times their £50 + unemployment benefit.

Helen continued:- "It's about changing peoples' mindset, showing them that if they put their mind to it they can earn lots of money and get the buzz from knowing they paid for things themselves."

Lauren Hoon is originally from South Africa but like the three young men now lives in Stonehaven. She claimed that she went on the course because she wanted to do something out of her comfort zone. Darren Los was keen to come and see what it would be like working at the Portlethen plant that employs 290 staff and has an annual turnover of £125m.

Both Ian and Greg had previous short term jobs at Arla Foods and as a local trainee chef but all are very appreciative of the opportunity to work full time and what it will bring to their lives.

At the presentations made at the completion of the course it was striking just how well the four came over - excited, enthusiastic and willing to learn. They have had a good start thanks to Tasty Jobs, the rest is up to them.

Tasty Jobs has received co-investment from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills through the Employer Investment Fund.

Regional Workshops Focus on Key Opportunities for Independent Retailers

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and the Scottish Federation of Meat Traders Associations (SFMTA) have recently hosted four regional meetings to explore and discuss the opportunities and challenges facing independent retailers during the current economic climate.

The meetings, held in Dundee, Midlothian, Bellshill and Forres, reported that shoppers' attitudes toward independent retailers are largely positive, but there are a number of significant barriers which can deter increased usage by some consumers.

At the meetings, Jack Broussine, QMS Marketing Executive, presented the results of recent research commissioned by QMS and conducted by TNS-BMRB. The research explores the reasons why some shoppers choose to purchase their red meat from a traditional butcher shop, as well as supermarkets, and why for others, it is less appealing.

The research found that just over half of the red meat buyers interviewed (53%) claimed to have purchased red meat from a butchers shop within the six months prior to the research, and around a third (30%) claimed they had purchased red meat from a butchers shop more often than a supermarket.

The research also identified the defining characteristics of the three types of red meat buyers in relation to their butcher shop usage: Butcher Only (17%), Switchers (36%) and Supermarket Only (47%).

A group which might offer business development opportunity to both independent retailers and supermarkets are "Switchers" or those who claim to use both butcher shops and supermarkets to purchase their red meat. Using Kantar Worldpanel data, this group would account for around £110m spend or 17,697,000kg of fresh beef, lamb and pork retailed in Scotland in the 52 weeks leading to 30th September 2012.

Mr Broussine said: "The 'Switchers' are a large group of shoppers and may offer a significant opportunity to butchers. They visit a butcher shop, albeit sometimes infrequently, to purchase red meat products - there is the opportunity to increase the frequency of their usage."

The research found that butchers are largely viewed positively by all red meat buyers with the main benefits being recognised as the quality of the produce they sell and the level of service they offer.

"Switchers" showed an even greater appreciation of the benefits of shopping with both retail formats than any other group - even those only buying from a butcher shop. 82% listed the meat offering and 24% listed the staff as a reason for purchasing red meat from a butcher shop.

However, "Switchers" are strongly driven by the price and convenience on a day to day basis and are likely to use a butcher shop when they want higher quality and are less sensitive to price and convenience for this specific purchase occasion.

The presentation highlighted that the positive aspects of the butcher shop experience are what keeps the "Switchers" returning.

Another theme highlighted during the meetings was that some shoppers feel out of their depth when purchasing red meat from a butcher shop.

"A minority of respondents commented that they felt ill-equipped for the more involved transaction process of the butcher shop compared to the predictability and ease of pre-packed and pre-priced shopping," said Mr Broussine. "They may be unfamiliar with weights, cuts of meat and pricing, or they may fear they will spend more than their intended budget.

"The experience can also be deeply coloured by whether the server that day is friendly and welcoming, keen to volunteer information and advice, or gruff, rushed and lacking in basic customer service skills. These service factors can have a huge effect on people's inclination to make a repeat visit."

Douglas Scott, SFMTA Chief Executive, likened the experience for the inexperienced shopper to that of shopping in a fish mongers or to a shopper's requirement for a certain level of advice and support which is available when buying wine or whisky.

"There are steps to be taken to overcome some of these barriers and to make the experience more welcoming and less intimidating," said Douglas. "Butchers are the stars of the show and they have the benefit of authenticity in their offering. There is a need to aid and empower shoppers and make sure that when they enter the butcher shop, every aspect of their experience is positive and encourages them to return."

Each meeting featured a case study from two successful butchers highlighting what makes their business successful. A recurrent theme of these talks was the importance for owners and managers to recognise their strengths and create a reason for customers to return time and time again.

The presenting butchers identified a range of activities including: working on the business strategy as well as serving customers in the business; focussing on staff training/development; the use of new technologies to communicate with frequent and non-frequent shoppers; working in the community; and entering butchery competitions.

During the meetings, attendees split into small groups to discuss the matters arising, including how butcher shop operators might encourage repeat custom of "Switchers" and how QMS and the SFMTA could to communicate with and understand your customers.

These discussions have been documented and will be explored by the SFMTA executive and QMS's Scottish Butchers Think Tank and reported on at a later date. QMS and the SFMTA are exploring how they will action points discussed at the meetings and are intent on developing a joint strategy to tackle some of the issues highlighted.

Unemployment Figures Fall

The latest Scottish unemployment figures are hopefully a light at the end of the tunnel of what has been a debilitating five-year economic downturn. The number of people out of work has fallen by 19,000 to 204,000 in the three months between August and October - the largest drop in Scottish unemployment for more than four years.

It is also good news that unemployment among 16 to 24 year olds in Scotland dropped 4.3 per cent in the latest period to just over 21 per cent. Still far too high, and an undoubted generational challenge and we hope that Government action will minimise the pain for young people trying to enter the job market.

Plans for New Food Body

As reported last year, the Scottish Government announced in July that it would create a new food body for Scotland, for food safety, food standards, nutrition, food labelling and meat inspection. A Task Force has now been established that Lord Rooker chairs comprising of Board members and Executive Directors. The Task Force will consider, respond and input to the Scottish Government's transition programme to create the new food body.

The Food Standards Agency is committed to working with the Scottish Government to meet their objectives whilst ensuring that consumers' interests across the UK in relation to food continue to be protected. The Task Force will has an important role in making that happen.

The Scottish Government (SG) has begun work on planning the new food body and in collaboration with the FSA in Scotland, organised a workshop in Edinburgh on 21 November so that stakeholders including SFMTA could help shape the SG's forthcoming consultation on the New Food Body (NFB) and the FSA in Scotland's parallel consultation on domestic food law. The first session, led by SG, gave stakeholders the opportunity to consider if there were any areas currently not covered by the FSA in Scotland that the NFB could take on as additional functions. A second session led by FSA in Scotland explored with stakeholders if there were any gaps in domestic food law that have not already been identified, where consumer protection could be improved. The event was very well received with attendees from 57 organisations, including a large number of Local Authorities and there was a very productive discussion. The findings from the event are currently being analysed in detail, but the following summary provides a flavour of the event.

Reports from the tables included topics such as playing a greater role in public health and healthy eating, streamlining existing burdens on businesses and farms, involvement in strategy and food security, analysis and monitoring of food purchases, and the initial approval of premises under the food hygiene regulations. There were no immediate suggestions for anything that the NFB might stop doing. There were many points made by participants about what they would definitely like the NFB to keep doing, reflecting their recognition of the expertise and skill of the FSA in Scotland currently. The provision of training was particularly noted as a high point.

In general there was strong support for introducing powers to enable mandatory display of FHIS ratings, as long as this was enforceable. There was also strong support for enabling legislation to allow use of administrative sanctions in future enforcement powers. Feedback is currently being analysed to inform the detail of the consultation.

Establishing the new food body will require primary legislation and the Scottish Government has indicated that they will launch their consultation on this at the end of January 2013. The earliest Vesting Day for the new food body would be in October 2014.

Wanted
Modern Apprentices

Scottish Meat Training still has vacancies available on their Modern Apprenticeship training programme for 2012-13

Available for ALL age groups and for ALL staff – new and old

And it's FREE. Skills Development Scotland fully fund the training for Level 2 and Level 3 Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland.

Do not miss out on this opportunity to invest in your workforce
Contact: Claire on 01738 637785 or email **Claire@meattraining.net**

Adopt an Apprentice

Skills Development Scotland have an incentive available for new employers of trainees who are made redundant. If a new employer agree a contract with the trainee to employ them for at least a year and also to allow them to complete their Modern Apprenticeship then they will be eligible for a £2,000 incentive. We have had three trainees re-employed through this scheme in this contract year.

The Youth Contract

There are wage incentives available in some areas for employing an out of work young person. These are difficult to source though we do have a list of where some are available. They are primarily aimed at employing young people who have gone through a Work Programme with the local Jobcentre.

In order for employers to qualify for the incentive, clients must be:

- Aged between 18-24 when starting work with the employer
- Attached on the Work Programme prior to starting work
- Starting work on or after 2nd April 2012
- Working 16 hours or more with the employer with a job that is a permanent role
- Willing to sign an employee consent form (a separate employee consent form) allowing the employer to claim the wage incentive
- Employed by private, voluntary community sectors, social enterprises, local governments or NHS trusts.
- Central Government Departments, Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are excluded.

The winner of the first ever Scottish Football Pie Awards is Forres Mechanics. All courtesy of the pies supplied by local butchers Murdoch Brothers who helped cut up the opposition in the contest judged at Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline.

The piemakers make the steak pies sold at Forres Mechanic's ground and came out on top of the 48 football club pies who were entered. Entries represented clubs at all levels across Scotland. The Old Firm and all but one of the SPL clubs were competing with Bathgate Thistle and Ardrossan Winton Rovers to win the trophy for the best football pie in Scotland.

To ensure that the publicity for this new contest did not overshadow the World Scotch Pie championship, the Scotch Pie Club announced the winners of the best Football Pie on Tuesday 11th December. The makers of and representatives from the last 6 clubs standing were invited to attend the prize presentation. All winners in other categories of the Scotch Pie Club Awards will be announced at a presentation lunch on 9th January. The Football Pie winners were as follows:

2013 Scotch Pie Club Awards - Football Pie
Best Pie in Scottish Football made by Murdoch Brothers Butchers for Forres Mechanics FC
Gold Award Scottish Premier League made by Pars Foods Ltd for St Mirren FC
Speciality Gold Award for Chicken Balti Pie made by Pars Foods Ltd for Celtic FC
Gold Award Scottish Football League made by Pars Foods Ltd for Falkirk FC
Gold Award Scottish Junior Football made by Bruce of the Broch for Fraserburgh United JFC
Silver Award made by Reids Highland Fare for Invergordon FC

The category for the best pie available for supporters to buy at a Scottish football match was introduced this year in the Scotch Pie Club Awards in recognition of the huge importance these hearty snacks play in the fans enjoyment of the beautiful game.
Judging in this category was undertaken by team of football fans and journalists led by Jim Leishman on Tuesday 27th November.

Chairman Dr James Anderson (above) accepted and was pleasantly surprised to receive the trophy on behalf of Forres Mechanics. He said "our fans love to enjoy a pie at a match and we are delighted to hear that ours is the best in the land."

Forres Mechanics produced the quality on the pitch to win the 2011-12 Highland League but now that quality has been confirmed to the off the park quality as well; the Mosset Park club Chairman continued:-

"I didn't know that the competition existed but it is super that local business gets the opportunity to parade its wares through the football club. We like to think of Forres Mechanics as a community club and we are delighted to be associated with the Murdoch Brothers business and it is an excellent pie."

Speaking on behalf of the winning piemakers, Murdoch Brothers, Ronnie Murdoch said "we take huge pride in all of our products so to receive this recognition for our Forres Mechanics football pie is the highest praise as we have been judged by peers as well as fans. It's a huge honour."

The overall competition attracted a record entry this year with more than 100 butchers and bakers entering some 500 pies, pasties, sausage rolls, bridies and savouries into the competition.

The Morayshire butchers won recognition just three years ago when they lifted the World Championship title for their Scotch Pies but it was their Steak Pie that won this prize. Both these Murdoch pies are sold at the ground as well as Sausage Rolls, Chicken & Ham Pies and Macaroni Pies.

The average attendance at home games is around 400. That rose to 600 as they closed in on the Highland League title last season and of course for the visit of Rangers just under 3000 squeezed in for this season's William Hill Scottish Cup tie.

Dr Anderson now hopes this win will increase the sale of their pies, boost gates, make people more aware of Forres Mechanics and maybe bring some tourism into the area.
All supporters from the other clubs in the Highland League will look forward to a savoury treat when they come to play Forres.

"From a curiosity point of view it will certainly increase the number of spectators who go to the refreshment counter" added Dr Anderson. There is no doubt about that so it will be good for Kenneth and Sarah who have the catering franchise."

The Chairman proudly placed the new cup in the Forres trophy cabinet, filling the space vacated by the Highland League Championship trophy that was absent in need of slight maintenance. Dismissing suggestions that celebrations at the presentation might have taken its toll on the silverware the Chairman replied:-

"It is away temporarily getting a few minor dents removed from it, honourable battle scars. I'm sure all these scars were on the trophy before we were presented with it, we just identified them."

Ronnie Murdoch, a partner with Graham his brother at Murdochs felt that lifting the trophy was a fantastic achievement for the business, their staff, the town and Forres Mechanics:

"We were very aware of the competition that we were up against not just locally, but nationally since there are a lot of good producers of high quality products. Id like to thank all my staff for being diligent and conscientious about the products that they prepare and produce every day. It is really as much their award as it is mine.

"Hopefully this will increase the sale of our pies, make people more aware of Forres Mechanics and maybe bring some tourism into the area. The more things that can generate income for the area is all good and positive."

Murdochs won the World Scotch Pie Championship in 2010 and in some respects know what to expect from winning awards for their products:

"We are still generating interest and sales as a result. We are exporting pies now as well and our new website is creating sales now as well."

Current pie production swings between 15000 and 20000 per week but with their state of the art bakery there is scope for plenty more.

"We would be happy to supply other football clubs and we built the new factory so that we could handle more volume. Greater turnover will generate more jobs and generally make sure that the company succeeds."

The award for the best pie in the SPL was presented to Pars Bakery for the pies they supply to St Mirren – the Buddies Pie.

More pictures at https://picasaweb.google.com/ScotchPieClub/2013FOOTBALLPIE#

Supermarket Watch

Morrisons position as the only top supermarket selling 100% British fresh meat is over. The supermarket has announced that it is **abandoning its policy of selling 100% British poultry** and is planning to import poultry meat from within Europe, marketing it under its Helmsely's and Market Value brands.

A spokesperson for the NFU Poultry Board has reacted saying: "British poultry producers have committed and invested in their businesses in order to supply Morrisons, so it is extremely disappointing that Morrisons has made this decision. It means British chicken will be now be displaced by cheaper produce from EU countries that will not have to meet the same welfare standards and it is a blow for the industry." Morrisons has defended its stance saying that it will continue to source British poultry, but where and when they can supply their customers with better value, the company will do so.

Sainsbury's is pulling the plug on **quality standard labels** from its packs: both the Red Tractor logo and the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) logos will no longer feature on its own-brand lines. The decision has angered farmers. A spokesperson for the Red Tractor logo, which was first introduced in 2000, responded: "It is the benchmark that many consumers actively look for when deciding what to buy. The Red Tractor is the only guarantee that a product labelled as British is British through the chain". However, Sainsbury's has defended its decision saying that too many logos on pack are confusing. And Sainsbury's also says that they aim to double sales of British food by 2020, has announced a new £1 million agricultural fund to support British farmers and has invested £40 million in British farming over the last five years.

In further labelling news, the Government is launching a **new traffic light food labelling system** on products across the UK this month to make it easier for consumers to make healthy food choices. Meat and cheese risk being demonised under the scheme as they may be labelled 'red' for salt and fat content: so bad news for cheese, full-fat milk, sausages and bacon all of which, when eaten in moderation, contain essential elements of a balanced diet. The new scheme is voluntary but all major retailers have signalled their intent to adopt it.

Sausage PGI

Newmarket Sausages have become the 50th British food product to earn protective status (PGI). First made in Newmarket in the 1880s, they are said to have been enjoyed by Queen Victoria. The bid was launched 10 years ago but has been protracted because one local producer did not want to divulge the recipe.

PGI status specifies that Newmarket sausages must be made in or close to the Suffolk town and contain a minimum of 70% pork and 3% seasoning which includes white pepper, black pepper, thyme, parsley and nutmeg.

Not all British sausages have been so successful in applying for protected status. The Lincolnshire sausage was turned down because there are already too many variations made across the UK which has diminished the link between the product and the county.

SFMTA did not follow up suggestions that Lorne Sausage should attempt to gain PGI status since verification of claims would be costly and clear benefit could not be identified.

Healthy support for small business

The Scottish Government, in partnership with the Scottish Food and Drink Federation, is running a further two-year programme for small businesses to make their products healthier.

This innovative approach sees hands-on support for small companies across Scotland, helping them to reduce levels of sugar, fat and salt in their everyday products.

Since the programme launch good progress has been made with a number of manufacturers based across Scotland, with the SFDF's Technical Industry Manager providing tailored recipe change advice to businesses.

From Tods of Orkney oatcakes to Stuarts of Buckhaven butchery produce, customers are welcoming the healthier products and therefore creating more viable, sustainable businesses.

Minister for Public Health Michael Matheson said: "It is really encouraging to see small businesses making their products healthier, crucially without impacting on sales. Simple updates to recipes or processes can make all the difference, often without much impact on taste. And every little improvement in the product can help meet customer preferences for healthier shopping baskets.

"We must take steps now to tackle obesity. We have already introduced a range of measures to improve diet and are spending over £2.5m this year and the next on projects to encourage healthy eating, from diet projects in deprived areas to the HealthyLiving Award on the high street.

"Our programme for small businesses makes an important contribution, and we are having wider discussions with major manufacturers, retailers and caterers about broader actions to inspire healthier choices across the whole food spectrum."

Dr Colette Backwell, Director, Scottish Food and Drink Federation said:
"We are delighted that the Scottish Government has recognised our work to make products healthier. As an industry, we are committed to playing our part in the improvement of public health and tackling the challenges of overweight and obesity alongside Government and other partners.

"This programme gives the smaller companies at the core of our industry access to in-house new product development expertise, whilst maintaining the safety and quality of the great Scottish food and drink in which our consumers place their trust."

Related information:
Finance of £172k is being committed from September 2012 to September 2014. This funds all associated costs including salaries, publicity, print materials and events.

Reducing moisture loss from chill down after slaughter

By maintaining a high atmospheric humidity, the moisture loss from a freshly slaughtered carcass during chill down can be reduced from 3% to 0.5%. The high humidity prevents the moisture from leaving the meat resulting in higher product weight. This can be up to 6kg from a typical side of beef during the chill down process.

Case Study

Salt content of the morning roll has been reduced by 14%

R T Stuart Ltd (otherwise known as Stuarts of Buckhaven), is a manufacturer and retailer specialising in bakery and butchery products. This includes a range of savoury and sweet bakery items, with the top-selling products including morning rolls and scotch pies.

Summary
21 bakery products in RT Stuart Ltd's product range have been targeted for reformulation, equating to 80% of total product sales.

A salt reduction strategy has been developed for 10 of the 21 targeted products.
The salt content of the morning roll, which at 40,000 units sales per week makes it RT Stuart Ltd's top-selling product, has been reduced by 14% to date.

Results and impact
So far, R T Stuart Ltd has completed two steps of the reformulation process for the recipe for the top-selling morning roll. This has been amended to reduce each roll's salt content by 7% every month over six month period.

Where the project is delivered?
RT Stuart Ltd has 16 bakers shops and three butchery outlets in the Buckhaven area of Fife. In addition to sales in these shops, the company's products are sold widely via wholesale to other independent and multiples retail outlets across Scotland, as far as Dundee, Edinburgh and Falkirk.

Background
R T Stuart Ltd is a family business with a long-history in bakery. The Stuart family have made few changes to the traditional recipes or production techniques during their 155 years in operation. However, when Chris Peace, SFDF's Industry Technical Manager, outlined the process and potential customer and business benefits of product reformulation, Keith Stuart, Production Director, was keen to understand how it could work for RT Stuarts.

Process
In the first stage of the company's reformulation work the focus has been on bakery items which are all produced from scratch in the purpose built manufacturing facility at Methil. This control over the ingredients used in making these bakery items has meant that changes to recipes could be made without having to refer to any external ingredients supplier.

What's next?
Once the reformulation work on all bakery products is underway, the company plans to investigate reformulation opportunities in its butchery products, which include sausages and black pudding. This will require close cooperation with ingredient suppliers who provide the seasoning mixes used in many of these products. As SFDF will coordinate this activity it provides a further opportunity for the reach of the programme to be expanded.

This free of charge service provides hands on technical support to SMEs in Scotland to help them reformulate their products.

The Government has challenged the food industry to help lead the fight against obesity. This also makes good commercial sense as consumers become more aware of healthy eating and the importance of checking food labelling.

For more information contact:
Chris.Peace@sfdf.org.uk / 0131 229 9415

Meat juiciness related to perception of saltiness

Meat products are in the top three of product categories that contribute to the high salt intake in the modern western diet. Within the Top Institute Food and Nutrition, experts at NIZO food research in The Netherlands have developed a strategy for salt reduction in processed meat products that targets the maximization of perception of the available salt in the food product.

By changing the structure, but not the firmness, of sausages, the amount of serum that can be released could be modulated. A trained QDA (Quantitative Descriptive Analysis) panel rated the saltiness, firmness and juiciness of sausages with a low and high serum release at three salt levels.

The sensorial scores for saltiness showed that sausages with a high serum release were perceived significantly saltier that those with little serum release. Sausages with a high serum release were perceived more juicy than those with a low serum release.

The perceived juiciness is the result of the amount of serum that is pushed out of the meat matrix while chewing and the ability of the tissue to bind water, which is affected by the salt content.

The observed increase in salt perception, as a result of increased juiciness, was largest at the lowest salt level.

Senior scientist and project manager Fred van de Velde is convinced that this strategy will help industry to develop healthier foods.

"We have already developed innovative clean label solutions for the reduction of salt in bread, cheese and meat while retaining a good taste. These include natural salt enhancers, enhancement through inhomogeneous distribution, and recently the enhancement by serum release.

With this technology a salt reduction of at least 15% and possibly 40% can be achieved."

UK pig prices bucking the European trend

Scottish pig producers are facing some challenging times as the industry goes through a period of adjustment following the cessation of pig slaughtering at Vion's Hall's of Broxburn site just over one month ago.

However, Stuart Ashworth, Quality Meat Scotland's Head of Economics Services pointed out that producers will be taking heart from an improvement of around 1% in pig prices over the past month, putting them around 9% above this time last year.

"This is particularly pleasing when compared to pig producers in the major European pig producing countries who have seen prices slide by about 3% over the same period.

"This has created a significant turnaround in the position of Scottish prices in contrast to European prices. Scottish prices now stand 8% above the EU average compared to 1% below in mid-October. The down side on this, of course, is that it makes European product more competitive in the UK market," said Mr Ashworth.

The other pleasing development for pig producers is that prices have improved at the same time as a modest increase in UK prime pig slaughter numbers has occurred.

"Some retailers are saying they are recognising the increased cost of feed in their pricing policies," added Mr Ashworth. "There is also the prospect that the demand for pigmeat is improving and that worries over reduced European production in 2013 may be encouraging retailer recognition of a need to secure UK production."

A closer look at the European price also suggests an underlying strength in the pig sector, he observed. "The modest decline in European prices over the past month still leaves European prices almost 20% higher than this time last year. Data on production is lagging for many member states but the data that is available shows declines among major pig producers.

"For example during September German production was 8% lower than last year while Denmark and France show declines of more than 10% in the same month."

These falls are greater than the European Commission's own forecast which show a decline in EU-27 production in the final quarter of 2012 and the first quarter of 2013 of 1.5%.

"Whichever way we look at it, the medium term outlook for the pig sector is one of tight supplies giving the producer a position of strength in the market place. Pig producers will also be pleased to see some of the heat coming out of the international protein and grain market," added Mr Ashworth.

The latest International Grains Council market reports soyabean prices down 7% over the past month following better than anticipated US yields and slower export demand along with the prospect of higher yields in South America.

At current levels, soyabean futures are about 15-20% off the July peaks. In contrast wheat prices are reported to be 1% higher over the month as global estimates of wheat production are put at a 6% year-on-year decline although upward pressure has eased as the Black Sea exporters seem to be more willing to trade than had been hinted at earlier in the year.

QMS Market Commentary: Christmas Market Boosts Beef and Pig Prices

Beef and pig producers have seen strength in the Christmas market with beef, in particular, proving to be markedly resilient to the economic climate. Prices have risen to 10 p/kg dwt (2.7%) since the beginning of November while the pig price has improved 1% over this period.

However, Stuart Ashworth, Quality Meat Scotland's Head of Economics Services, pointed out that despite this improvement in price, prime cattle supplies have remained below last year's levels as cattle are proving slow to finish.

"Latest slaughter statistics from across the UK show the extent to which cattle supplies are being squeezed. The prime kill is 5% down during November and 7.5% down over the year to the end of November. This level of decline across the UK, when set against the slightly higher volume of calf registrations in 2010 (compared to 2009), and the average age at slaughter continuing to be 21 to 22 months, suggests some backlog of cattle on farms going into 2013.

"Almost half of the decline in slaughtering is accounted for by heifers some of which may have been retained for breeding. Nevertheless, there remains a strong likelihood that there are more cattle to come onto the market over the next few months than has recently been the case," added Mr Ashworth.

"Indeed, the number of young bulls reaching abattoirs has started to increase almost exactly twelve months after the number of pure bred dairy bull calves registered with BCMS began increasing."

While there is some possibility of an increased supply of cattle, it must still be recognised that on the basis of calf registrations, the current supply is likely to remain some 10% below the levels seen before the introduction of de-coupled support payments in 2005.

However, whilst cattle producers have seen a seasonal price improvement, lamb producers have not. "Prime lamb prices have fallen approximately 5% since the start of November. In the past fortnight lamb marketings have matched, or slightly increased over, the same period last year. Until then, lamb supplies had been running well below last year's levels.

"Between June and the end of November, the UK lamb kill has been over 550,000 head lower than last year. This suggests a higher carryover of hoggs into 2013 than last year."

For most of the past six weeks the price of lambs has been falling at the same time as availability has been lower. This suggests a weakness in demand, poorer quality lambs reaching the market or a combination of the two. There is some evidence from deadweight reporting abattoirs that the quality of lambs is lower than this time last year.

Meanwhile demand is coming under pressure. Export trade statistics take some time to come through, but trade in October is reported to be 22% lower than in 2011 suggesting the export market is challenging. Despite the lower slaughter numbers, a greater volume of lamb is remaining on the home market and the trade statistics show a small increase in imports during October.

"Despite lower levels of lamb marketing in the UK, the overall market remains well supplied so prices are being pressured both by issues of demand and quality," said Mr Ashworth. "A further complication on the lamb market is the much lower price on offer for sheepskins in comparison to last year."

Regional Meetings – January to March

The Federation Regional Meetings to be held during the first three months of 2013 will take the popular form of round the table discussions over a two course meal. Members are asked to choose at which venue they would like to attend and book a place or places by telephoning Bruce on 01738 637472.

These meetings are for business owners and key members of staff. They will start at 7.00pm and end at 9.00pm. Those attending are asked to meet from 6.30pm onwards.

Date	Venue
Monday 21st January	County Hotel, Selkirk
Monday 28th January	Western House Hotel, Ayr
Monday 4th February	Garfield House Hotel, Stepps
Wednesday 6th February	Queensferry Hotel, North Queensferry
Monday 25th February	Inchture Hotel, between Perth & Dundee
Monday 4th March	TBC, Oban
Tuesday 12th March	Kings Arms Hotel, Castle Douglas
Tuesday 19th March	The Redgath Hotel, Oldmeldrum
Wednesday 20th March	Waterside Hotel, Inverness

Meetings in Northern Isles and Western Isles will be arranged later in the year.

Diary Date

The Scottish Meat Trade Fair will be held at the Dewars Centre, Perth on Sunday 12th May 2013 – please put this date into your new diary.

Year two of the "Go for it Scotland!" sport and healthy activity bursary, which benefitted nearly a thousand people in its inaugural year, is being launched on 6 December 2012. The bursary programme, run by Quality Meat Scotland and **sport**scotland, is open to individuals and groups of all ages and abilities providing they live and train in Scotland and take part in a healthy activity which increases their heart rate. Individuals, groups and clubs are invited to apply for the twenty £500 bursaries which are being awarded annually in the run up to Glasgow 2014.

David Sole OBE, former Scotland rugby captain and board member of both **sport**scotland and QMS, visited Langfaulds Primary School located in the heart of Drumchapel, Glasgow ahead of this week's launch of the 2013 bursary. Mr Sole met with children and staff at the school and heard how they have been able to create a basketball club and take part in local basketball festivals with the help of funding from the "Go for it Scotland!" bursary.

"We are a health promoting school and are extremely aware of the impact good health and wellbeing has on a child's development," said Nancy MacLaughlan, Deputy Headteacher at Langfaulds Primary School.

"The bursary programme is a great extension to our existing health and education activities to encourage better understanding of the important role played by beef, lamb and pork in a healthy diet," said Jennifer Robertson, a qualified dietitian and Health and Education Coordinator at QMS.

"The 'Go for it Scotland!' funding can be used for equipment, specialist clothing, travel, training, nutrition, coaching, or as Langfaulds Primary School have used it, to set up a new group and participate in new activities."

Stewart Harris, Chief Executive of **sport**scotland, said: "Our partnership with Quality Meat Scotland helps precipitate great projects such as this one at Langfaulds Primary School - and many others – which assist young people to participate in sport and physical activity. After such a positive inaugural year in 2012, we are delighted to be involved in 2013."

Application forms can be downloaded from **www.qmscotland**.co.uk and the deadline for submitting an application is 5pm on Friday 15 February 2013.

Scotland's Trade Fair and Scotland's Speciality Food Show

You are invited to attend **Scotland's Trade Fair and Scotland's Speciality Food Show** from:

Sunday 20th January	9.30-5.30pm
Monday 21st January	9.30-5.30pm
Tuesday 22nd January 2013	9.30-4.30pm at SECC, Glasgow.

Scotland's Speciality Food Show is the only trade show for the speciality food and drink market in Scotland. The show is located and run concurrently with Scotland's Trade Fair in Hall 4 at the SECC in Glasgow. The fair attracts its own audience of delicatessens, farm shops, speciality food retailers and food hall buyers as well as providing an opportunity for gift shops to purchase food and drink products to complement their existing ranges.

The fair regularly attracts 1000 retailers seeking new products and ranges from approximately 120 companies from all over the UK.

The Show will be opened on Sun 20th by Fergus Ewing MSP, Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism. Best Product Awards will be given for both Trade and Food Shows and a Seminar Theatre will run with talks from industry experts on all aspects of retailing and tourism.

For Sale - Watt The Butcher Ltd, 39-41 Murray Street, Montrose.

Turnover in excess of £500,000 per annum. Fixed Price of £95,000 as a going concern with fixtures and all equipment and stock at valuation. Also to include the lease of Unit 6 & 12 Broomfield Business Centre. Fully fitted EC approved premises and yard plus s.a.v. or fixed price of £85,000 for shop premises only. Contact: Neil Watt on 01674 672777

For Sale – Butchers shop for sale on Isle of Bute

Opportunity to buy a long established family butchers. Profitable business in town centre location turning over £475,000 pa. Freehold, walk in chill, separate pastry and cooked meat prep areas. Offers in region of £199,000.
Contact: Martin Thurman, RH McIntyre, Gallowgate, Rothesay. Tel: 01700 505962

Shop For Lease

A shop in Glasgow area is available to lease.
For further details contact SFMTA. Tel: 01738 637472

For Sale - Family run Butchers in Cowdenbeath, Fife – Freehold

Successful family run butchers established in 1967 in the centre of Cowdenbeath, Fife.
Important: Viewing is by appointment only. Tel: 01383 510653

For Sale

Long established family Butchers/Deli business for sale/lease in Falkirk District area.
Please contact 01506 824597.

For Sale

Busy Butchers shop in Airdrie; Contact: Moira Bennett Tel: 07843994600

Livestock Prices

Data collection co-ordinated by AHDB Meat Services (Economics) on behalf of QMS, price updates available at www.qmscotland.co.uk

BEEF PRICES	W/E 15/12/12	Previous week	Previous year
Scottish Abattoirs			
Steers dwt	372.9 p/kg	370.2 p/kg	347.5 p/kg
Heifers dwt	368.0 p/kg	367.3 p/kg	345.5 p/kg
Young Bulls dwt	340.6 p/kg	345.2 p/kg	322.5 p/kg
Numbers			
Steers	4078	3631	3995
Heifers	2925	2770	3410
Young Bulls	430	453	372

BEEF PRICES	W/E 12/12/12	Previous week	Previous year
Scottish Auctions			
Steers lwt	209.41 p/kg	215.63 p/kg	199.95 p/kg
Heifers lwt	210.83 p/kg	216.32 p/kg	200.07 p/kg
Young bulls lwt	162.26 p/kg	161.31 p/kg	158.77 p/kg
Numbers			
Steers	248	260	241
Heifers	340	301	376
Young bulls	27	41	47

Deadweight cattle week ending 15th December 2012								
	All steers p/kg			All heifers p/kg			All Young bulls p/kg	
	3	4L	4H	3	4L	4H	3	4L
-U	376.9	377.8	378.4	372.9	375.9	374.7	362.8	350.5
R	372.9	377.1	373.9	366.4	371.3	370.7	357.4	352.6
O+	367.7	378.5	370.8	361.5	373.8	370.8	347.2	344.1
-O	349.5	353.6	348.4	332.2	335.4	335.5	331.6	325.3

Beef and pig producers have seen strength in the Christmas market with beef, in particular, proving to be markedly resilient to the economic climate. Prices have risen to 10 p/kg dwt (2.7%) since the beginning of November while the pig price has improved 1% over this period.

For Sale

2 x Avery Computer Scales M Series Model 202 with Till Drawers – all manuals/discs included £700 each
Trief Derby Dicer, new head fitted by manufacturer £3750 ono
True Pizza/Sandwich prep counter complete with worktop and 2 door refrigerated ingredient holding unit £375. Contact: Karen Connolly on 01506 651460

. SHEEP PRICES	W/E 12/12/12	Previous week	Previous year
Scottish Auctions			
New Season SQQ lwt	148.37 p/kg	155.97 p/kg	205.11 p/kg
Ewes lwt	£46.69 /hd	£46.72 /hd	£70.41 /hd
Sheep numbers			
Scottish Auctions			
New Season SQQ	20467	20658	19290
Ewes	5870	6275	5206

SHEEP PRICES		W/E 15/12/12	Previous week	Previous year
GB Abattoirs				
New season SQQ dwt		355.5 p/kg	359.0 p/kg	465.4 p/kg
Deadweight sheep week ending **17th November 2012** p/kg				
	U	371.3	369.6	357.1
	R	360.4	360.3	351.2
	O	348.8	347.7	342.6

Kantar market research data suggests that retail sales of lamb are improving although retail price is under pressure. Latest information from the Office of National Statistics suggests lamb prices have not significantly changed from last year compared to beef being almost 7% more expensive and the overall retail price index being 2.9% higher than last year. These relative movements are improving the competitiveness of lamb on the home retail market."

PIG PRICES	W/E 15/12/12	Previous week	Previous year
GB Abattoirs			
All pigs DAPP	161.02 p/kg	160.80 p/kg	147.66 p/kg

GB deadweight pigs ending **15th December 2012** – p/kg					
	Method 1 and 2 p/kg dwt	Change		Method 1 and 2 p/kg dwt	Change
Up to 59.9 kg	148.97	-1.03	80.0 – 89.9 kg	161.19	-0.01
60.0 – 69.9 kg	161.26	+0.14	90 kg and over	152.51	+0.56
70-0 – 79.9 kg	162.07	+0.05			

Data collection coordinated by AHDB Meat Services (Economics) on behalf of QMS, price updates available at **www.qmscotland.co.uk**

The medium term outlook for the pig sector is one of tight supplies giving the producer a position of strength in the market place. Pig producers will also be pleased to see some of the heat coming out of the international protein and grain market.

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