

Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat

From Quality Meat Scotland
in partnership with the
Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group.



Why the Red Meat Industry Matters

Scotland's Red Meat Industry supports around **40,000 jobs** and contributes **£3.5 billion** to the economy each year. From farms and butchers to abattoirs, transport, agri-tech and business support, it offers a wide range of **meaningful, skilled jobs** and **career opportunities**.

This toolkit builds on the [Meating Our Potential](#) campaign launched by the [Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group](#) (2025), which aims to **raise awareness** of, and **support** the significant economic opportunity from growing our domestic beef herd. With labour challenges being a key barrier to productivity, our Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat campaign – including this toolkit – has been designed to help stakeholders promote rewarding opportunities right across the supply chain.

By sharing real “day-in-the-life” stories, highlighting sector benefits, and providing practical guidance, this toolkit aims to inspire the next generation and help attract and retain talented people for the future.

[🔗 Learn more: Visit the Meating Our Potential Hub](#)



How This Toolkit Can Help You

The Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat toolkit equips you to:

- Showcase authentic employee stories and the variety of roles available.
- Highlight sector benefits such as security, flexibility, and progression.
- Use research-based messaging to reach students, school leavers, career changers, and mid-career entrants.
- Access recruitment tips and ready-to-use assets for campaigns.

Contents:

- Research & Insights
- Target Audiences & Behaviours
- Recruitment Guidance & Tips
- Toolkit Assets

For Job Seekers:

- Case Studies & Best Practice
- Role & Career Highlights
- Resources & Links

Who this toolkit is for:

- **Industry employers (Toolkit Owners/Users):**
Everyone working across the Scottish red meat supply chain — HR, recruitment, and communications teams, as well as operational colleagues — will access, distribute, and use the toolkit within their networks. It is designed to support the industry in recruiting workers for their businesses.

- **Job seekers (Message Targets):**
The content and messaging within the assets are designed for job seekers and career changers, encouraging them to consider opportunities within the Scottish red meat sector.

What **Jobseekers** Want

Essencemedia's research shows strong openness to careers in the red meat sector — and enthusiasm grows as awareness increases.

Interest & Appeal

- **92%** would consider a role in the sector.
- **43%** became more likely to apply after learning about the variety of roles.
- **85%** were strongly motivated by practical work, food production, or agriculture/livestock roles.
- **70%** held a positive view after receiving more information (up from 49% initially).

Impact of Incentives

- **94%** would be likely to work in the sector if at least one appealing perk were offered.

[Find out more](#)

Source:

Research was carried out in two stages in early 2025: Stage 1: Omnibus study of 1,000+ nationally representative Scottish respondents (28 March–7 April), exploring general perceptions of red meat careers. Stage 2: Bespoke survey of a further 1,005 respondents interested in the sector (20–30 June), examining motivators and barriers in more depth. Together, the results give a clear picture of attitudes toward the sector and the opportunities it offers.

Top perks

- Competitive pay & benefits **(88%)**
- Job security **(85%)**
- Flexible working **(84%)**
- Learning new skills **(82%)**
- Training & development **(81%)**

Employer Brand Matters

- **97%** research a company before applying — reinforcing the importance of a strong online presence and clear communication.

What this means for You

Tell real stories, highlight flexibility and development, and ensure your website, social media and online reviews reflect your values, culture, and opportunities. Offering the right perks and highlighting what makes roles rewarding can significantly improve recruitment and retention across the sector.



Tailor Your Approach

Different audiences value different things — shaping your messaging helps maximise engagement.

Key Motivators

- 16–24 yrs → Purpose & sustainability → "Make a difference in your first job."
- 25–34 yrs → Security & progression → "A career you can grow in."
- 35–54 yrs → Skills alignment → "Bring your skills — we'll handle the rest."

Audience Behaviours (Insights from Essencemedia & Skills Development Scotland)

The audiences listed in the table are considered to be key target groups.

Useful Links

[🔗 Skills Development Scotland – Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)

[🔗 Guidance on online employer branding](#)

Audience	Job search frequency	What they look for	Where they search	Workplace values	Tips
School leavers	Weekly.	Apprenticeships, internships, shift work, mentoring, entry-level roles, school leaver programmes.	Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), school careers events, social media, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Inclusion, career pathways, job purpose, transparent pay structures.	Partner with DYW to offer visits, placements and talks.
Graduates / university leavers	Weekly.	Graduate schemes, internships, entry-level roles.	University career services, social media, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Career progression, learning opportunities, company culture.	Promote graduate schemes, networking events, mentoring opportunities, early career support.
Returner*	Weekly.	Full-time, hybrid, remote.	Job centres, career fairs, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Teamwork and trust.	Highlight supportive management and mentoring.
Career changers	Monthly.	Full-time, hybrid, remote.	Job boards, LinkedIn.	Balance, respect.	Use inclusive language, show training pathways.
Retirees / part-time seekers	Rarely.	Part-time or flexible work.	Local networks, recruiters.	Purpose, reputation.	Offer flexible hours and community connection.

*Example, Parents or carers returning after family leave, individuals recovering from illness or injury, those returning after redundancy, people transitioning from self-employment, individuals returning after study, travel or personal development, and ex-offenders re-entering employment

The Benefits of a Career in the Sector

Working in Scotland's red meat industry offers security, variety and a real sense of purpose. Many roles provide structured training, apprenticeships, and clear progression pathways — from butchery and processing to marketing, animal health, and agri-tech.

[Find out more in Lantra's Careers Toolkit](#)

Hear more from a variety of inspiring real people working across the Scottish red meat supply chain, why they choose to work in the sector and how they got to where they are today in our case studies and video diaries from pages 15-17.



How to Create a Great Place to Work

People stay where they feel valued, supported, and part of something bigger. Building a positive workplace culture helps attract talent and boost productivity — and it doesn't need to be complicated.

The 4 P Model (adapted from Skills Development Scotland's People, Place, Practice & Values framework):

Guidance on creating great workplaces

- [Feeding Workforce Skills \(Food Education Scotland\)](#)
- [Fair Work Employer Support Tool \(Scottish Government\)](#)
- [Skills Development Scotland – Find Business Support](#)

Values

- Involve your team when developing company values so they reflect everyone's input.
- Communicate values on an ongoing basis clearly through internal communications, social media, recruitment materials and on-site notice boards for those not using PCs.
- Values need to be lived every day — not just written somewhere and forgotten.

Place

- Provide safe, comfortable and well-equipped workplaces.
- Review facilities regularly — including break areas, restrooms and PPE.
- Consider flexibility where possible, such as staggered shifts or hybrid options.

People

- Encourage two-way communication — make time to listen, not just talk.
- Create recognition systems such as "employee of the month" boards or internal shoutouts.
- Offer mentoring or buddy systems to support new team members and show career paths within your business.
- Make sure communication reaches everyone — for staff without PC access, share updates through notice boards, team briefings and printed materials.

Practice

- Ensure management practices are fair, transparent and consistent.
- Invest in developing good people managers who can motivate and support staff.
- Encourage employees to share ideas for improving productivity and sustainability.

Promoting Careers & Opportunities **Effectively**

Key Points

- Use clear, honest job descriptions covering the role, salary/pay pattern, working hours, training, and progression opportunities.
- Write in inclusive, friendly language. Focus on real benefits and highlight transferable skills.
- Offer flexible application formats (e.g., video submissions or phone calls) to support different needs.

Tips for Impactful Adverts

- Avoid jargon and gendered wording.
- Highlight key benefits: competitive pay, structured training, flexible working, job security, and development opportunities.
- Showcase authentic culture through real employee voices — case studies, short videos, quotes or day-in-the-life stories.

Where to Promote / Recommended Platforms

- Local networks, colleges, company website & social media
- Scottish Association of Young Farmers (SAYFC) – [Jobs & Opportunities](#)
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) – [School Engagement & Regional Support](#)

- Apprenticeships.scot – [Training, Apprenticeships & Employer Support](#)
- Skills Development Scotland – [Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)
- Lantra Scotland – [Agriculture Careers](#)
- Tasty Careers – [Food & Drink Industry Map](#)
- Butchery Careers – [Role Guidance & Learning Resources](#)

Digital & Social Channels

- Facebook, LinkedIn
- TikTok & Instagram – great for showcasing culture, short videos, success stories, and “meet the team” content

Guides & Templates

[SF&D Recruitment & Retention Toolkit](#)

[CIPD Recruitment Factsheet](#)

[ACAS Recruitment Guidance](#)

Pro Tip

Share authentic success stories and workplace highlights on social media. Real employee voices and images resonate far more than stock photos.



Attract, Grow, Retain

A job description is often the candidate's first impression of your business. It's more than a list of tasks — it's your chance to showcase culture, values, pay, and growth opportunities. Well-written descriptions attract the right people and set expectations clearly.

Tips for Strong Job Descriptions

- **Clear, concise language:** Avoid jargon and overly technical terms.
- **Inclusive wording:** Use gender-neutral and welcoming language.
- **Showcase your uniqueness:** Culture, community links, sustainability, training & development opportunities.
- **Skills & potential:** Focus on transferable skills, not just formal qualifications.
- **Include key details:** Role responsibilities, working hours, salary/pay pattern, contract type, reporting lines, progression opportunities.
- **Outline benefits & support:** Flexible working, mentoring, structured training, career pathways.
- **Encourage applications:** Emphasise that motivated candidates from diverse backgrounds are welcome.

Source: CIPD

Checklist for Recruitment Best Practice

✓	Communicate your values clearly through the website and social media.
✓	Use fair and transparent recruitment processes.
✓	Hire for attitude and potential as well as skills.
✓	Treat all applications respectfully, updating them at each stage.
✓	Encourage managers to reflect the company's culture during interviews.

Useful Resources

[CIPD Inclusive Employers Guide](#)

[Fair Work Framework – Scottish Government](#)

[People, Place, Practice Checklist \(SF&D Toolkit\)](#)



Attract, Train & Retain Through Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a powerful way to attract new talent, develop skills, and grow future leaders. They give individuals hands-on experience while learning, and help businesses build a skilled, loyal workforce.

Benefits of Apprenticeships

- **Develop talent internally:** Train apprentices in your way of working, culture, and values.
- **Boost retention:** Apprentices often stay longer, having been invested in from the start.
- **Enhance diversity:** Opens opportunities to people from different backgrounds, including school leavers and career changers.
- **Support business growth:** Apprentices can contribute to productivity while learning.
- **Access funding and support:** Many UK apprenticeship schemes are partially funded by government or industry bodies.

Key Considerations

- **Define clear roles and expectations:** Outline responsibilities, learning objectives, and career pathways.
- **Structured mentoring and supervision:** Assign experienced staff to guide and support apprentices.

- **Combine practical work with training:** Ensure apprentices have hands-on experience and access to formal learning.
- **Regular feedback and assessment:** Monitor progress, celebrate achievements, and adjust training where needed.
- **Integration into culture:** Include apprentices in team activities, social events, and company initiatives.

Pro Tip

Highlight apprenticeship success stories on social media or your website. Real-life examples of progression and achievement resonate strongly with potential candidates.

Useful Resources

[🔗 Lantra's Agriculture Apprenticeship Toolkit](#)

[🔗 Apprenticeships.scot](#)

[🔗 Developing the Young Workforce \(DYW\)](#)



Using SCQF Levels for Inclusive Recruitment

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is a system that maps all Scottish qualifications and learning programmes to levels based on their complexity and difficulty. It allows employers to compare skills and experience more fairly, making it easier to recognise transferable skills and alternative learning routes.

Using SCQF levels instead of asking for specific qualifications can open doors for a wider range of applicants. It helps you focus on skills and experience rather than formal education, supporting fairer and more inclusive recruitment.

Example

Instead of saying "must have a degree", specify "skills equivalent to SCQF Level 9 (degree level)" or "practical experience in similar work". This approach benefits school leavers, apprentices, career changers, and those re-entering the workforce.

Learn more

[🔗 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#)

[🔗 SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)





How to Run **Great** Interviews

Interviews aren't just about evaluating candidates — they're your chance to showcase your business. Make them welcoming, structured, and fair.

Practical Tips

- Prepare open-ended questions that focus on skills, behaviours, motivation, and fit.
- Use a consistent scoring system to reduce bias.
- Let candidates know in advance if they need to give a presentation, complete a task, or prepare anything specific.
- Involve more than one interviewer to bring diverse perspectives.
- Share your company story, benefits, and values to help candidates visualise their future with you.
- Always provide feedback — it shows professionalism and builds reputation.

Helpful Resources

[🔗 SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)

[🔗 ACAS Interview Checklist](#)

[🔗 CIPD Selection Methods & Interview Guide](#)

Onboard, Train, Empower

A robust onboarding experience sets the tone for an employee's entire journey. It goes beyond introducing the role — it's about helping new starters feel supported, confident, and connected to your culture from day one.

Key Elements of Effective Onboarding

- **Structured induction:** Introduce company values, policies, team members, and expectations.
- **Role-specific training:** Ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to succeed.
- **Mandatory training:** Cover all essential compliance and safety requirements, not just role-specific tasks, to reduce risk.
- **Mentoring and support:** Assign a buddy or mentor to guide the new starter through their first weeks.
- **Regular check-ins:** Monitor progress, answer questions, and provide feedback early to build confidence.
- **Culture integration:** Share stories, success examples, and ways to get involved in wider company initiatives.

Why It Matters

Builds confidence, engagement, and loyalty.
Reduces mistakes and misunderstandings.
Reinforces company culture and expectations.
Supports retention and accelerates productivity.

Pro Tip

Document your onboarding process and share it internally. Consistency ensures every new starter receives the same high-quality experience.

Useful Resources

[Indeed UK – Onboarding Guide](#)

[Growth Engineering – Employee Onboarding Complete Guide](#)

[CIPHR – Employee Onboarding Guide](#)

[Talent Insight Group – The Impact of Effective Onboarding](#)

[Actus Software – Effective Onboarding Best Practices](#)



Keeping Your Team Happy & Engaged

Retention is about more than pay — it's about creating a workplace people want to stay in. Focus on wellbeing, recognition, growth, and feeling heard.

Key Actions

- Offer clear development pathways and promote from within where possible, supported by regular training and skills development.
- Encourage flexibility — explore shift variety, job sharing, or part-time options where this works for the business.
- Recognise and reward achievements, both publicly and privately.
- Encourage open communication through regular check-ins, one-to-ones, and annual appraisals to discuss wellbeing, performance, and future goals.
- Support employee wellbeing by providing access to appropriate support, such as an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), where possible.
- Embed Fair Work principles: effective voice, respect, security, opportunity, and fulfilment.

[Flexibility Works](#)

[CIPD – Employee Retention Factsheet](#)

[Skills Development Scotland – Upskilling & Reskilling Hub](#)

[Find Business Support – Training & Grants](#)

[Performance Reviews | Factsheets | CIPD](#)

What You Can Share

Make it easy for others to champion careers in the red meat industry by using the promotional assets provided. These are designed for flexibility across digital, print, and in-person channels.

Included Assets

- Short "day-in-the-life" video clips for social media, events, or recruitment pages
- Professional photography and stills from campaign filming.
- Case studies

[Download Images](#)

Pro Tip

Use consistent campaign hashtags and tag relevant organisations (e.g. QMS Scotland, Lantra, SDS, DYW) to amplify your reach. (If you have any questions, please contact: externalaffairs@qmscotland.co.uk)



SELINA



LOGAN



FARQUHAR



INDIAH



MATTHEW



ALICE

[Download Videos](#)

Case Studies

We also have case studies of people working in the industry telling their story – click the link below to download them and share.

[Download Case Studies](#)

Cutting Edge Roles in Case Study...

Pravin Chagwan
Livebook Australia

What does your work do for the red meat sector?

I have always had a keen interest in agriculture and livestock business.

What does a typical day look like in your role?

It's a mix of everything. I'm working with farmers, processors, and exporters, and I'm also doing a lot of research and development.

What's the most interesting part of your job?

It's the challenge of finding new ways to improve the industry and make it more sustainable.

What's the biggest challenge you face in your role?

It's the lack of resources and the need for more investment in the industry.

What's the future of the red meat sector?

I think it's going to be a mix of everything. There will be more focus on sustainability and quality, and there will be more investment in research and development.



QMS
Quality Meat Australia

Cutting Edge Roles in Case Study...

Angie Tang
Teagasc, Ireland

What does your work do for the red meat sector?

I'm working with farmers and processors to improve the quality and sustainability of the red meat sector.

What does a typical day look like in your role?

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Cutting Edge Roles in Case Study...

Christine Rose
Teagasc, Ireland

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Cutting Edge Roles in Case Study...

Emily Reardon
Teagasc, Ireland

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Inspire the Next Generation of Talent

Scotland's red meat sector has a strong story to tell — one of innovation, craftsmanship, and community.

Use this toolkit to

- Showcase the diversity of roles across the supply chain.
- Highlight the benefits and training opportunities available.
- Make recruitment inclusive and engaging.
- Share authentic stories that reflect the pride and purpose of working in the red meat industry.

Together, we can build a vibrant, skilled, and sustainable workforce for the future.



Useful Links & Resources

Here's a handy list of all key links featured throughout this toolkit for quick reference:

Industry Careers & Pathways

- [Lantra Scotland – Agriculture Careers](#)
- [Lantra's Careers Toolkit](#)
- [Tasty Careers Map](#)
- [Butchery Careers](#)
- [SAYFC Opportunities](#)

Workplace Culture, Wellbeing & Retention

- [Fair Work Employer Support Tool](#)
- [Fair Work Framework](#)
- [Flexibility Works](#)
- [CIPD Retention Factsheet](#)
- [Find Business Support \(Scotland\)](#)
- [Feeding Workforce Skills](#)

Recruitment & Employer Support

- [SF&D Recruitment & Retention Toolkit](#)
- [Skills Development Scotland – Employer Hub](#)
- [Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)
- [Apprenticeships.scot](#)
- [Developing the Young Workforce](#)
- [CIPD Recruitment Factsheet](#)
- [ACAS Recruitment Guide](#)

Training, Skills & Qualifications

- [SCQF Framework](#)
- [SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)
- [SDS Upskilling & Reskilling Hub](#)
- [Funded training courses through Lantra](#)
- [Lantra's Next Generation Practical Training Fund](#)

Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group

