

Meating Our Potential

Unlocking the Opportunity in Scotland's Beef Sector to Feed our Growing Nation

What is Meating Our Potential?

'Meating Our Potential' is a national partnership campaign led by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and the Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group (SRMRG) to help grow Scotland's beef herd and strengthen our domestic food system to fill the widening supply gap.

It's about small, attainable steps that add up — asking producers to add a couple more cows per herd each year over the next three to four years to meet future UK demand, reduce imports, and make the most of our underused processing capacity.



The campaign brings together producers, processors, retailers, government, and consumers to build confidence, provide support, and grow a resilient, productive and profitable sector.

Why Now?

By 2030, the UK is projected to need an additional 278,000 tonnes of beef to meet domestic demand — but production is set to fall by 8%. This means more imports unless we act now.

Scotland has a key role to play — and a clear opportunity:

- Add 22,000 tonnes of beef output
- That's around 79,000 more cows nationally
- On-farm, this means just a couple more cows per herd per year over the next three to four years (around six to eight more cows per herd in total)
- This growth could add £281 million in output and £76 million in GVA to Scotland's economy
- Scotland's processing capacity is operating at just 69–73% — we have room to grow
- If we do not increase production of beef in the UK, net imports are projected to rise by around 124,000 tonnes by 2030 – this is illogical and inconsistent with sustainability goals

A recent QMS survey of more than 1,000 Scottish red meat consumers revealed strong public backing:

- 90% would choose Scottish red meat over imported, even if the import was 30% cheaper
- Around three quarters (73%) prefer to purchase red meat produced in Scotland when faced with a choice in the supermarket or butcher – with supporting Scottish farmers and local economy in the top reasons alongside superior quality, freshness and traceability.

Who's it for?

Everyone in across the Scottish red meat supply chain and beyond:

- **Producers** – ready to build productivity and profitability
- **Auctioneers** – at the heart of livestock trading, helping to connect Scottish producers with the market
- **Processors and retailers** – needing a reliable, high-quality local supply for customers
- **Policymakers and leaders** – focused on food security, public health, economy, rural jobs, and sustainability
- **Consumers** – already showing strong support for Scottish red meat

How will it happen?

We're making it as simple as possible to get involved and take action:

- **The Meating Our Potential Industry Hub:**
Your go-to webpage for toolkits, support, practical resources and updates.
Scan the QR code to access it →
- **Roadmap to Resilience** launching summer 2025
A clear framework across three themes:
 1. Productivity
 2. Profitability
 3. Growth
- **Campaign Videos & Insights:** Hear from producers, experts and industry leaders



Get Involved

Whether you're a producer, livestock market representative, processor, advisor, retailer or policymaker — we need your voice.

- Add a couple more cows per herd each year
- Use the hub and explore the support available
- Share your story and spread the word
- Sign the Meating Our Potential pledge - *to feed our growing nation with locally produced sustainable red meat* - our cow board is going on tour across key industry events
- Talk to QMS and partners about what you need

Use the hashtag #MeatingOurPotential on social media and follow @qmScotland

Summary

Scotland has the land, the people, the infrastructure — and now, the data — to grow our beef sector responsibly and profitably. If each herd adds just a few more cows, we can help close the supply gap, protect our food system, and deliver lasting value for our economy, environment and communities.

Together, we can Meat Our Potential

