



FARMING SCOTLAND: A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

The opportunities, and challenges faced by Scotland's farmers as they look towards farming on the world stage, will come under scrutiny when the 14th Farming Scotland Conference rolls into Carnoustie.

The conference, is hosted and sponsored by EQ Accountants, Bell Ingram, Thorntons Solicitors and The Royal Bank of Scotland. The firms state that the conference has now become a key point in the agricultural calendar for farmers and their advisors, with the 2017 event set to become one of the most important thus far.

Conference Chairman, Graeme Davidson from EQ states:

"There is no doubt that our conference is now regarded as a must-attend by agricultural professionals from throughout Scotland."

"For 2017 we are very conscious that domestic and European political and economic uncertainty continue to dominate the sector."

"We have, therefore, set the conference horizons wider, and will look beyond Europe to examine the potential opportunities and challenges that lie ahead as Scottish agriculture faces up to the rest of the world."

Rob Clayton, Strategy Director of AHDB Potatoes, Trudi Sharp, the Scottish Governments' Deputy Director for Agriculture and Rural Development, Marion MacCormick, Fresh Meat Buying Director at Aldi and Ian Pigott, a Farmer from Hertfordshire are the 4 high profile speakers set to address conference delegates at the Carnoustie Golf Hotel on 2nd February 2017.

Ian Pigott, known for his regular contributions to the farming media, is a passionate believer in countryside education, and takes the view that if young people are given a better understanding of where their food comes from they will, in turn, have an increased commitment to purchasing British produce and perhaps consider a career in the agri-food sector."

"There is every likelihood that post Brexit, farmers in Scotland, as elsewhere in Britain, are likely to face increased competition from imported food and drink. Such imports, may or may not be of similar quality provenance to our British produce or even that from continental Europe."

"We have diversified our family farm, which is only 20 miles from the centre of London, to develop a dedicated Farm School education centre. In 2015 we hosted over 3500 children through our education programme and over 3000 visitors of all ages to our Open Farm Sunday. I believe everyone up and down the supply chain can do something to reconnect, educate and communicate with the British public whenever and wherever they can."

“Scotland is renowned for its quality food and drink, and indeed for education programmes such as RHET. But I want to challenge the conference – will this reputation and current levels of consumer awareness be enough to shield Scottish farmers from the global marketplace?”

The theme of meeting consumer expectations will be further examined by Marion MacCormick from Aldi, whilst Rob Clayton will focus on the challenges faced by potato growers “in an Island nation.” Trudi Sharp is set to give the government policy input to conference.

A new conference website is up and running ahead of the 2017 conference to allow delegates to book tickets online. Business Angus, the local enterprise initiative, will once again provide funding for local young agricultural business people to attend.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- This press release is issued by Scene & Herd PR on behalf of the organisers of the Farming Scotland Conference. Contact monty@sceneandherdpr.co.uk / 0772 989 3648 for further media information.
- The 14th annual Farming Scotland Conference will take place at the Carnoustie Golf Hotel on the morning of 2nd February 2016.
- Conference tickets, at £70 each (which includes lunch) should be pre-booked via the dedicated website www.farmingscotlandconference.co.uk
- The Farming Scotland conference is organised, sponsored and hosted by EQ Accountants, Bell Ingram, Thorntons Solicitors and The Royal Bank of Scotland.