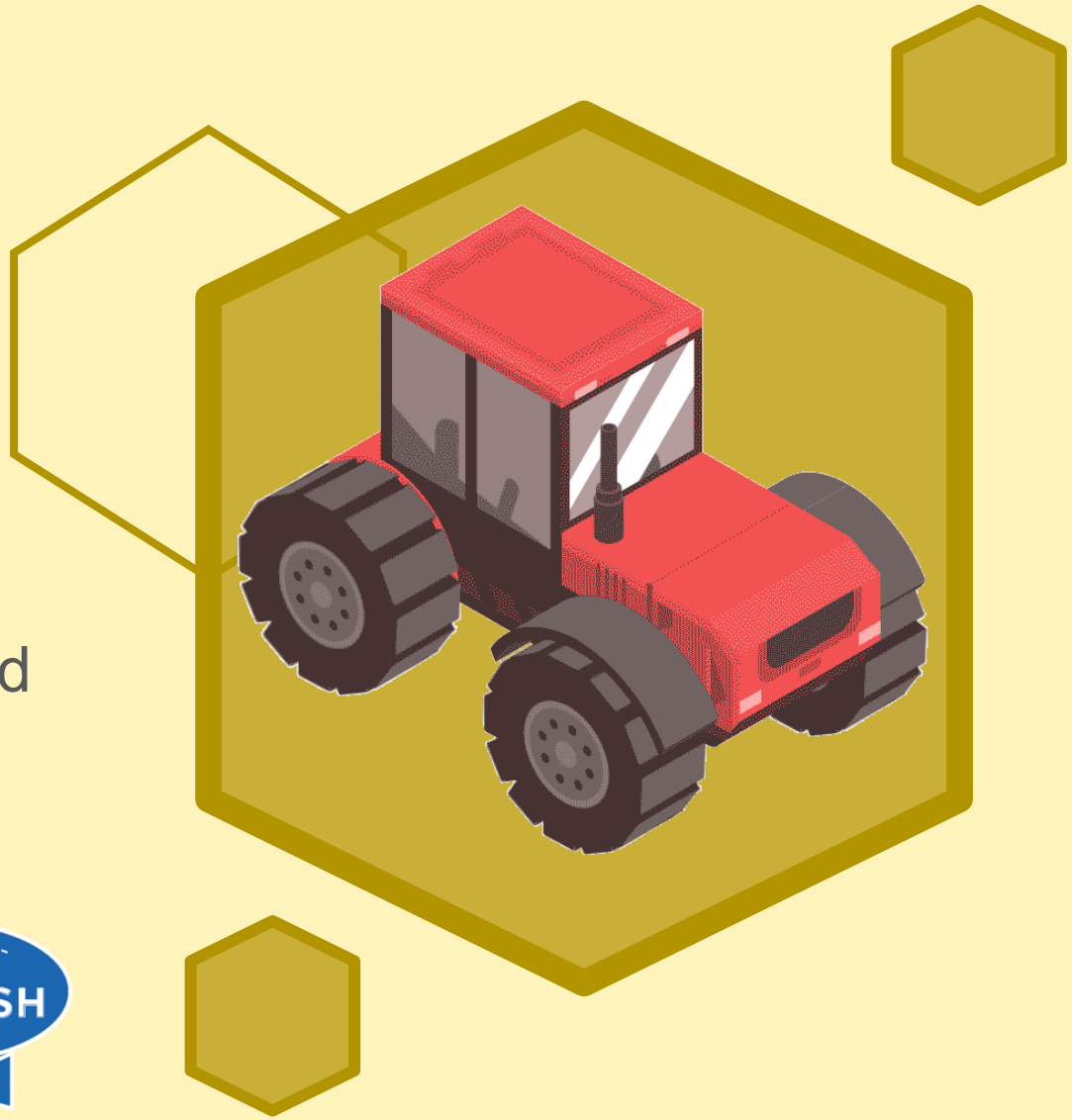
MAKE IT SCOTCH



LESSON 1

Introduction to the red meat industry and livestock farming techniques.

BORN & REARED SCOTCH BEEF

GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN UK PROTECTED

BORN & REARED SCOTCH LAMB

BORN & REARED PRIME SCOTTISH PORK



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Learning Intentions

By the end of this presentation, we will:

- Understand **what red meat is**.
- Identify **different types of farms in Scotland**.
- Understand **what Scottish farms produce**.
- Learn about **cattle breeds and how cattle are managed**.
- Learn about **sheep breeds and how sheep are managed**.
- Learn about **pig breeds and how pigs are managed**.
- Understand **animal welfare**.
- Understand **quality assurance** and why it is important.



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What is red meat?

- Scotland produces red meat from **cattle, sheep, pigs,** goats and deer.
- **Cattle, sheep** and **pigs** are the main animals.
- Raw red meat is dark red because it contains **myoglobin**, a protein found in muscle.



Red Meat Food System

The red meat food system shows how meat gets from farm to plate.

Let's watch the Farming Circle of Life video.



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Farming in Scotland

- **82% is not suitable** for growing crops, fruit or vegetables.
- Much of this land is ideal for **growing grass for cattle and sheep**[1].
- The type of farming depends on the **soil, landscape and climate**.

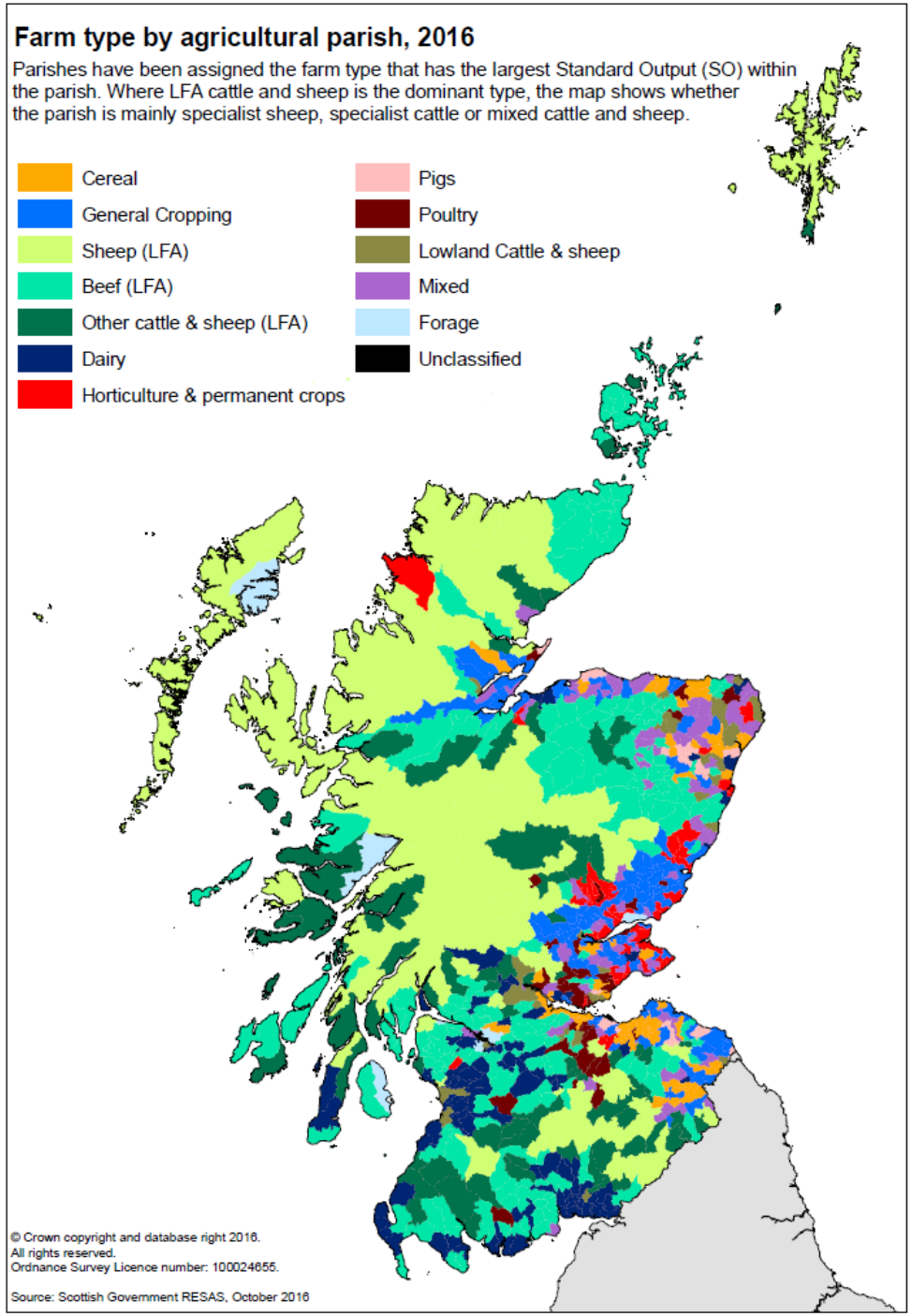
Can you name some other types of farms?

Arable/cereal, dairy, potato, deer, poultry, sheep, beef, pig, fruit & vegetable, horticulture, crofting, small holdings.

How many did you get?



1: Results from the Scottish Agricultural Census: June 2025 - gov.scot



Cattle

Scotland has 1.64 **million cattle** (2025)[1].
80% are kept to produce meat and the rest are dairy cattle that produce milk.



- **Cows** – females that have had a calf.
- **Calves** – young cattle.
- **Bulls** – male breeding cattle.
- **Heifers** – young females that have not had a calf.
- **Steers/bullocks/stots** – young males not kept for breeding.
- Cattle have **ear tags and passports** to identify and track them.
- Most cattle are **outside in summer** and **inside in winter**.
- Some cattle stay **outside all year round**.

1: Results from the Scottish Agricultural Census: June 2025 - gov.scot

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Cattle Facts - Did you know?

- Cows are pregnant for about **nine months**.
- Calves can stand within minutes of being born.
- Cows usually have **one calf** but can sometimes have twins. Occasionally triplets!
- Calves stay with their mothers for 6–9 months before being weaned.
- Weaning is when they no longer require milk from their mother and the majority of their diet is **grass**.
- A weaned calf weighs around 200–350 kg.
- Cattle are ready to be sold for meat once they are adults - they can weigh up to 700 kg.





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Cattle Breeds

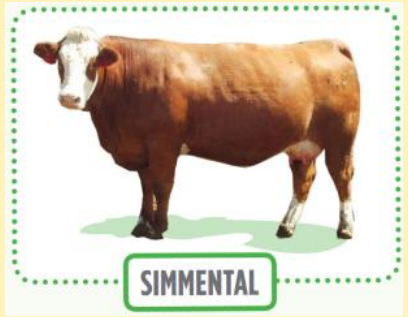
- Farmers choose breeds based on the type of farm they have.
- Different breeds can also be crossed to get the best features from each.
- There are over 200 breeds of cattle in the UK. Can you name any?

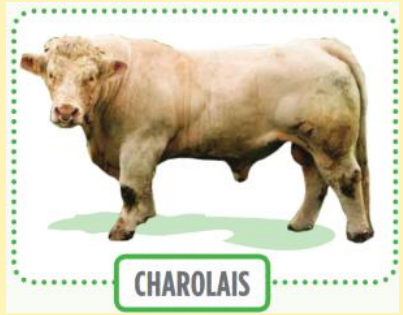


















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Sheep Facts

Ewes – female sheep that have had a lamb
Gimmers – female sheep that haven't had a lamb
Lambs – the young sheep
Rams/Tups – the male breeding sheep.

Scotland has 6.54 **million sheep** (2025)[1].



- Most sheep live **outside** all year round.
- Lambs are usually born in the **Spring.**
- Sheep are pregnant for about **5 months.**
- Many are **scanned** before lambing to find out how many lambs they are going to have.
- Most sheep have **twins,** but they can have singles, triplets or quads.
- Lambs stay with their mothers for **3–5 months**.
- Lambs are sold for meat when they reach around **38–40 kg**.



1: Results from the Scottish Agricultural Census: June 2025 - gov.scot

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Wool

- Sheep grow a **wool fleece every year** to protect them from the weather.
- They are **shorn (wool removed) in summer**.
- In Scotland, sheep are mainly kept for **meat, not wool**.
- Wool is a **natural** and **sustainable** material. Can you think of any uses for wool?



Wool can be used for clothes, bedding, sofas, insulation, carpets, kilts, tweeds and much more.



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Sheep Breeds

- There are **over 90 breeds** and **crosses of sheep** in the UK.
- Farmers choose sheep breeds based on their **farm type** and what they want to produce.



Blackface Sheep



Swaledale Sheep



Scotch Mule Sheep



Border Leicester Sheep



Cheviot Sheep



Texel Sheep



Lleyn Sheep



Hebridean Sheep

The National Sheep Association have a list of UK sheep breeds on their website.

Pictures courtesy of the National Sheep Association (NSA).



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Cattle & Sheep Feeding

- Cattle and sheep are **ruminants** - they have one stomach with **four** separate compartments.
- This allows them to get the **nutrients** they need from grass.
- **Grass** can be eaten straight from the fields or left to grow then cut (harvested) to be made into **silage** or **hay** to feed in the winter.
- They also eat **cereals** like barley, wheat and oats, vegetables and potatoes.
- Both sheep and cattle are also given **minerals** to supplement their diet.





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Silage v Hay

Silage is grass that has been ‘pickled’.

Grass is **cut, dried slightly and packed tightly**.

It is covered in **plastic to keep out oxygen**.

This causes **fermentation**, which helps keep the grass nutritious.

Silage is used to **feed cattle and sheep in winter**.



Hay is grass that is **cut and dried in the sun**, usually for about a week. It is then **baled and stored under cover**.





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Pigs



- **Sows** – female pigs that have had piglets.
- **Gilts** – female pigs that have not had piglets.
- **Piglets** – young pigs.
- **Boars** – male breeding pigs.

There are around **312,300 pigs in Scotland**.

Pig farming

- Pigs are kept **indoors or outdoors**. If pigs are outdoors in the summer they use mud as sunscreen to protect their fair skin!

- Pigs eat a **balanced diet** of cereals, soya, vitamins and minerals.
- Some feed comes from **by-products** such as whey and waste oats.
- Sows are pregnant for **3 months, 3 weeks and 3 days**.
- A sow can have **10–15 piglets** per litter.
- Piglets are weaned at around **4 weeks**.
- Pigs grow quickly, from **1–1.5 kg at birth** to **110–130 kg** when they are sold for meat.

Common breeds

Large White • Landrace • Duroc • Hampshire

(2025 Scottish Government Agricultural Census.)

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Traceability

- Cattle, sheep and pigs get an **ear tag** when they are born.
- Ear tags help farmers **identify and track animals**.
- This helps with **food safety and disease control**.
- Electronic tags can collect **data to improve animal welfare**.
- Some pig farmers use tags to **measure how much pigs eat**.







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Quality Assurance

Many foods are part of an assurance scheme which reassures the consumer that their food is produced to a certain **set of standards**.

Around **8,093** farms and crofts in Scotland are part of the **red meat quality assurance scheme** delivered by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS).

Each farm is visited by an independent assessor every year.

The inspectors are looking for a list of standards to be met including:

- **Good animal welfare (see next slide)**
- **Accurate record taking**
- **Safe working practices**
- **Correct application/storage of medicine**
- **Biosecurity & cleanliness -** preventing disease from entering or spreading on the farm.



Only farmers who have met these standards are eligible to sell under the brands.

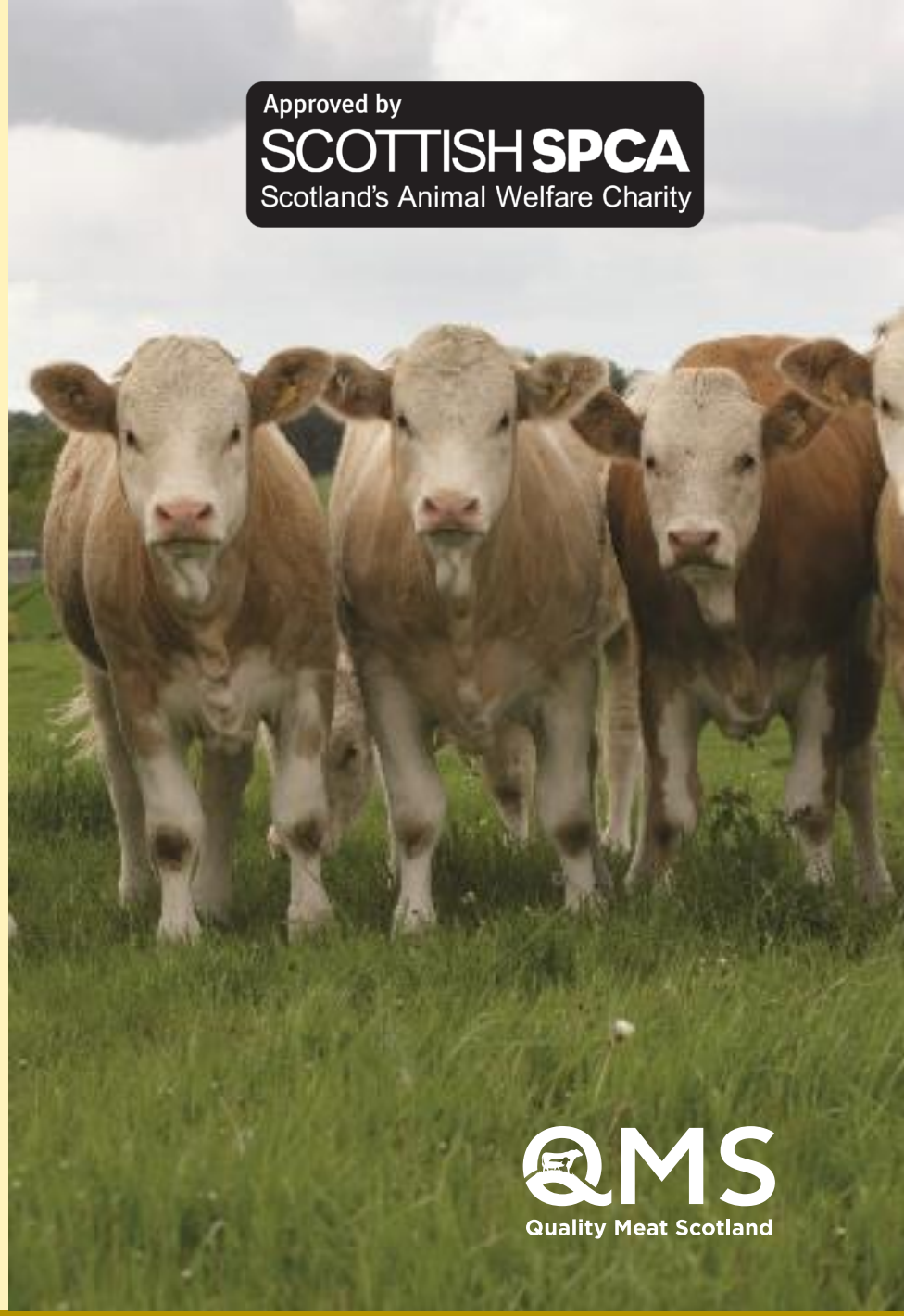
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Animal Welfare in Scotland

- **This is a priority** in Scottish livestock farming.
- The **Scottish SPCA supports the QMS Quality Assurance Scheme**, which has been running for 35 years.
- Farms are **inspected every year** to make sure high welfare standards are met.
- Farmers spend lots of time with their animals, **checking their health and wellbeing**.
- **Vets and animal nutritionists** work with farmers to help keep animals healthy.



List examples of good animal welfare?



5 Welfare Freedoms

These are the **very minimum** principles on which Animal Welfare and Wellbeing should be based.

Animals should have:

1. Freedom from **hunger and poor nutrition**
2. Freedom from **discomfort**
3. Freedom from **pain, injury and disease**
4. Freedom to **behave normally**
5. Freedom from **fear and distress**





Approved by SCOTTISH SPCA Scotland's Animal Welfare Charity

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Test your knowledge

It’s time to put learning to the test with our simple quiz.

It will cover the content of this lesson, the main learning takeaways and provide opportunities for class discussion.



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The breed of beef cattle a farmer has is determined by...

A - The type of farm they have

B - Their preference

C - The topography of their farm (is it hilly or flat)

D - All of the above





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The breed of beef cattle a farmer has is determined by...

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What breed of sheep is this?

A - Blackface sheep

B - Horned sheep

C - Whiteface sheep

D - Hebridean sheep





QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

What breed of sheep is this?

A - Blackface sheep

B - Horned sheep

C - Whiteface sheep

D - Hebridean sheep





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Cattle & sheep are ruminants which means they have how many stomach compartments?

A - 1

B - 2

C - 3

D - 4





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Cattle & sheep are ruminants which means they have how many stomach compartments?

A - 1

B - 2

C - 3

D - 4





QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

Female pigs are called...

A - Boars

B - Gilts

C - Sows

D - Piglets





QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

Female pigs are called...

A - Boars

B - Gilts

C - Sows

D - Piglets





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Which of the list below is NOT an animal welfare & wellbeing freedom:

A - Freedom from hunger and malnutrition

B - Freedom from music

C - Freedom from fear and distress

D - Freedom from discomfort

E - Freedom to express normal behaviours





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Which of the list below is NOT an animal welfare & wellbeing freedom:

A - Freedom from hunger and malnutrition

B - Freedom from music

C - Freedom from fear and distress

D - Freedom from discomfort

E - Freedom to express normal behaviours





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Animal welfare standards are the same across the world.

A - True

B - False





QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

Animal welfare standards are the same across the world.

A - True

B - False





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For meat to be sold using the logos above the animals must be part of the Quality Meat Assurance Scheme. What are the inspectors looking for when they inspect Assurance Scheme farms?

A - Good animal welfare

B - Safe working practices

C - Ensuring that the animals have been born and reared in Scotland

D - Accurate record taking

E - A tidy farm

F - All of the above



QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

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What type of animal food does this describe? "grass that has been cut then put into either a pit or bales and covered in plastic".

A - Straw

B - Silage

C - Hay





QMS Quality Meat Scotland | MAKE IT SCOTCH

What type of animal food does this describe? "grass that has been cut then put into either a pit or bales and covered in plastic".

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Task

Complete the worksheet to test your knowledge and understanding of the red meat industry and livestock farming techniques.



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Key Points - Red Meat Farming in Scotland

- Much of Scotland is **not suitable for growing crops**, but is ideal for growing grass.
- **Cattle and sheep** can use this grass for food.
- Cattle are usually **outside in summer and housed in winter**.
- Most sheep are **outside all year round**.
- Pigs can be kept **indoors or outdoors**.
- Cattle and sheep are **ruminants**, with a four-part stomach that helps them digest grass.
- Cattle, sheep and pigs have **ear tags** so they can be identified and tracked.
- **Traceability** helps protect food safety and control disease.
- **Animal welfare** is a priority, with the **Five Freedoms** as basic welfare principles.
- **Quality assurance** checks that farms meet required standards



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Success Criteria

I can

- Describe **what red meat is**.
- Identify **different types of farms in Scotland**.
- Describe **what Scottish farms produce**.
- Identify **cattle breeds and how cattle are managed**.
- Identify **sheep breeds and how sheep are managed**.
- Identify **pig breeds and how pigs are managed**.
- Describe what **animal welfare is**.
- Briefly describe **quality assurance** and why it is important.



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- MAKE IT -
SCOTCH


- BORN & REARED -
SCOTCH
BEEF
GEOGRAPHIC
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UK PROTECTED
- BORN & REARED -
SCOTCH
LAMB
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