

Activities report to NSA Board 16th November 2022

Information for Trustees not otherwise made available in Sheep Farmer, Weekly Email Update or website

NSA policy, technical and research work

Northern Ireland Protocol

The Brexit protocol has seen Northern Ireland remain in the EU single market for goods, meaning European regulatory rules still apply in the region. Disruption has been ongoing since the UK's exit from the European Union on January 1, 2021. Because Northern Ireland has remained in the EU Single Market under the Northern Ireland Protocol agreement, Britain is treated as a Third Country in trading terms and must now meet stricter requirements. A high proportion of sheep destined to enter Northern Ireland from Britain would not be able to meet new health standards brought in from January 1, as a result of the protocol.

RUMA

The goal of the RUMA TTF (Target Task Force) has been to respond to the Lord O'Neil report to the UK government on AMR and its recommendation to identify realistic, evidence-based goals for the UK agriculture industry. The creation and roll out of the first set of sector specific targets through the RUMA Targets Task Force, published in 2017 and running to 2020, helped focus activity across the UK livestock sectors to achieve a 52% reduction in antibiotic use since 2014. Discussions have been ongoing about various health assurance schemes and snapshot testing.

UKGLE

Defra has reviewed and widened the remit of the Farm Animal Genetic Resources (FAnGR) Committee to provide the necessary expert advice and support on the conservation and use of our GR (Genetic Resources) moving forward. The Committee, now named the UK Genetics for Livestock and Equines (UKGLE) Committee, will continue to advise Defra and the DAs of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on all issues relating to managing and conserving AnGR. They will continue to identify opportunities to capture value from taking account of the genetic variation in livestock species more effectively, with a focus on applications to enhance production efficiency and minimise environmental footprint, whilst maintaining high levels of animal health and welfare. The Committee will also continue to advise on breed conservation and their sustainable use, and on compliance with retained UK zootechnical legislation.

SFS Wales

The Sustainable Farming Scheme is well under way for development with the initial proposals concluding their period of feedback on the 31st of October. NSA is working closely with Welsh Government, NSA Cymru & the Welsh Commons Forum to ensure the NSA response accurately reflects the views of those farming in Wales. Welsh Government are hosting several co-design groups and workshops that are taking place over the next few months (you can sign up on the Welsh Government website), NSA would especially encourage those with different grazing agreements for example; contract farming, share farming, profit shares, tenancies and those with common land to play an active role in these workshops. Welsh Government are hoping for the final scheme outline to be published for consultation in 2023, the Agriculture Bill will also be introduced into the Senedd later this year.

Animal Health and Welfare Pathway

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway is set to launch in late autumn, the first stage - which is the review - is being piloted during September. At an advanced stage of testing is the wormer resistance and effectiveness which eventually will feed into the general health and welfare review. Plans further down the line are expecting that 2023 will be the official launch for further testing and screening for issues identified in the review.

Agriculture Pollution Regulations – Wales

NSA is working collaboratively with industry to ensure the best outcome for farmers in Wales following the announcement of the whole Wales NVZ being upheld. NSA has written to Welsh Ministers to address the draconian approach from the Senedd by blanket application and will continue to advocate for Welsh farmers. In the meantime, NSA will be hosting a technical webinar to ensure members have all the information they need when it comes to January 2023.

Scottish Agriculture Bill

The Scottish Agriculture Bill has also been introduced to Scottish Government and is currently out for consultation. The Bill outlines the proposed agriculture policy for Scotland based on simplifying and improving retained EU law. The Scottish Government intends to bring forward new legislation in due course to make provision for a longer-term agricultural policy for Scotland. NSA Scotland is working with stakeholders and committees to ensure a robust and comprehensive response is submitted on behalf of the farming industries.

Border Control Posts

An issue that is still rumbling on, Qualivia have pulled out of the deal to invest in a BCP across the channel in Calais and so we are still no further forward in regaining the breeding animal export trade across the short straights. Other options are being looked into, with a vast amount of work done on alternative routes and the health and journey time implications for some of these routes. NSA continues to work with industry to try to ensure there is a workable solution in the near future. If you are being impacted by these issues or would like more information please email policy@nationalsheep.org.uk

Retailers

With the start of the new Future farming schemes emerging from Defra, and the consultation on the Sustainable Farming Scheme in Wales there are funding streams being slowly introduced for things such as soil testing, tree planting, and sustainability/carbon assessments. At the same time Red Tractor Assurance are running a research pilot with the aim of offering an environmental module as a bolt on to farm assurance. NSA is firmly of the view that farmers should be rewarded for environmental delivery, either through a premium marketplace, or through publicly funded schemes.

NSA has had meetings with the main supermarket retailers to discuss differences between consumer & government target pressures. There is a clear lack of consideration, for instance a percentage of land to be 'dedicated to nature' is unattainable on land tenure agreements that already exclude woodlands and non-crop habitat.

NSA advocates that as far as possible farmers should be rewarded financially for delivering environmental outcomes, and that any schemes should be inclusive and offer opportunities for young people and new entrants who may be on short term agreements that are restricted to productive land only.

Landscape Recovery & Future Farming Schemes

The Landscape Recovery scheme is one of 3 new environmental land management schemes. It will aim to complement the Sustainable Farming Incentive, which is striving to support action at farm level to make farming more sustainable, and Local Nature Recovery, which will aim to support action at local level to make space for nature alongside food production, LR is aimed at large scale land use change. LR is well underway with pilot projects and NSA is extremely encouraged to see that every pilot has got food production integrated within it and grazing animals are a significant focus.

Agri-environment agreement holders can now apply for the Sustainable Farming Incentive via the Rural Payments Service. This has included those with Countryside Stewardship & Environmental Stewardship

agreements. The online service was also (at the time of writing) going through a process of testing to ensure the common land standards of SFI could be accessed through the portal as well.

NSA communications and knowledge exchange work

Reach/engagement with

Press work:

A total of 27 press releases were issued during the months of July, August and September, an increase on the previous quarter perhaps due to the impact of NSA Sheep Event and the increased activity amongst Government during the period. Summer months traditionally have seen reduced press activity so this figure is encouraging when many other farming organisations appear to be quieter at this time.

Open rates for NSA press releases remain well above the industry average demonstrating the value national and agricultural press put on NSA's opinions and information. The reach of NSA communications work continues to exceed expectation too. NSA Sheep Event was a notable event of interest to the agricultural sector. The varied press releases issued covering breaking news from the seminar tent or words from the Secretary of State as well as those focussed on competitions and other visitor attractions were presented to a wide reaching audience of more than 1.2million being mentioned in more than 35 farming and regional media publications and online sites.

The table below shows the press releases put out in the last quarter per week and their different focuses as well as the social media reach for posts that have been placed on social media relating to the press releases.

| Week commencing | Press releases issued | Social media reach on press release links - Facebook |
|-----------------|--|---|
| 4/7/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grassland Trail at NSA Sheep Event 2. Welsh SFI | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5.1k 2. 1.1k |
| 11/7/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of UKGLE 2. NSA responds to Toby Carvery stopping serving lamb | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.2k 2. 1.7k |
| 18/7/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidence dented in Parliament by Australia trade deal 2. Sheep Event next week | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 935 2. 2.9k |
| 25/7/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. International guests at NSA Sheep Event 2. Wales & Border early ram sale 3. Samuel Wharry travel bursary launch 4. George Hedley and Bob Payne award presentation 5. Sheep Event – NSA supports Pathway 6. Sheep event – welcome address 7. Sheep Event – General 8. Sheep event – V Prentis | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.6k 2. 5.8k 3. 4.9k 4. 5.3k 5. 1k 6. 2.5k 7. 3.4k 8. 885 |
| 1/8/22 | No press release issued | |
| 8/8/22/ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marie Prebble world record attempt / Samuel Wharry | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10.6k |
| 15/8/22 | No press releases issued | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. |
| 22/8/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ram sales 2. Wales NVZ | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 8.5k 2. 753 |
| 29/8/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love Lamb week 2. NSA calls for robust food policy | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 4.1k 2. 639 |
| 5/9/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NSA welcomes new PM 2. NSA invites award nominations 3. NSA calls on Secretary of state to put British farming first | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 678 2. 1.6k 3. 1k |
| 12/9/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love lamb success 2. Wool symposium launch | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.1k 2. 1.2k |
| 19/9/22 | Reduced press activity – Queen’s funeral | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. |
| 26/9/22 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NSA Wales & Border ram sale | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5.4k |

Weekly Email Update and other online comms with members:

The NSA members’ Weekly Email Update has been sent to approximately 4300 people each Friday during the last quarter, this includes mailings to members (for whom we have email addresses), breed society representatives and a complimentary list, which includes Defra and devolved Government representatives. The number of people on the email list is slowly increasing as work continues to acquire members’ email addresses who we may have not previously held it for.

Open rates for the NSA Weekly Update have continued to increase since the beginning of the year when the move to sending the email earlier on a Friday afternoon was taken. The average open rate is now approaching 40%, a significant increase from 2021 when an average of 28% of emails were opened. The email average open rate is well above the industry average of 19% indicating its value to recipients.

Website

Visits to the NSA website increased substantially over the last quarter, from an average of 39,145 visits per month, to 51,075 visits per month. The main NSA page has been the most visited throughout Q3, closely followed by the ram sales, sheep event, sheep breed and starting your own flock pages.

The last quarter saw visits to the website from 49,409 users, generating 153,224 page views. Of these users 87% came to the site from direct search or a direct link e.g. in the Weekly Email Update or press activity, and 13% came from social media. Work is ongoing to increase and maintain traffic to the NSA website from NSA's social media channels.

Social Media

The past three months have seen the growth of NSA's social media pages.

At the end of the third quarter of 2022 the NSA Facebook page following had increased by 533 to 20,655 people. NSA saw an overall increase in Twitter followers of 84 to a total of 13,389.

Sheep Event generated a significant uplift in NSA's social presence. In the lead up to the event 46 Facebook posts (NSA original content) were shared, reaching 244,909 people. In addition, we shared other businesses/organisations posts promoting their attendance at the event. This resulted in 109 shares of other people's content and reached 208,495 people. We also put out 30 Twitter posts (NSA original content) which reached 17,745. In addition, we retweeted 135 tweets from other businesses/organisations promoting their attendance at the event (unfortunately Twitter doesn't provide analytics on retweets). This totals 471,149 people reached with Sheep Event specific content through our social channels.

Posts performed well across a range of topics, particularly on SCOPS posts, Fact Fridays, the NSA and TePari prize draw, Next generation ambassadors and the use of British Wool.

The top three performing Facebook posts for the quarter were:

1. *****SCOPS post*****. 56,964 people reached and 2,964 engagements.



2. **#Fact Friday**. 20,504 people reached and 2,115 engagements with the post.



National Sheep Association
Published by Rachel Rose · July 15 ·

#FactFriday Did you know that sheep can not only remember faces but also recognise different facial expressions?

Researchers from Cambridge University found that sheep prefer to go through gates with a person smiling at them rather than frowning!



3. #Fact Friday. 18,568 people reached and 1,063 engagements with the post.



National Sheep Association
Published by Rachel Rose · July 8 ·

#FactFriday

Did you know that Dolly the cloned sheep was born on 5th July 1996?

She was cloned from a cell taken from the mammary gland of a six-year-old Dorset sheep and an egg taken from a Scottish Blackface sheep!

Her birth proved that specialised cells could be used to create an exact copy of the animal they came from



The top three performing Twitter posts were:

1. “🔔 Don’t forget to set your alarm🔔 NSA Sheep Event 2022 is TOMORROW!! 📍 Three Counties Showground, Malvern 🗄️ Gates open 9am #APositiveFuture #SheepEvent pic.twitter.com/fGwJv97rSA”

3,890 people reached and 65 interactions with the tweet.

2. “NSA offers funding to enthusiastic young sheep farmers seeking knowledge on pedigree sheep breeding!👉 If you are aged 18-35, apply now to receive full or part funding to attend the SBRT 11-13 Nov 📅 Applications close 21st Oct Apply via the link below👉 <https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/next-generation/events-activities/sheep-breeders-round-table/> ... pic.twitter.com/9U64jxDqg5”

1,848 people reached and 42 engagements with the tweet.

3. “📅 Not to be missed📅 NSA Sheep Event returns next week 🗄️📅 Wednesday 27th July 📍 Three Counties Showground, Malvern 🗄️ Book your advanced tickets online now and save 20%👉 <https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/nsa-sheep-event/> ... Don’t forget, NSA members receive FREE entry into this event! #SheepEvent pic.twitter.com/vtPfdmSin8”

1,541 people reached and 17 engagements with the tweet.

Email Campaigns:

Throughout the last quarter, targeted email campaigns have been sent to non-members who have previously expressed interest in NSA activity or membership, to encourage them to sign up. There were 9 campaigns this quarter which advertised NSA membership benefits, and upcoming events.

Recent/planned events

- **Next Generation**

The 2022 cohort of NSA Next Generation Ambassadors met for their third and fourth (final) delivery sessions during the third quarter.

In July, to coincide with NSA Sheep Event the group travelled to Malvern for a grassland based session. Once again Ambassadors were able to visit some innovative and interesting farms as well as hearing from industry experts, including Sam Jones from Worcestershire and Rich Thomas from Herefordshire who gave very interesting tours. Ambassadors were also able to view the trial grassland plots at Barenbrug UK as well as hearing from Liz Genever and Nerys Hughes (AHDB). This delivery session culminated in NSA Sheep Event where Ambassadors were on hand to help in several areas of the event – thanks go to them for this.

Following this the group met for the final time this year for a business focussed session in Northumberland. The group enjoyed the kind hospitality of Hexham Auction Mart as their base for inspirational theory sessions on dealing with change and promoting personal growth with consultant Wynn Jones and business planning with local agricultural accountant Andrew Robinson of Armstrong Watson. The group were especially interested by excellent farm tours with 2017 NSA North Sheep hosts David Smith and family from West Shields farm, Tow Law and future 2023 NSA North Sheep hosts J.E Woodman & Son at their Bradford House Farm near Ponteland in Northumberland.

2022 has most certainly brought a great group of ambassadors into the Association with many already becoming active in their regions, an encouraging sign for the future.

NSA Next Generation Wool Symposium

Bookings opened in September for the first ever NSA and British Wool 'Wool Symposium'. This attracted good amount of interest with 12 shortlisted to join the visit in October.

Public Facing activity:

Love Lamb week brought together industry to highlight the sustainable, nutritious nature of lamb at the beginning of September. The annual campaign that is supported by NSA as well as UK levy boards and farming unions once again attracted high profile attention from celebrity chefs, found publicity in national media and encouraged shoppers to add different lamb cuts to their weekly shopping baskets.

Project work

Externally funded projects

RDPE sheep scab

Coming to the end of the second year. Final second blood samples being taken on all farms post any coordinated dipping/treatment. Nicola Noble working closely with SW coordinators to ensure project deliverables completed by the end of the project (March 2023). There are still a few outstanding invoices to

come from vet practices involved and some funding to claim from Moredun once final deliverables are complete. Monthly meetings with Moredun (lead partner) and SW coordinators continue.

Erasmus

Project coming to its final few months. Summer UK visits were successful. Held a face-to-face event early November to disseminate findings from the study trips titled 'Low input for maximum gain: exploring livestock systems across UK and Europe, which was well attended. Final stages will be project write-up and submission by end of the year.

RoSA

Concerns raised at summer board meeting and annual review meeting have been resolved. New team manager at BASIS appointed. Working well for coordination. Planned webinar series for 2022/2023 to fit into commitments on Breakfast club webinars and Moredun/NSA joint webinars. Need to ID new steering group members. Seems to be better communication between board, steering group and comms teams. New challenge to maintain and increase membership in its second year.

The three successful winners of the joint NSA RoSA Next Generation competition have engaged with their mentors. Articles on the results of the pairing have been in the last two editions of Sheep Farmer with the final instalment due in the Dec/Jan edition.

Stats August 2022: 81 confirmed (68 paid, 24 enough points (but not paid)). 79 events registered. 22 event organisers

Moredun

Signed another three-year partnership agreement at the reduced rate. Activities planned for 2023. Due to announce the re-launch of the partnership in December.

SBRT

Face-to-face event due mid-November. Preparation going well and ticket sales have exceeded targets. A number of sponsored places from HQ and regions to allow the next generation to attend. NSA will continue to support and remain on steering group. Programme confirmed and available online (<https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/sbrt/>).

New project proposals

Submissions in discussion for research funding:

- *Fabulous Fibre*: Investigation into increasing finer wool from specific breeds to increase value of wool through genetics. Looking for appropriate funding but partners in consortium keen.
- *Shropshire Sheep Health*. In discussion with Foundation for Common Land.

Submitted funding bids:

- *Low methane sheep*: Reduce impact on emissions through genetics. Successful in 1st stage of bidding (April). Submitted to 2nd round of bidding early November. Decision due Feb.
- *British Heritage Sheep*: Bloc chain technology, taste grid. Submitted to Defra R&D funding early November. Decision due Feb.
- *Precision farming livestock technology*: Increased use of technology for health, welfare and productivity gains. Submitted to Defra R&D funding early November. Decision due Feb.

Unsuccessful funding bids:

- *Silvasheep*: Role of dairy sheep in sustainable systems – has been resubmitted to a smaller R&D funding. NSA not written into consortium as no KE budget but aiming to subcontract to us should this be funded.
- *New entrants to farming*.

British Heritage Sheep

Funding remains the main issue for BHS. Two grant applications are being worked on currently – one for the funding of the admin of the project (Defra Innovation), and the other for a traceability system from farm to retailer/caterer to ensure authenticity of BHS claims (Garfield Weston).

Ovine Semen Archive

Work has temporarily slowed down on this, as AB Europe asked for more time than we expected to send straws out to the people who bought disbanded stock. So while the rationalisation has been done on paper, the actual throwing away of unneeded semen will not happen until early 2023. We will keep the pressure on to make sure it happens!

NSA internal work

Governance (inc. Vice Presidents)

Accounts for year ended 31.12.2021 have been submitted to the Charity Commission, Companies House and OSCR.

Accounts for NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive have been submitted to Companies House

Accounts and audit

It has been agreed that from the 1st October, Scottish Region bookkeeping will now be processed at Head Office. This means that Northern Region, Welsh Region and Wales & Border Ram Sales are the only regions currently processing their own bookkeeping.

A pre-audit meeting with Bishop Fleming will take place on Friday 25th November, though it is not anticipated that there will be any issues.

Debtors currently stand at £14,349.88, the majority of which belongs to the Scottish Region. It is difficult to know whether some of these debts have been paid or not, as Head Office is still struggling with access to the Scottish Region bank account.

Sheep Centre site

The valuation for the whole site has been completed as required by the auditors.

Following a visit from Peninsula's health & safety advisor the fire safety arrangements in the Suffolk building are being reviewed and quotations obtained to install new detection equipment. Quotes to test the fixed electrical wiring are also being considered.

The new lease for Firs Farmhouse has been drafted and is awaiting signature from tenants.

The rental agreement for Bats Loft is due for review in January 2023 and this will be discussed with the tenant in December.

Regional activities (to include NSA ram sales)

Cymru Wales Region report from Helen Roberts

NSA Cymru will be attending the Welsh Winter Fair with a stand and has supported the event with sponsorship as well. We are also looking at supplying gazebos as part of a sponsorship package for the sheep rings for the 2023 Royal Welsh. The annual meeting is planned for 16th Feb, and we have asked the

OCVO if we will be able to have the new chief vet for Wales to come and speak, the announcement for this post will not be made until the New Year.

The Region has been highly active with the help of Emma to put a substantive response into Welsh Govt regarding the Welsh Agri Bill and the Sustainable farming scheme proposals. Other responses will be put in regarding the huge, proposed increases to charges by NRW to dip disposal etc. HCC are consulting on a proposed increase to levies, they have been invited to attend our stand at the winter fair for a Q & A session.

Helen Roberts has met with Welsh YFC and is seeing how we can work more closely with the YFC in the future.

Stand bookings are open for NSA Welsh Sheep and plans are underway to make this event a successful one. Spend on marquees may be more than first anticipated as the host will still have stock housed at the event.

NSA Scotland report from Grace Reid

Wednesday 10th August

- Meeting with Rachael Hamilton MSP attended by Grace Reid and Alec Telfer
Meeting to discuss impacts of new Ag Bill in Scotland; importance of stakeholder and farmer input going forward; value of sheep in the environment; food security; impact of trees/carbon credits; biodiversity/climate change argument; value of youth/new entrants.

Friday 12th August

- QMS Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group meeting attended by Grace Reid to discuss Scottish Government Biodiversity consultation
Meeting arranged to form a collective response to the Biodiversity consultation.

Monday 15th August

- Scottish Farming Round Table attended by Grace Reid
Main topics discussed: lack of rain and licensed suspensions of taking water from rivers; rising energy costs; labour shortages; Welfare of Animals in Transit.
- Scottish Government Animal Health and Welfare General Stakeholders meeting attended by Grace Reid
An update was given on the Kept Animals Bill; proposals on the Animals Abroad Bill; Welfare in Transit and at Slaughter; labelling and international trade. The meeting also provided an update on the process of ARIOB and potential Animal Health and Welfare links to the National Test Programme (unconfirmed):

Sheep

1. Sheep scab sustainable prevention control plan/measures
2. Targeted iceberg disease investigation – biosecurity/ isolation
3. Flock lameness assessment

Wednesday 17th August

- Scottish Government Industry Led Sheep Scab Working Group meeting attended by Phil Stocker and Grace Reid

Discussions were had surrounding the disposal of spent dip and logistics of removing dip from Scottish islands. A shared communications approach was also agreed and an update was given by Scottish Government in terms of funding applications for the pilot project. Guidance for agricultural shows was also explored with more detail needed.

Monday 29th August

- Scottish Farming Round Table attended by Grace Reid
Topics discussed: energy cost crisis; Ag Bill consultation launch; Love Lamb Week; Land Reform consultation; food security.

Wednesday 31st August

- Scottish Government Industry Led OPA Working Group meeting attended by Phil Stocker and Grace Reid

Discussions included the training and accreditation of scanning for OPA; farmer experience and biosecurity practices; OPA published papers; an update on the AROIB and the action plan of the group moving forward.

- NSA Scotland General Purposes and Policy Committee Meeting

Monday 5th September

- Food and Agriculture Stakeholder Taskforce (FAST) Meeting attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson Eighteen stakeholder organisations from across Scotland's agricultural supply chain, including attended the emergency meeting at Stirling Agricultural Centre. Triggered by frustration about the lack of detail and direction in the agriculture bill consultation published recently, the discussion centred on Scottish Government's 'dysfunctional' stakeholder engagement and perceived dearth of understanding of the pragmatic needs of the industry. The group, the largest independent stakeholder forum to be established in several years, will meet monthly, with the expectation it will be chaired by a different member of the group each time. Topics covered: lack of clarity and direction from Scot Gov; unintended consequences, including negatively impacting food security and the future of agricultural production and the farmed environment in Scotland; the vacuum left by the lack of communication from the Agricultural Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB) and a 10-month hiatus since the Government's own Agricultural and Rural Development (ARD) Stakeholder Group and general stakeholder communications and cooperation.

Thursday 8th September

- Scottish Government Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) Stakeholders group meeting attended by Grace Reid

This was the first ARD meeting for 10 months which had been a talking point and reason for starting up a new Scottish Stakeholder Group. The main topics were the new Ag Bill Consultation; loan of £33m from ring fenced agriculture budget to Scottish Government due to cost crisis; the upcoming vision and framework for agricultural policy and an update was given on the National Test Programme.

Monday 12th September

- Scottish Farming Round Table attended by Grace Reid

Topics discussed: £33m loan query from agricultural budget to Scotland's economy; Land Reform consultation; fertiliser prices; Queen's funeral.

Tuesday 13th September

- Scottish Government meeting on the UK wide call for evidence on methane suppressing feed products attended by Grace Reid and Emma Bradbury.

Attendees included the Head of Livestock Production Policy (John Armour) and Lauren Begg (Policy Adviser). The discussion revolved around the need for methane suppressing feed products in the sheep industry; what is happening in other countries globally and standardisation across the UK nations.

Thursday 15th September

- NSA Scotland Regional Management Sub Committee meeting

Thursday 22nd September

- Dynamic Health Planning meeting attended by Grace Reid

This meeting was arranged to discuss the progression of a SRUC Health Planning platform which presented 'an auditable farm-team driven process of continuous safeguarding and improvement of animal health, welfare and production efficiency'. A further two meetings would be held to brainstorm the effectiveness of the platform and future use.

Saturday 24th September

- SAC Consulting/SAYFC Open Day, 'Alternatives to Ownership', Sittyton Farm, Newmachar attended by Peter Myles and Grace Reid

This was an opportunity to engage with the younger generation of sheep farmers whereby Peter and Grace provided a short presentation on NSA Scotland.

Tuesday 4th October

- NSA Scotland Catch Up with RSPB attended by Peter Myles, Maimie Paterson and Grace Reid

Meeting to discuss the wading bird population and future agricultural policy in terms of food production whilst meeting environmental targets.

- NSA Scotland Regional Management Sub Committee meeting

Thursday 6th October

- Food and Agriculture Stakeholder Taskforce (FAST) Meeting attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson
This meeting was convened to discuss the upcoming Ag Bill Policy in Scotland and viewpoints to ensure Scottish farming and agri-food stakeholders were united in responses at high levels and communicating effectively. The meeting focussed mainly on governance and current concerns for the industries and how future ag policy may impact them.

Monday 10th October

- Scottish Farming Round Table attended by Grace Reid

Main topics: FAST; SBRT; NSA Scotland dinner; consultations; Animal Rebellion/activists; Avian Flu.

Tuesday 18th October

- Scottish Stakeholder Welfare in Transit meeting attended by Grace Reid
- NSA Scotland Membership and Promotions Sub Committee meeting

Saturday 22nd October

- Scottish Smallholder Festival Forfar attended by Peter Myles, Grace Reid and Pamela Nicol

This was a welcomed opportunity to meet with another demographic of the Scottish sheep industry. Peter had been tasked with judging some of the sheep classes and we also had a very quick catch up with Mairi Gougeon (Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands). This resulted in the promise of a meeting in the near future to discuss the new Scottish Agricultural Bill and upcoming policy items.

Tuesday 25th October

- Briefing for Stage One debate – Hunting With Dogs Bill attended by Peter Myles

This meeting was key to presenting evidence for introducing ‘*An obtainable and workable licensing system to permit the use of more than two dogs, where justified and necessary*’. This was the key condition upon which NSA Scotland, NFUS, Scottish Gamekeepers Association could support any final Bill. Furthermore, there was the explanation of the damage predators cause to Scottish Livestock and wider biodiversity. It was clearly stated that there was no advocacy for traditional hunting.

Friday 4th November

- Food and Agriculture Stakeholders Taskforce (FAST) Meeting attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson
This meeting was arranged to discuss the upcoming ARD stakeholders meeting and to update on a letter sent to Mairi Gougeon alongside a meeting held with George Burgess. A discussion was held on the ARIOB and a presentation was provided by Steven Thomson on Agricultural Policy.

Tuesday 8th November

- Scottish Ag Bill Consultation, Stirling attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson

This meeting was a workshop led by Scottish Government to explore the Ag Bill consultation and to ensure all stakeholders (public wide) had an input. This was one of a series of meetings across the country. Attendees were asked to put proposed powers in order of preference and discuss potential threats and opportunities to their sector.

Wednesday 9th November

- Scottish Government ARD Stakeholders meeting attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson

The meeting was the first in person workshop since the Covid pandemic which included a short update from Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, Mairi Gougeon and discussed the current Agriculture Bill consultation. Discussions were had surrounding the importance of food production and security, what conditionality might mean; young people and new entrants to agriculture, fundamental elements of farm support and the need for clarity, consistency and communication going forward as Government policy develops. The Cabinet Secretary was also able to update attendees with an extension to the deadline to the 5th December 2022 for the current consultation that is ongoing relating to the powers which need implemented as part of the primary legislation process. Whilst it is crucial to move with pace to ensure industry is as well prepared as possible for future change, it is imperative that any secondary legislation i.e. measures put in place are affirmed by stakeholders and those on the ground before they are legislated.

Thursday 10th November

- Scottish Government Industry Led Sheep Scab Working Group meeting attended by Phil Stocker and Grace Reid

The Scottish Government Industry Led Sheep Scab Working Group (Chaired by NSA Chief Executive Phil Stocker) met to continue discussions on how to help stop the spread of sheep scab and to improve communications when dealing with this very parasitic disease. Attendees were given an update from Moredun's Stewart Burgess who has been working on the development of a Scottish Government funded pilot project in Lewis and Harris and a wider discussion was had on the general steps which needed to be taken when acknowledging an instance of sheep scab across the country.

Monday 14th November

- Scottish Government Industry Led OPA Working Group meeting attended by Phil Stocker and Grace Reid

Tuesday 15th November

- FAST Meeting attended by Grace Reid and Maimie Paterson

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday 30th November

- NSA Scotland General Purposes and Policy Committee meeting
- NSA Scotland Lamb for St Andrews Day Dinner

Monday 5th December

- Scottish Government Animal Health and Welfare General Stakeholders meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Other significant external meetings – attended by Phil unless otherwise stated

Black Mountain Graziers Association

Black Mountain Land Use partnership

Ruminant Health and Welfare Steering Group

Defra Northern Ireland G.B. Food Supply Chain Forum

Scottish Government/Moredun Sheep Scab Working Group

Register of Sheep Advisors

NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive

Defra Future Farming and Countryside Programme Forum

Uplands Alliance Steering Group/Defra Upland Farmers Pathway to Success

Katherine Flynn, Defra

Animal Health and Welfare Programme

British Heritage Sheep

UK Technology for Agriculture and Genetics

Livestock Chain Advisory Group

Defra Sheep Health Pathway Working Group

Global Sheep Producers Forum

Team Doctor

Defra Penalty Notices workshop for ABP and TSE's

Welsh Commons Forum

Scottish Government Agriculture and Rural Development Stakeholder Group

Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance

Wool Innovation Network

NFU Farming Organisations Roundtable

Interview for 'The Grocer'

On-farm meeting with Nicholas Saphir, Chairman AHDB

Alliance for Welsh Designated Landscapes AGM

Steve McLean, Marks & Spencer Head of Agriculture and Fisheries
National Food Crime Unit, Food Standards Agency
Animal Health & Welfare Partnership, Chair of Chairs
Farmers Fresh
Farmers Weekly
Downing Street
Animal Health & Welfare Pathway Liaison Group
Sheep Vet Society
SCOPS Sustainable Control of Parasites in Sheep
Rural Development Programme for England Sheep Scab Projects
NFU Cymru
AHDB Sheep Genetics Review
Erasmus E-organic research project
Red Tractor Beef and Lamb Board