

FARMWELL
SCOTLAND



**Useful contacts for the
farming community**



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This document highlights some of the support available to farmers undergoing difficulty at a personal level and/or with the welfare of their livestock.

Advice and support for farmers from bodies involved with the farming industry

RSABI are probably the first point of contact for farmers who are struggling for whatever reason and are in need of support. RSABI will also help direct farmers to other support if that is more appropriate.

RSABI support people from Scottish Agriculture emotionally, practically and financially in times of need. RSABI have a confidential helpline and listening service for those in agriculture experiencing difficult times including stress and anxiety. They also have a referral system where individual people or agencies can refer someone in need of help. The RSABI can be contacted on their Confidential Helpline at 0300 111 4166. Email rsabi@rsabi.org.uk. Of note is a tie up between RSABI and the Farm Advisory Service (FAS):

- Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMP) can be arranged via the Farm Advisory Service (FAS). More detail about the ILMPs can be found at the following link: <https://www.fas.scot/integrated-land-management-plans-ilmps/>
- As part of an ILMP farmers can also opt to take out 2 further funded advice plans – detail of these is also at the link above.
- RSABI can also request FAS to do a Specialist Plan to help farmers who are facing hardship with a view to giving additional specialist advice. This Specialist Plan is the equivalent of the further advice plans outlined above, but crucially an ILMP is not required for this to happen, and it may be fast-tracked. The specialist advice can be provided by a range of bodies – for example the SRUC.
- Such hardship in the household or business can take many forms and they all impact on people and their families. Often it comes out of nowhere and through no fault of their own.
- Household: succession/retirement; relationship issues; stress; depression; isolation; illness; disease; accidents; suicidal feelings; alcohol/drug dependency
- Business: difficulties with finance; banking relationships; tenancy issues; bureaucracy/paperwork; animal welfare

National Farmers Union Scotland. The NFU Scotland has support services available for their members. Further information is available via through their main website <https://www.nfus.org.uk/about-nfus> or on tel. 0131 472 4000. They also have a specialised Legal and Tenancy Issues Helpline on 0131 271 8585 and a Tax Helpline 0800 023 2368.

Scottish Dairy Hub. They are a free to use, information and support service working to connect and support dairy farmers & suppliers. The Hub Team can answer questions related to dairy businesses, and may be able to offer assistance with specific issues. They can be reached via their main website <http://scottishdairyhub.org.uk/> or by phone on 0345 475 5110 or 0750 076 6083.

RCVS and private veterinary surgeons. Private veterinary surgeons are often in an ideal position to provide advice on farm animal health and welfare. Farmers can always seek assistance from their private veterinary surgeon in relation to the running of their farm and herd health planning. The regulator of the veterinary profession, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, has a list of veterinary practices at the following site: <https://findavet.rcvs.org.uk/find-a-vet/> . Tel [020 7222 2001](tel:02072222001)

British Veterinary Association. As the representative body for vets, the British Veterinary Association is an advocate for mental health and wellbeing within the veterinary profession. The BVA supports the [Mind Matters Initiative](#) (ran by the RCVS) and works closely with the independent charity [VetLife](#) to provide mental health support for the veterinary profession, resources developed by these initiatives may be applicable to farmers. BVA has also have a range of [policy positions on farm animal welfare](#) that may be a useful reference point for farmers.

SAC Veterinary Services/SRUC. They offer services covering all aspects of rural enterprise, from agronomy, livestock and dairy services to disease surveillance, farm animal diagnostics and environmental consultancy. Their advice can be very useful to preserve/improve animal welfare by helping to identify disease and to implement livestock health schemes. A full list of services and local office contact details are available on their website https://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/20005/sac_consulting.

Scottish Crofting Federation provides a members' support service through their HQ in Kyle; hq@crofting.org or 01599 530005. In addition members can call the legal helpline provided by crofting law specialists Inksters Solicitor on 01599 230300.

Scotland's Farm Advisory Service (FAS) is part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) which is co-funded by the EU and Scottish Government. This £20 million programme provides information and resources aimed at increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts. Grant support, a full programme of events, a subscription service for crofts and small farms, and a range of articles and publications form the core of this service which is designed to provide integrated advice for farmers and crofters across Scotland. <https://www.fas.scot/> National advice facility Phone: 0300 323 0161 Email: advice@fas.scot

QMS contract the assessment and certification of their assurance schemes to Acoura and around 45 experienced assessors visit member farms annually. Although their on-farm role is to ensure the QMS Assurance Scheme Standards are met, assessors are also able to lend a supportive ear and signpost farmers to where they might seek help. Farmers can speak to assessors in confidence or call the Farm Assurance office on 0131 335 6602.

ScotEID can advise on aspects of livestock movement records and BVD control in Scotland. Details can be found via <https://www.scoteid.com/>. ScotEID Information Centre, Huntly. Tel: 01466 794323, email: help@scoteid.com

For queries relating to completion of paper movement documents (farm-to-farm/show/imports), please contact Scottish Animal Movement Unit (SAMU). Tel: 0845 601 7597 Email: samu@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Physical or mental health support

GP and National Health Service. The first point of contact for an individual who feels unwell (either physically or mentally) will often be their GP. The NHS has a website with public information and advice on health and wellbeing as well as links to further sources of information on specific topics. Visit site on <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>

Samaritans in Scotland. There is a free helpline on 116 123 and their website can be accessed via <http://www.samaritans.org/your-community/samaritans-work-scotland>. The helpline can give support and help to anyone requiring this.

Local Churches can often offer pastoral support irrespective of religious views or persuasion. As an example, Rev Chris Blackshaw, a minister with the Church of Scotland in Ayrshire is visiting livestock markets and offering direct support to the farming community - the contact number is 07980 975062.

Enforcement and statutory bodies

Enforcement Authorities for farm animal welfare and animal ID issues (APHA, SSPCA, Local Authorities, RPID, and BCMS). Due to their official role in ensuring compliance with the law, the Authorities are not often the first port of call for farmers in need of help. However, they can and do offer a wide range of support and advice, particularly in relation to how farmers can comply with farm animal legislation.

- APHA. Their official website can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency>. Contact details for APHA Offices in Scotland can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening>.
- SSPCA. Contact numbers for local offices are found at SSPCA. <https://www.scottishspca.org/>. They have a dedicated Animal Helpline on 03000 999 999.
- Local Authorities. Their contact numbers and websites depend on geographical location. Websites for the local councils can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>
- RPID can offer support and advice in relation to single farm payment issues, animal ID issues and a wide range of other agriculture related topics. Local offices can be sourced via <https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/contact-us/>.
- BCMS. Further detail can be obtained at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/british-cattle-movement-service>. Email bcms-enquiries@bcms.rpa.gsi.gov.uk. BCMS helpline 0345 050 1234

Other bodies offering general support and advice

Citizens Advice Scotland – they can offer a wide range of advice and guidance to those seeking help be it financial or other. They can be contacted on tel 0808 8009060 and at www.adviceguide.org.uk

Debt Advice Scotland. Can signpost callers to advice on financial matters. Details found at <https://www.stepchange.org/DebtadviceinScotland.aspx>. This website will lead viewers to a list of contact numbers for advice on specific debt related issues.