

FAS Conference 2026

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Time	
09:45 - 10:15am	Tea/Coffee Arrival
10:15 - 10:25am	Welcome from the Chair - Willie Budge
10:25 - 10:55am	Headline Speaker - Nicola Wordie
10:55 - 11:25am	Inheritance Tax and Succession - Robert Young, EQ Accountants
11:25 - 11:45am	Break
11:45 - 12:40pm	Quickfire Technology Updates
	Heat and disease detection bolus - Helen Hollingsworth, smaXtec
	Virtual fencing - David Girvan, Farmer
	New castration methods - Kythe Mackenzie, SRUC Veterinary Services
	Variable rate nitrogen application - Jim Wilson, Soil Essentials
	Pen-side testing for fluke - University of Liverpool
12:40 - 1:15pm	Lunch
1:20 - 2:15pm	Workshops - Choose Two From:
	1. EID cattle tagging - David Kerr
	2. Biodiversity win-wins - Patrick Laurie
	3. Metabolic profiling for sheep - Lorna Shaw & Kythe MacKenzie
	4. Where to turn when new to agriculture – Laura Henderson with RPID, SLMS, APHA, SRUC, CC
	5. AI spot sprayer - Jim Wilson
2:15 - 2:45pm	Policy Update - Steven Thomson
2:50 - 3:15pm	Questions for the Panel - Nicola Wordie, Robert Young, Patrick Laurie, Steven Thomson
3:15pm	Closing - Tea & Coffee

Meet the Speakers

Nicola Wordie Farmer and Agricultural Communicator



Nicola will discuss her life so far and how she got into farming and how she embraces technology in her farming operations, both for practical farm management and for communication purposes. She uses modern livestock management tools such as electronic identification (EID) tags for cattle and sheep, herd and flock record software, and precision feeding systems to monitor animal health and productivity.

A bit about Nicola:

Nicola Wordie is a farmer and agricultural communicator known for farming alongside her dad on their mixed livestock farm near Huntly. She has built a substantial social media presence under the name @livestock_farmher, sharing honest, everyday insights into farming life with thousands of followers to inform the public about where food comes from and the realities of modern farming. Her commitment to agriculture has been recognised with prestigious accolades, including an Under-35 award from the Royal Northern Agricultural Society (RNAS) for her achievements, high standards of stockmanship, and efforts to promote the industry. She has also been on the telly! George and Nicola also won sheep farmer of the year 2025 at the British farming awards.

David Kerr Technical Manager, ScotEID



David will be running a workshop exploring how Scotland is adopting UHF (Ultra-High Frequency) EID by 2026. and what benefits can be felt on farms by adopting the technology such as: improving health and safety, and make for easier inspections, on farm, in transport and in markets, with the potential to phase out paper passports, reducing costs to the industry.

A bit about David:

David specialises in electronic identification (EID) for livestock, particularly cattle and deer. He provides expertise on UHF (Ultra High Frequency) technology, supporting Scottish farmers with traceability, disease control, and data management through EID tagging initiatives.

Patrick Laurie

Hill farmer, Author and Journalist



Patrick will be running a workshop exploring how farms and crofts in Scotland can play a vital role in conserving key species and how cattle grazing helps manage and maintain important habitats that these species depend on. Patrick will also demonstrate how technology can be used to identify and record the wildlife present on your farm, helping you better understand and support biodiversity on your land.

A bit about Patrick:

Passionate about farming for nature, his works, including *Native: Life in a Vanishing Landscape* and *The Black Grouse*, discuss breathing life back into his hill unit, and explore themes of nature challenges, and conflict management. He manages a herd of Blue Grey cattle and advises on ways to combine profitable agriculture with effective biodiversity stewardship.

Lorna Shaw

Ruminant Nutritionist, SAC Consulting



Lorna and Kythe MacKenzie will be running a workshop looking at how metabolic profiling can be used as a practical way to understand nutritional status in herds and flocks and highlight the types of health issues that can be identified early through metabolic profiling, often before obvious signs appear.

A bit about Lorna:

After graduating from SRUC with a BSc (Hons) in Agriculture in 2016, she began her career in feed additives before moving into beef and sheep nutrition and then completing an MSc in Ruminant Nutrition at Harper Adams in 2022. She works closely with clients to formulate rations using on-farm resources and optimise welfare, performance, and profitability, while also providing training, CPD for vets and advisors, and contributing to industry events and publications. Her role includes supporting other consultants and participating in advisory and innovation projects across the livestock sector. Outside work, she enjoys curling, visiting agricultural shows, and spending time on her family's farm in the Scottish Borders with her Jack Russell, Bea.

Kythe Mackenzie Veterinary Investigation Officer, SRUC



Kythe and Lorna Shaw will be running a workshop looking at how metabolic profiling can be used as a practical way to understand nutritional status in herds and flocks and highlight the types of health issues that can be identified early through metabolic profiling, often before obvious signs appear.

A bit about Kythe:

Kythe qualified as a vet more years ago than anyone needs to know. She has worked in Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Lake District amongst other UK locations. Her veterinary career has been very varied covering mixed practice, farm practice, health planning consultancy, and the pharmaceutical industry. She joined SRUC in May 2023 and splits her time between Inverness and Ayr hubs working as a Veterinary Investigation Officer. In this role, Kythe works at the interface of clinical veterinary practice, disease investigation, and applied research, supporting livestock health, welfare, and productivity across Scotland.

Jim Wilson Farmer and Managing Director, Soilessentials Ltd



Jim will be bringing along some of his advanced spot-spraying technology for you to see and explaining how the technology can benefit you farm. From soil health, carbon sequestration, biodiversity, pest control and expenditure.

A bit about Jim:

A leading figure in Precision Agriculture, Jim has been running the family farm at Hilton of Fern in Angus, Scotland since the early eighties. A typical Scottish Arable Farm it has hugely variable land, both in terms of soil type and topography. In 1996 he began collating data collected from a variety of soil, canopy and yield sensors. Over the years he has been an invited speaker at many conferences and congresses ranging from international agronomy meetings to farmers discussion groups. His passion for finding user friendly, practical applications for Precision Agriculture Technology is what drives him and maintaining an active role in the farm allows him to test first hand any new developments.

Steven Thomson, SRUC Professor in Agricultural Economics and Policy



Steven will provide an overview of updates on recent changes to agricultural policy from 2026 and beyond, including the new SSBSS small claim calving interval derogation, changes to the enhanced greening requirements where more businesses will need to manage Ecological Focus Areas (EFA), updated EFA options, and plans for increasing EFA requirements over time.

A bit about Steven:

Steven has over 30 years of experience in undertaking applied agricultural policy analysis and providing policy advice to Government. Steven is heavily involved in supporting the Scottish Government design future fit agricultural policy that reflects the needs of both industry and Government, building on the principles of conditional direct support. Steven uses administrative data to provide novel insights on Scotland's agricultural sector and to develop tools to assess policy proposals but also has a wide interest in all aspects relating to rural and island life.

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