

News from the Farm Advisory Service:



IN CONVERSATION WITH...



In Conversation With... Podcast

'In Conversation With...' is a monthly podcast offering a deep dive into specific parts of agriculture with a panel of guests.

This series alternates monthly between grain supply chains with Mark Bowsher-Gibbs and then sheep health with Kirsten Williams. We feature new guests on every episode, from supply chain professionals, traders, vets nutritionists and more. Listen now, to deep dive into your arable or livestock area of interest.

To find this episode, scan the QR code below or visit www.fas.scot/sounds



Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme 2024

will open for applications on 1st September 2024

Apply online, it's quick, easy and reduces ear tag errors

www.ruralpayments.org

Access funding to reduce your agricultural emissions

The Scottish Government has committed to reaching net zero emissions by 2045. As part of its Climate Change Plan, Scottish Government aims to achieve a 31% reduction in agricultural emissions (from 2018 levels) by 2032. Farms with a low carbon footprint are not only the most efficient and profitable but often perform favourably against competition and with buyers that are increasingly looking to buy from 'low carbon' suppliers.

Regardless of your farm or croft size, the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) can help you minimise your agricultural emissions whilst increasing the profitability and sustainability of your business through funding for one-to-one advice worth up

to a total of £3,700.

Access £660 worth of funding through FAS to undertake a carbon audit to understand your carbon footprint, identify emissions sources and compare business performance to others. Apply for further support worth up to £3,200 for a maximum of two specialist advice plans to help reduce agriculture emissions. Topics include climate change adaptation and mitigation, and biodiversity, habitat and landscape management.

To apply or for more information, visit www.fas.scot/advice-grants, or contact the FAS advice line at **0300 323 0161** or email advice@fas.scot

Preparing crofts and small farms for 2025 and beyond

Like all other farms, crofts and small holdings will need to have completed at least two elements of the Scottish Government's new Whole Farm Plan (WFP) before submitting their annual Single Application Form in 2025.

The WFP has five components: Animal Health & Welfare Plan (AHW), Biodiversity Audit, Carbon Audit, Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM), and Soil Analysis.

You can choose which two to complete first, based on your business needs or available funding support. The Preparing for Sustainable Farming scheme offers financial support for soil analysis and carbon audits. Soil analysis, biodiversity audits and carbon audits, need to be reviewed on a five-year cycle. Audits completed in the five years prior to May 2025 are valid for your 2025 claim.

AHW plans are required for livestock keepers, and IPM plans for those using plant protection or control products, both need annual reviews. New conditions for the Scottish Suckler Beef Scheme will also be introduced, with eligibility for support payments based on achieving a 410-day calving interval.

Additionally, new GAEC 6 standards regarding Peatlands and Wetlands will guide land maintenance. All farming businesses are encouraged to progressively implement all WFP components by 2028 to ensure compliance and continued support.

To support crofters and small holders looking for more detailed guidance, FAS will be holding a series of meetings across the crofting counties. Dates and venues will be announced shortly. Visit the FAS website or ask your local advisor for details of your nearest meeting.

Osla Jamwal-Fraser, SAC Consulting

To read our full article, please visit: www.fas.scot/article/preparing-crofts-and-small-farms-for-2025-and-beyond/

Free Events

At the Farm Advisory Service we run a range of events both online and in-person.

Visit www.fas.scot/events to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

Mineral Requirements of Finishing Lambs Webinar

Online, 4th September, 8:00pm - 9:00pm

Don't be Sheepish, Plan Ahead - Improving Flock Efficiency

Thurso, 10th September, 11:00am - 2:00pm

Farm Wildlife Walks - Stranraer

Portpatrick, 10th September, 10:00am - 1:30pm

Farm Wildlife Walks - Isle of Mull

Mull, 11th September, 12:30pm - 3:00pm

Scotland's dairy progress towards Scotland's Net Zero 2045 target

Recent Scottish Government data for agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions and nitrogen use show that the dairy sector is the third greatest contributor to Scotland's agricultural emissions. However, when comparing emissions intensity, dairy farms are lower than other livestock sectors due to their high output of milk and meat. The average dairy farm's emissions intensity is 1.5kg CO₂e/kg output.

The majority of emissions in the dairy sector (56%) come from methane from rumen fermentation, followed by manure management (22%), agricultural soils (14%), fuel combustion (6%) and liming (2%).

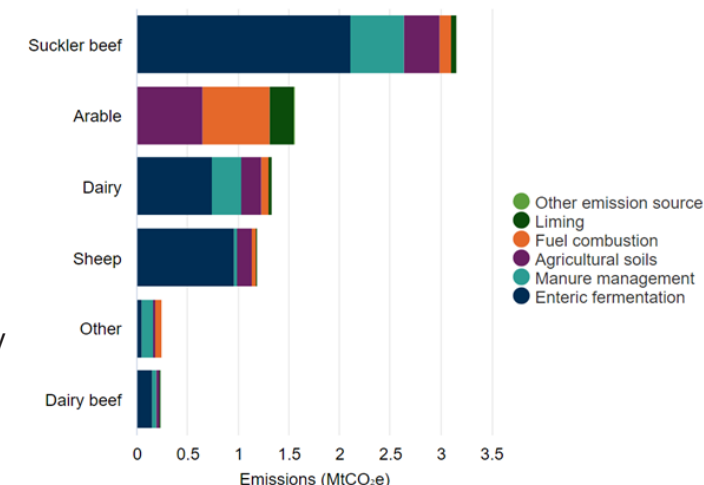


Figure 1. Sources of emissions across each sector
Source: Scottish agriculture greenhouse gas emissions and nitrogen use 2022-23.

Emissions can be reduced by the following:

- **Nutrition** - feed additives to inhibit ruminal methane production are currently being developed and tested on farms. Feeding as efficiently as possible to help reduce purchased feeds.
- **Genetics** - breeding to improve genetic merit and genomics can help ensure that all animals are producing milk as efficiently as possible.
- **Manure management** - including methods used to capture, store, treat and use animal manure e.g. covering slurry stores and use of additives.
- **Improving soil health** – reducing compaction, minimising cultivations and actively monitoring and improving soil nutrition.
- **Fossil fuel use** - mainly caused by machinery use. Ensure machinery is properly maintained, tyre pressures are correct and not having machinery idling will reduce emissions and fuel costs.
- **Liming** - maintaining optimum soil pH can help reduce fertiliser use and increase crop yields.

Although dairying has the lowest carbon footprint of all the livestock sectors, further emission reductions are required to meet the Scottish Government's 35% emissions reduction target compared to 1990 levels.

Lorna MacPherson, SAC Consulting

To read our full article, please visit:

www.fas.scot/article/scotlands-dairy-sectors-progress-towards-net-zero-2045/

Scotland's Farm Advisory Service is funded by the Scottish Government. It is delivered by SAC Consulting, part of Scotland's Rural College, and Ricardo Energy and Environment.

If you need more advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service has a range of support and help available:

Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics including cross compliance, water framework directive requirements, climate change and other technical issues call us on **0300 323 0161** or email advice@fas.scot. The advice line operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Bespoke Advice and Grants

FAS can also help you to increase the profitability and sustainability of your farming business through Scottish Government grants including Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMPs) – worth up to £2,000.

The ILMP will identify opportunities and cost savings for your business, based on an independent and confidential assessment of your business by an experienced farm business adviser of your choosing. As part of your plan you can choose to benefit from up to two further specialist advice plans.

Online

Our website contains articles, videos and much more at www.fas.scot