

# Scottish Agritourism

A Strategy for Sustainable Growth



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# Shared Vision

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## Aim

To ensure Scottish Agritourism has a long-term sustainable future that delivers a high quality, authentic visitor experience with agriculture and food and drink at its core, sustaining the future of family farms in Scotland contributing to the rural economy and positioning Scotland as a key player in global agritourism.

## Collective Commitment

To achieve this aim will require a strong collaborative effort by farming enterprises, government, communities, public agencies and organisations.

## Benefit

This strategy will have wider benefits beyond tourism and agriculture and will impact positively on the economy across Scotland.

## Delivery

The actions flowing from the strategy will be the responsibility of partners identified in the action plan.

## Ambition

To have 1,000 Scottish farming and crofting enterprises offering an agritourism experience with at least 50% providing a food and drink element by 2030.

## Sustainability

Through a responsible approach, ensure sustainability, in all of its forms, is a key strategic cross cutting theme.

# Shared Vision



Paddleboarding at Portnellan Farm © Craig Stephen/Go Rural



# Foreword by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands

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Agricultural tourism, or Agritourism as it is known, represents a fantastic growth opportunity for our rural economy; a growing consumer trend in Scotland with an increasing number of farming enterprises looking to diversify their operations.

I'm genuinely excited by this and see it as a huge area of growth. This isn't just about farmers diversifying - there are of course huge opportunities for farm businesses, but the wider picture of what we're trying to achieve across agriculture and food and drink, better connecting people to the land and showing where their food comes from.

I know this isn't just about food and drink experiences, I just use that to illustrate the point. There is so much opportunity here, we have people in Scotland taking more of an interest in where their food comes from, more people looking to stay and travel domestically. There is so much opportunity here and I want to see this strategy really help drive this exciting industry forward. There are a host of passionate farmers doing this already, this is about us taking the next step to make this a real sector of success for Scotland.

By diversifying operations, farmers and crofters generate a stable income and this, in turn, helps to sustain their businesses. But it doesn't stop there as diversified activity also provides an economic boost to the wider rural community by attracting tourists from urban areas to our countryside.

Scottish Agritourism has a long-term sustainable future that delivers a high quality, authentic visitor experience with agriculture and food and drink at its core, sustaining the future of family farms in Scotland contributing to the rural economy and positioning Scotland as a key player in global agritourism.

Activities covered are wide and varied and include amongst other things, farm tours; eating farm produce in a farm café or restaurant; adventure sports; health, relaxation and wellness activities; and children's farm experiences.

This is all the more important during the current Covid pandemic as more and more people opt for staycations and this together with the impacts of Brexit makes it all the more important that we deliver a strong Scottish Agritourism offering.

This strategy, developed by a passionate and committed group, will deliver a strategic and coordinated approach to the sustainable growth of Agritourism in Scotland to ensure the sector thrives in a responsible way.

**Mairi Gougeon,**  
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands



*'Scottish Agritourism has a long-term sustainable future that delivers a high quality, authentic visitor experience with agriculture and food and drink at its core'*

# Background and Introduction

Agritourism has become a growing consumer trend in Scotland with an increasing number of farming enterprises responding by looking to diversify their operations.

Agritourism in Scotland was defined in 2020. Leaders in the sector created a Scottish definition to be “A tourism or leisure activity on a working farm, croft or estate which produces food.” (Note that throughout this document when referring to “Farm” this includes crofts and estates).

In developing this strategy, global leaders in agritourism were identified where agritourism has a sector worth over £1 billion per annum. Subsequent research demonstrated the following:

- That it is essential that agritourism is clearly defined for the consumer as a differentiated experience from other forms of rural/countryside tourism.
- Clearly identifies what the unique Scottish version of agritourism is, linked to Scottish farming culture and food; involves an insight into the daily life of a working farm and an authentic experience.
- Involves the chance to buy and/or taste food from the farm and/or other farmers in the local area.
- That there is a strong focus on quality assurance for accommodation, experiences and food and drink.

Other countries also demonstrate that agritourism has the ability to add considerable value and employment to the smallest of farms, even around three hectares and so agritourism could clearly assist the viability of small family farms and crofts in Scotland that are perhaps most at risk from changes to farm support.

This strategy provides an opportunity to highlight Scotland’s unique food history and heritage, to enable the term agritourism to be more widely known and understood by consumers.

Agritourism in Scotland is diverse and covers a wide range of product types and experiences, resulting from a long and successful history of hospitality on Scottish farms and crofts. The following is a list of key current activity in the sector that research has confirmed. This list is designed to be indicative, not exhaustive:

- Accommodation on a farm for an overnight stay – farmhouse B&B, farm cottages and farmhouses, lodges, glamping pods, camping & caravan parks.
- Things to do for a day out include farm tours, seasonal lambing tours, wildlife, adventure sports/ water sports, childrens’ farm parks/activities.
- The eating out experience on a farm includes farm cafés, takeaway on-farm food.



The Infield, Guardswell Farm



Newton Farm Holidays

© Craig Stephen / Go Rural Scotland

# Background and Introduction continued...

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- Farm shops which are either for weekly shopping and/or a leisure shopping experience, butchery on farm and an increasing number of farmers selling produce direct either on farm or online.
- On-farm events are represented by pick your own, pumpkin and tattie harvest festivals with several businesses now tapping into the weddings and business events markets with dedicated facilities.
- A small number of operators are offering workcations “be a farmer for a day.”

Currently there are very few accommodation providers offering meals or food from the farm, almost no agritourism hotels or restaurants with rooms, almost no farm cafés or restaurants opening to visitors in the evening and only a handful of operators working with the travel trade.

A strong Scottish agritourism offering provides a wide range of benefits to society including:

- Sustaining family farms with self-generation of farm income; keeping multiple generations of farming families on farm in employment.
- Allowing landscapes to be maintained for food production and for the benefit of society and our tourism sector.

*\*Active farming means undertaking agricultural activity. For this purpose, a farmer is a natural or legal person (or a group of natural or legal persons). They must also exercise an agricultural activity. An agricultural activity must include the production, rearing or growing of agricultural products, including harvesting, milking, breeding animals and keeping animals for farming purposes. If eligible parties have land which is naturally kept in a state suitable for cultivation and grazing (essentially all land in Payment Regions Two and Three) and it represents more than half of the holding (inclusive of any seasonal land) they must also meet rules on exercising a minimum activity. Planting new trees under an approved forestry scheme does not meet the minimum agricultural activity requirements of active farmer considerations. Details on what is eligible and what counts as minimum activity can be found here: [Eligible hectares and minimum agricultural activity](http://Eligible hectares and minimum agricultural activity) ([ruralpayments.org](http://ruralpayments.org)).*

- Opportunity to address the gender imbalance in farm ownership and decision making.
- Combating isolation and loneliness of farmers.
- Providing access for local and urban Scottish populations as well as visitors to green space, nature, health improvement, safe walking routes, fresh food and drink, tangible and intangible cultural rural heritage, education for both children and adults and cookery skills.
- Promoting sustainable tourism by diverting tourists from hot spots to quieter areas, synergies with other forms of tourism such as cultural, cycling, hiking, sailing, outdoor.
- Supporting fragile rural areas and remote communities.

There already exists in Scotland a strong, pro-active and well-connected network of farmers with an interest in agritourism, that have been working together since around 2008.

Working with that network, the Go Rural brand illustrates that agritourism businesses are active\* working farms. Scottish Government defines the minimum size of a farm as three hectares.



# Size and Growth Potential of the Sector

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It is known that there are around 500 businesses currently operating in the sector.

The first Agritourism Growth Tracker was completed in August 2021 and the data collected from this study provides a series of emerging themes around employment, growth potential, profitability and characteristics of the sector. Significantly, initial findings suggest the profitability associated with agritourism far exceeded that reported for farm activities. Pre-pandemic agritourism businesses received 550,000 visitors. (The full report is provided as Appendix 2).

There are several other data sources that help build a picture of the sector, these are fully outlined in Appendix 3.

International best practice benchmarking is an action in the strategy. The strategy development benefited from the input of three international experts in agritourism from Italy, Austria and Canada.

As well as the huge impact that COVID 19 has had on all sectors of the economy, the consequences of Brexit are also now manifesting themselves in the supply chain and the changes to Government support for agriculture are about to be announced. The time is right for work initiated on agritourism to be further developed and implemented.



# Core Strategic Objectives

To develop a Scottish Agritourism offering based on food and drink and farm experiences.

To attract, develop and retain a skilled, committed, and diverse workforce, both family employment on farm and employees.

To create, develop and promote a thriving and responsible sector.

To provide quality, unique, and memorable market led experiences.

To build financially sustainable, profitable, and resilient businesses and to play a key role in sustaining the future of Scottish agriculture.



Boutique Farm Bothies



Ogilvy Spirits

# Key Audiences for the Strategy

Farming and crofting businesses already involved in agritourism who wish to expand or are considering a tourism related diversification.

Farming and crofting businesses who wish to start selling food and drink direct.

Policy and strategy teams within Scottish and UK Government.

Public agencies with tourism, agriculture or food and drink commitments to sustainable economic growth.

Any other organisations that aspire to develop agritourism in Scotland.



Glamping at Portnellan Farm © Craig Stephen / Go Rural Scotland



Anna Mitchell Castleton Farm Shop © Craig Stephen/Go Rural

# Strategic Context

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Part of the rationale behind this strategy relates to a closer working between the different Scottish Government policy areas and the sector. This will enhance collaborative working and help to deliver relevant government policy and economic growth ambitions while at the same time recognising the need for a distinct complementary strategy for agritourism.

The overarching strategic context for this document is set by the current national tourism strategy “Scotland Outlook 2030”, Ambition 2030 Scotland’s Food Tourism strategy, developing recommendations on the future strategy for Scottish Agriculture, the current consultation on a Local Food Strategy.

The Scotland Food and Drink recovery plan specifically highlights how agritourism can help stimulate demand in key markets and drive sales of local/ Scottish food and drink.

It is important to identify good practice from other countries around the world which could be adapted to assist the growth of agritourism in Scotland.

As part of its priorities for Government, within the first 100 days of the new parliamentary session, the Scottish Government committed to providing support for the food and drink and tourism sectors. This has been further strengthened in the 2021/22 Programme for Government document published in September 2021.

# Strategic Framework and Priorities

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## Purpose

To deliver a strategic and coordinated approach to the sustainable growth of Agritourism in Scotland to ensure the sector thrives in a responsible way.

## Vision

That Scotland is a leader in 21st century Agritourism within a thriving responsible visitor economy.

## Aim

To ensure Scottish Agritourism has a long term sustainable future that delivers a high quality, authentic visitor experience with agriculture and food and drink at its core, sustaining the future of family farms in Scotland, contributing to the rural economy and positioning Scotland as a key player in global agritourism.

# Our Values

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## **Ambitious**

Agritourism in Scotland is developed in a bold, innovative and inclusive manner.

## **Outward-Looking**

With a strong international focus the strategy will learn from experiences in other countries, build connections across the globe and position Scotland as a leader in agritourism.

## **Community Focused**

Growth of Scottish Agritourism respects our communities and their people and will work with them to create assets that benefits the country.



## **Innovative**

The strategy will help create new, quality, market led, products and experiences.

## **Collaborative**

The strategy and action plan will be developed and owned through collaboration with a coalition of willing partners and including agritourism businesses.

# Key Enablers

Development of a strong **agri experience** based on farming and food and drink, differentiating the customer experience from other rural tourism offerings.

Local **processing** and on farm food and drink processing to facilitate provision of farm produce retail and tasting experiences.

**Policy development** both at UK and Scottish level that supports and allows all aspects of agritourism to flourish.

Investment in **technology** that enhances the visitor experience and adds value to agritourism businesses.

**Passionate people** who drive innovation and who are effective leaders.

Protection and enhancement of our natural **environment and farming culture.**

**Strategic partnerships** to enhance the benefits to both farming enterprises and associated partners.

Directing and influencing **investment** in the sector aligned to the strategic core purpose.

Investment in the **Go Rural brand** to grow sector awareness with consumers.



Old Leckie Farm



Carry Farm



Best Cafés

# Five Strategic Priorities

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**1**

**Attracting, developing and retaining a skilled, committed and diverse workforce**

**2**

**Creating, developing and promoting a thriving and responsible sector**

**3**

**Providing quality, unique and memorable market-led experiences**

**4**

**Building financially sustainable, profitable, and resilient businesses to sustain Scottish agriculture**

**5**

**To develop an offering based on food and drink and farm experiences**



# Outline Actions

## 1 Attracting, developing and retaining a skilled, committed and diverse workforce

1. Creating employment and reversing rural de-population
2. Invest in further peer to peer knowledge transfer including monitor farms
3. Create capital investment programmes directed and targeted towards agritourism businesses
4. Build on foundations of strong leadership skills in the sector via Rural Leadership Programme graduates
5. Develop an apprenticeship programme for agritourism
6. Promote agritourism as a career opportunity for young people

## 2 Creating, developing and promoting a thriving and responsible sector

1. Consider what benefits would be gained by agritourism being defined in law as agriculture
2. Work collaboratively with Scottish government to influence and help deliver relevant policy and economic growth ambitions
3. Work with leaders in other UK countries to build the case for UK policies to support agritourism e.g. VAT/ tax rates
4. Create capital investment programmes for agritourism which are only eligible for activities which reflect the ambition for sector offering and consumer demand
5. Ongoing Scottish and international benchmarking
6. Deliver a comprehensive marketing plan and quality/ farm assurance for the sector
7. Provide leadership to the sector and unite businesses to drive growth and quality offerings
8. Sustainability and net zero contribution

## 3 Providing quality, unique and memorable market-led experiences

1. Product development based on consumer demand and focussed on quality and the unique food and farm experience
2. Provide human and capital resource to develop facilities and products specifically for the travel trade
3. Rich storytelling linked to high quality welfare and farm produce, the history of farm hospitality, authentic people, stunning landscapes, and farming culture
4. Undertaking learning journeys to other countries to learn about quality agritourism experiences
5. Promote agritourism businesses as places to visit for exercise, access green spaces and help visitors understand responsible tourism
6. Offer an experience which is both inclusive and supports the wider government Fair Work agenda
7. Capital support for proposals that help contribute to and promote to visitors net zero actions
8. Support for projects that link agritourism and Scotland's natural capital story

## 4 Building financially sustainable, profitable, and resilient businesses to sustain Scottish agriculture

1. Highlight agritourism as a potential source of additional income for a family farm thereby helping to alleviate the impact of subsidy changes
2. Identify perceived barriers to growth and solutions
3. Support businesses through a tracked growth pipeline to ensure businesses are market ready and to monitor sector impact
4. Influence government funding priorities by highlighting the opportunities that would accrue from supporting the agritourism sector
5. Ensure that agritourism is seen as an effective market led opportunity
6. Facilitate women to become decision makers and owners in the farming or associated farm tourism enterprise

## 5 To develop an offering based on food and drink and farm experiences

1. Ensure provision of local processing and on farm food and drink processing
2. Promote Agritourism properties as the places to “go to” to visit, buy high quality/ welfare farm food and drink, and taste great food
3. Capital grants aligned to developing food and drink storage, processing, cookery schools, kitchens, BBQ areas to support food and drink agritourism
4. Align with the Scottish Government initiative which focusses on buying local
5. Ensure that agritourism plays its part in delivering the national Food and Drink Tourism Strategy



# Action Plan

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Feeding lambs, Lennox of Lomond Farm Tours

An action plan to support delivery of this strategy is nearing completion. The next step is to prioritise these actions and identify the lead supporting partners with specific responsibility for delivery of each action.

The plan will be framed in a series of short (within the first year), medium (two to five years) and long (five to ten years) term timescales.

To oversee and drive progress and delivery of the plan it is recommended that a strategy implementation group, made up of key agencies and agritourism businesses chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands is created once the strategy is launched.

# Agritourism Growth Strategy Steering Group

Name	Organisation	Position
Caroline Millar	Scottish Agritourism and The Hideaway Experience	Sector Lead & Sector Representative
Kay Wilson	Lennox of Lomond, Argyll	Owner and Sector Representative
Robert Wilson	Wilson's Farm and Kitchen, Scottish Borders	Owner and Sector Representative
Alisa Currie	Bellevue Farm Cottages & Tours, Arran	Owner and Sector Representative
Anna Lamotte	Guardswell Farm, Perthshire	Owner and Sector Representative
Aimee Budge	Bigton Farm, Shetland	Owner and Sector Representative
Riddell Graham		Former Director of Industry and Destination Development, VisitScotland
Ken Massie	VisitScotland	Head of Regional Leadership and Development
Neil Ross	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Head of Community Growth Team
Julian Pace	Scottish Enterprise	Head of Partnerships
Kate Dagg	South of Scotland Enterprise	Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement
Fiona Richmond	Scotland Food and Drink	Head of Regional Food
Jonathon Hall	NFU Scotland	Head of Policy
Malcolm Mathieson	Crofting Commission	Convenor
Trevor Jonas Benson	Bannikin Travel & Tourism	CEO and Canadian Agritourism Representative
Thomas Philipp Streifeneder, P.H.D	Eurac Research	Head of Institute for Rural Development Industry Representative, Italy
Hans Embacher Mag	Holidays on the Farm	Industry Representative, Austria

# Case Studies

## case study one

### Scottish Enterprise Agritourism Monitor Farm Programmes

This programme provides a key route to facilitate knowledge exchange and skills development in the sector by both supporting existing agritourism businesses and new start-ups.

Two programmes of 18 months in duration took place in 2014/15, then a further two programmes of three years commenced in 2019, these are due to end in March 2022.

As part of the programme a core community group of around 20 businesses receive additional support as well as the monitor farmers.

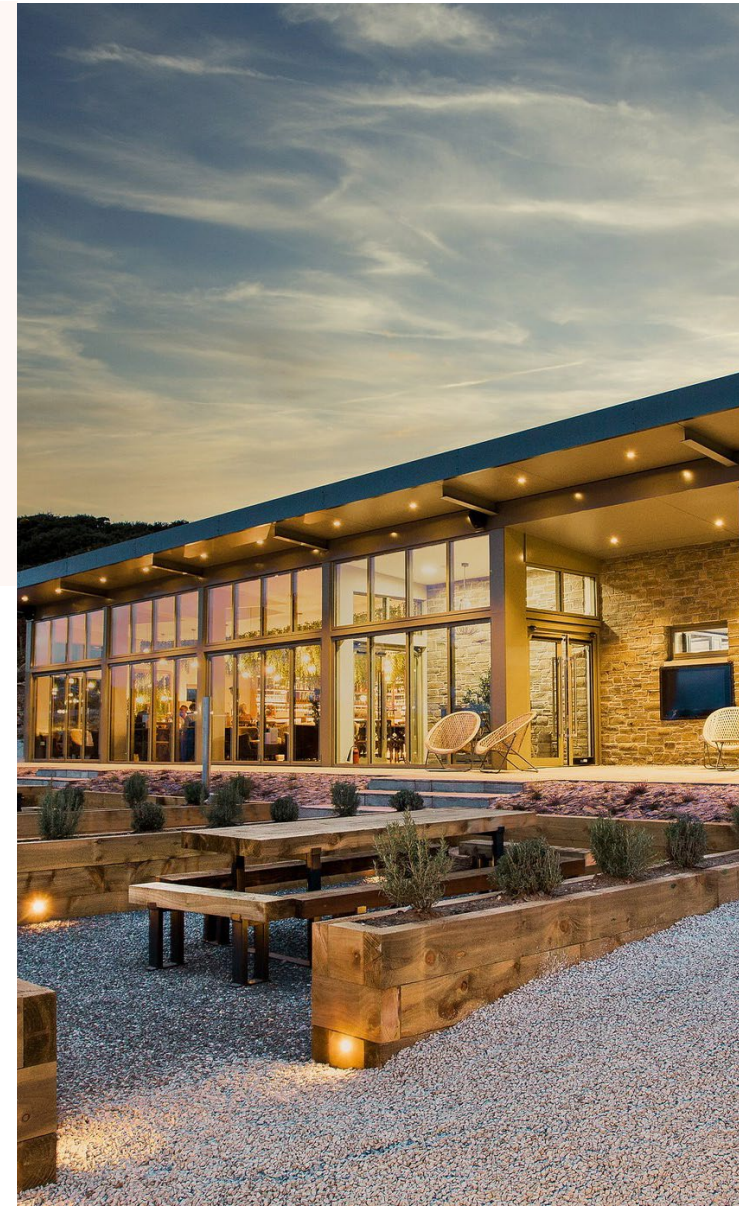
During Covid the meetings went online, this allowed people from throughout Scotland to join in e.g. Scottish islands.

Scottish Enterprise supported phase 1 of the new Go Rural website in January 2021 as an e-commerce knowledge project to share the experience with businesses.

There is clear evidence that the programme has facilitated business and financial growth.

#### ***The McConchie Family, Laggan Farm, Dumfries and Galloway, 2014/15 Scottish Enterprise Agritourism Monitor Farmers***

Laggan and Mossyard farms produce Scotch beef and Scotch lamb, and at the time of starting the programme had a well-established caravan site and an outdoor adventure business. Succession of the family business was identified as a key priority. The business was split into three separate companies with each of the three brothers in the business, John, Murray and Duncan taking a share of assets. The support of the programme to do this has led to significant business growth and innovation with the investment by all three brothers in new accommodation. Duncan and his wife Vicki have invested in a bespoke wedding and events venue and a new restaurant. The whole farm site is home to 15 family members across three generations; 48 full time and 30 part-time people are employed, most of these are within Laggan Life.



## case study two

### **Scottish Agritourism During Covid**

Lockdown saw the first agritourism support meeting with up to 70 businesses meeting online each week for Covid support and advice.

The sector decided to start live lambing tours to engage public at home – which attracted up to 200 families watching live and 1,000 per day on catch up. As a result of this initial success VisitScotland offered to help to continue tours via “Welcome to my Farm”.

On 1st June 2020 this initial informal network was formalised into Scottish Agritourism, and has operated under the umbrella of the Scottish Tourism Alliance (STA).

Scottish Agritourism has represented the sector providing data, raising concerns and conveying issues on the ground with members to Government via the STA, Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group (STERG) and through direct meetings with relevant Cabinet Secretaries.

There are currently 130 active members of Scottish Agritourism and the organisation is undertaking work around governance and funding with a view to creating a stand-alone entity by the end of the next financial year in March 2022.

### ***Fiona and John Scott, Fearn Farm, Easter Ross, Highlands***

Fearn Farm produces Scotch lamb, Scotch beef and cereals and opened a new luxury self-catering house on the farm in early 2020 as Covid-19 struck. Having invested in a new venture and starting off in agritourism for the first time, being able to be part of a strong pan-Scotland network for advice and support was a life-line. John and Fiona took part in several live farm tours, attracting audiences from across the globe. Learning a new skill “going live” helped to market the business and secured bookings. Fiona is a Destination Leader for Scottish Agritourism and helped to organise a regional online event for farmers and crofters across the Highlands and Islands.



## case study three

### VisitScotland and Scottish Agritourism

As part of a pilot project VisitScotland (VS) allocated a member of staff to support Scottish Agritourism (SA) one day per week from June 2020. This collaboration has given VS quick easy access to a network of 130 businesses and has given SA quick easy access to a wide range of VS support.

This support has included extensive positive PR, recruiting more businesses on to visitscotland.com, becoming travel trade ready with listings on the travel trade section of visitscotland.com, taking part in Scotland Re-Connect, jointly supporting businesses to be online bookable, supporting the live tours and PR/social associated with these, a joint campaign with VS, SA and QMS in the Times,

Sunday Times and The Sun, support with Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), visitor experience for the new Go Rural website.

VS have also supported the sector with the development and delivery of the Growth Tracker to start to annually measure the types and numbers of businesses in the sector.

As a result of all the above activity there is now an industry pipeline, tracking businesses across key areas and supporting them on a daily basis, to complement the monthly monitor farm meetings.

#### ***Lennox Family, Lennox of Lomond, Argyll, took part in QMS, Go Rural and VisitScotland Campaign***

The Lennox family produce Scotch lamb and Scotch beef on their 5,000-acre tenanted hill farm which has been in the family for 11 generations, since 1750. The farm tour business is now fully “travel trade” ready, now promoting their farm tour offering more professionally to the travel trade sector and listed on visitscotland.org. Kay Wilson took part in Scotland Re-Connect to market directly to the travel trade. The Lennox family were featured with others as part of the QMS, Go Rural and VisitScotland campaign to visit a Scottish farm and have an experience and enjoy Scotch beef. This resulted in coverage in the Sunday Times and new bookings both for farm tours and accommodation. The Lennox family are also one of the current Scottish Enterprise agritourism monitor farming families and the learning from this enhanced marketing support has been shared with a wide network of other businesses via the programme.



## case study four

### Scottish Agritourism – the Organisation

There are currently 200 individual business members gained over the past year, representing 130 businesses.

Over 40 members have one or both owners who are graduates of the Scottish Enterprise Rural Leadership Programme.

15 Destination Leaders across the whole of Scotland working closely with local businesses, destination organisations and food groups to ensure agritourism develops in all areas of Scotland.

### ***Ailsa Currie, Bellevue Farm, Arran, Destination Leader for Ayrshire and Arran***

Bellevue Farm is located on the island of Arran and produces Scotch beef, Scotch lamb, turkeys, eggs with much of this produce being sold directly. Ailsa Currie and her family also run self-catering holidays and have recently developed a new on-farm event space to host farm tours and events including farmers markets. Ailsa is one example of a member who is both enjoying being part of a positive, growing network and benefiting from being part of a group of entrepreneurial farmers and leaders working together. Along with many other members, Ailsa is a graduate of the Scottish Enterprise Rural Leadership Programme. She is also the Destination Leader for Ayrshire and Arran, plays an active role in the Arran community and has recently been appointed a Food Tourism Ambassador. Ailsa is one just one example of how effective leadership make a significant impact to both a business, a sector and a destination.



## case study five

### Go Rural

Go Rural is the consumer facing brand of Scottish Agritourism, building a thriving community movement of Scotland's farmers and crofters who are passionate about producing the highest quality food and drink, and who are committed to caring for the environment and protecting Scotland's landscapes for everyone to enjoy responsibly.

In creating a new consumer facing website, Go Rural will promote all types of quality agritourism businesses from across Scotland who offer locals and visitors alike high quality and memorable experiences.

### *Jane and James Foad, Boutique Farm Bothies, Aberdeenshire*

Jane and James Foad produce Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb, cereals and strawberries on their family farm near Huntly in Aberdeenshire. Jane and James are one example of an agritourism business using the Go Rural brand to both enhance the experience for guests who love the “funky cow” but by doing so reinforce the association of the Go Rural brand with a quality experience on a real working farm. The brand is used on road signs, on branded clothing, on welcome packs of home baking, on the business's own website. Jane and James have also taken part in various Go Rural live tours on the facebook page and in general are great ambassadors for the brand and for Scottish Agritourism. In turn they have received bookings via Go Rural. Replicating this across agritourism businesses in Scotland would drive consumer awareness and drive visitors to visit multiple farms.



# Appendices

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## Appendix 1 | Detail on Actions submitted by Growth Strategy Group

### Passionate people

#### Summary Action in Main Table

- 1 Creating employment and reverse rural de-population.
- 2 Invest in further peer to peer knowledge transfer programmes including monitor farms.
- 3 Create specific capital investment programme for agritourism businesses.
- 4 Build on strong leadership skills in the sector via Rural Leadership Programme graduates.
- 5 Develop an apprentice programme for agritourism.
- 6 Promote agritourism as a career opportunity for young people.

#### Key Points from Contributions

- Integrating agritourism into rural de-population policies.
- Build on the success of the Scottish Enterprise Agritourism monitor farm programme by working with Scottish Enterprise and other agencies to invest in future monitor farm programmes.
- Build on the investment and impact made over the last few years.
- Facilitate ongoing daily peer to peer learning, connecting and collaborating aided by digital technology.
- Specific programme for agritourism.
- Create programmes directed and targeted towards creation of employment for family members and to sustain the family farm, as well as external employees.
- Strong focus on leadership to unite and motivate the sector and new entrants.
- International focus on building the profile of Scotland globally in agritourism, building networks.
- Apprenticeship programme would involve work experience on the farm, combined with exposure to the food and drink supply chain, along with appropriate hospitality/tourism experience, all leading to a recognised qualification.
- Work with Skills Development Scotland and Springboard and other agencies to promote agritourism a career choice.



## Thriving Sector

### Summary Action in Main Table

- 1 Consider what benefits would be gained by agritourism being defined in law as agriculture.

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- 2 Work collaboratively with Scottish Government to influence and help deliver relevant policy and economic growth ambitions.

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- 3 Work with leaders in other countries to build case for UK policies to support agritourism e.g. VAT/tax rates.

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- 4 Create capital investment programmes for agritourism which are geared towards activities which meet consumer demand and reflect the ambition of the sector offering.

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- 5 Ongoing Scottish and international bench-marking.

### Key Points from Contributions

This would include permitted planning legislation for agritourism, same as agriculture and other areas.

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Ensure agritourism is included in local development plans.

Recognised that agritourism can relate to local, regional and national policy objectives.

Define the value of agritourism to society and economy in terms of revenue and jobs supported/created, inclusive growth, fair work, quality of life and sustainability.

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Targeted at developing experiences, food and drinks sales, accommodation with food and drink offering.

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VisitScotland annual growth tracker to measure KPIs in the sector.

Growth pipeline data from VisitScotland and Scottish Agritourism i.e. number of businesses quality/farm assured, listed on Go Rural/VisitScotland, travel trade ready, type of business and offering.

Condition of receiving a capital grant to have business performance tracked to see impact of grant.

International benchmarking working with other countries to share and receive data annually, identify global trends, ensure Scotland is fulfilling its potential compared to other countries.

Consider what international interventions and policies have worked well and which could be adopted for use in Scotland.

## Thriving Sector continued...

### Summary Action in Main Table

- 6 Deliver a comprehensive marketing plan and quality/farm assurance for the sector.

- 
- 7 Provide leadership for the sector and unite businesses to drive growth and quality offerings.

- 
- 8 Sustainability and net zero target contribution.

### Key Points from Contributions

Using the Go Rural brand and working closely with VisitScotland, develop and deliver a comprehensive marketing plan for the sector to attract immediate local market, Scottish urban market, UK domestic and international.

Use the Go Rural brand to “farm assure” consumers and visitors they are visiting a real working farm, adopted by all agencies.

Highlight the importance of agritourism as a daily/weekly/monthly activity for locals to buy food or access the outdoors.

International brand building.

Marketing to the travel trade.

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Build on the success of the Scottish Enterprise Agritourism monitor farm programme by working with Scottish Enterprise and other agencies to invest in future monitor farm programmes.

Build on the investment and impact made over the last few years.

Facilitate ongoing daily peer to peer learning, connecting and collaborating aided by digital technology.

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Clarity on how agritourism can contribute to national and international net zero targets.

Explore complementary environmental and biodiversity good practices being undertaken by the farming business which can benefit the agritourism side of the business.

Develop a tool to capture the environmental benefit and impact of agritourism businesses.

## Quality Experiences

### Summary Action in Main Table

- 1 Product development based on consumer demand and focused on quality and the unique food and farm experience.

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- 2 Provide human and capital resource to develop facilities and products specifically for the travel trade.

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- 3 Rich storytelling linked to high quality welfare and farm produce, the history of farm hospitality, authentic people, stunning landscapes, and farming culture.

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- 4 Undertaking learning journeys to other countries to learn about quality agritourism experiences.

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- 5 Promote agritourism businesses as places to visit for exercise, access green spaces, and help visitors to understand responsible tourism.

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- 6 Offer an experience which is both inclusive and supports the wider government Fair Work agenda.

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- 7 Capital support for proposals that help contribute to and promote to visitors net zero actions.

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- 8 Support for projects that link agritourism and Scotland's natural capital story.

### Key Points from Contributions

Analyse the demand and supply for accommodation on farms by type, identifying gaps e.g. restaurants with rooms, accommodation with food and drink.

Identify over provision or under provision of certain types of agritourism accommodation if any, by region.

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Resource to assist businesses be travel trade ready and to market to the travel trade.

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Recognise the value that intangible cultural food and agricultural heritage has for tourism.

Use the unique characteristics of Scottish agritourism as opportunities to differentiate the experience/ offering to visitors.

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Share best practice both within Scotland and best practice found internationally.

Work with Interface and the enterprise agencies to ensure there is a culture of innovation and product development in Scottish agritourism.

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Also a place for mental and physical health improvement.

Use agritourism businesses as a location and experience to educate schoolchildren and their families in the importance of agriculture as a source of food and drink.

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## Diverse Businesses

### Summary Action in Main Table

- 1 Highlight agritourism as a potential source of additional income for a family farm thereby helping to alleviate the impact of subsidy changes.

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- 2 Identify perceived barriers to growth and solutions.

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- 3 Support businesses through a tracked growth pipeline to ensure businesses are market ready and to track sector impact.

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- 4 Influence government funding priorities by highlighting the opportunities that would accrue from supporting the sector.

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- 5 Ensure that agritourism is seen as an effective market led opportunity.

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- 6 Facilitate women to become decision makers and owners in the farming or associated farm tourism enterprise.

### Key Points from Contributions

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Provide advice to new entrants or those wishing to grow.

Data on market demand, types of agritourism in demand, consumer trends, regional demand/supply to inform investment decisions.

Health and safety training/risk assessments, environmental training/procedures are two examples of interventions required so that perceived risk of undertaking an activity is reduced.

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Joint growth pipeline with VisitScotland and private sector businesses.

Tracking various progress areas e.g. farm assured, quality assured, listed on VisitScotland and Go Rural, travel trade ready, online bookable.

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## Supply Chain

### Summary Action in Main Table

- 1 Ensure that agritourism plays its part in delivering the national Food and Drink Tourism Strategy.

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- 2 Ensure provision of local processing and on farm food and drink processing.

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- 3 Promote Agritourism farms as the place “to go” to visit, buy high quality/high welfare farm food and drink and taste great food.

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- 4 Capital grants aligned to developing food and drink storage, processing, cookery schools, kitchens, BBQ areas to support food and drink tourism.

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- 5 Align with Scottish Government initiative which focuses on buying local.

### Key Points from Contributions

Exploit the opportunities to collaborate with the network of Scotland’s regional food groups.  
Take advantage of the Food Tourism Ambassador programme.

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Encourage visitation to Scottish farms to stimulate demand for Scottish farm produce.

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## Appendix 2 | Growth Tracker Report

The Baseline tracker can be found at [Scotland's Agritourism Growth Strategy | VisitScotland.org](#)

## Appendix 3 | Data sources on Agritourism

VisitScotland data records over 500 businesses on working farms listed on [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com) with around 50% part of VisitScotland's Quality Assurance Scheme

Farms which have received Farm business development programme, SRDP, Leader funding to support agritourism development in past 20 years

Case study data from Scottish Agritourism Members (125)

VisitScotland insight for consumer trends <https://www.visitscotland.org/research-insights/trends/trends-for-tomorrow>

Case study data from Scottish Enterprise Agritourism Monitor Farm Programme

SE Agritourism MF impact reports - <https://agritourism-monitorfarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Agritourism>

MF-Year-1-Meeting-Report-FINAL-1.pdf - <https://agritourism-monitorfarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Agritourism>

2016 Scottish Enterprise funded economic impact report

Scottish Enterprise funded study into agritourism in Scotland from 2016

Scotland Food and Drink Partnership's Knowledge Bank Service - <https://foodanddrink.scot/the-knowledge-bank>

It is clear that gaps still exist, and the following are felt to be important to build a more complete picture both of the sector and its growth potential:

- Consumer insights data from existing customers
- Demand data from travel trade to build for demand – building on some basic insights
- Contribution to women in agriculture/business ownership of agritourism