

Investing in Innovation

SAYFC Agri & Rural Affair Conference 2025

Full Schedule

Conference kindly supported by:



Friday

4pm	Registration	
5:45pm	Arrival	Drinks / Networking SPEnergy Safety display and meet and greet members area NFUS stand - membership launch for SAYFC Members QMS stand – promoting Lamb for St

		Andrews Day and Scottish products
6:15pm	Welcome Address Sponsored by QMS & IAAS	Welcome by Agri Chair Fraser Graham Guest Speakers Anna MacKinnon – QMS Make it Scotch Ambassador Anna is a full-time shepherdess on an estate in Perthshire. She is passionate about educating adults and children on farming and food production. She runs an Instagram page, The Cheferdess, where she shares recipes and tips to help people understand where their food comes from, as well as the benefits of using local and seasonal produce. Abby Goldie – Community Engagement Co-ordinator, QMS Abby works with schools, sports teams, and community groups to organise events promoting the red meat industry and the role of Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb, and Specially Selected Pork as part of a healthy, balanced diet. She also helps deliver the Meat Voucher Scheme and the Lamb for St Andrew's Campaign.
6:45pm	'Lamb For St Andrews Day' Dinner Sponsored by QMS & IAAS	
7:30pm	After Dinner Speaker	Keir Doe, Renewables Connect Keir is a surveyor and Perthshire farmer. In addition and following on from setting up his consultancy business Keir + Co, which advises and assists farmers, Keir founded Renewables

		Connect in 2024 – a online Platform, which connects landowners who are looking to explore renewable energy rental opportunities on their land (e.g. wind turbines, solar panels, battery storage, hydrogen etc) with renewable energy developers who are looking for renewable projects sites. Keir's Platform enables landowners to promote their land directly to renewable developers at no cost or obligation. In a nutshell...Tinder for Renewables!
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Saturday

9am	Farm Tour Bus Departs 9am Tour Ends 11am	Girvan Mains (by kind permission of A Young) South Ayrshire-based James Young farms at Girvan Mains, with a 450-strong herd of beef cows and an additional 2000 –2500 stores. Angus, Saler and Limousin cows are run by Charolais bulls, with Angus and Salers put on heifers and first calvers. The system focuses on productivity, getting top quality beef-bred calves to finished weight as quickly as possible. Investing in an anaerobic digester in 2016, and a ground source heat pump in 2019 for drying crop, primarily grass, which is then used in the enterprise’s TMR, further investing in a weight head and hydraulic cattle crushes has made it simpler and safer to work with larger numbers, as well as making it easy for the data collection, with poor performers identified and culled out. This has made his operation more efficient and has allowed James to increase his finishing capacity by up to 400. To maximise herd health, James works very closely with his veterinary team, and has developed a vaccine specifically for his holdings as a way to reduce losses. Nutrition is
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		central to the rearing process, but James maintains that correctly breeding animals in the first instance makes it easier to meet final market specifications.
11:30am	Site Visit Tour Begins 11:45am Tour Ends 12:45am	ATV Services Visit to ATV Services new depot in Ayr, come and see what some of the new products and designs re coming to the market and learn how ATV services are staying a step ahead of their competitors with their own Investments for the future.
1-1:30pm	Lunch	
1:30 - 5:30pm	SAC Workshop Facilitators James Orr & Alexander Pirie	This session will be based around Business Resilience. Alexander Pirie is a senior consultant and area manager for SAC Consulting based at Auchincruive in Ayrshire. Alex has been a consultant with the company now for a decade blends a dairy background with strong interests in climate change, carbon and conservation planning. He services around 120 clients within his office catchment and works increasingly across southwest Scotland. He is the host of the Thrill of the Hill podcast for the Scottish Farm Advisory Service (FAS) and represents various other groups in farming, including the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), Farming and Water Scotland (FWS) and sits on the Land Use and Environment Committee for the National Farmers Union for Scotland (NFUS).
	Galbraith Workshop	Session featuring Investment in land, Land

	Facilitators Alice Wilson & Christina Smith	values, valuations and what are the key features that are delivering a sale price far above the market values. Alice Wilson is a Senior Associate working across southwest Scotland, advising clients on a wide range of matters including farm sales, valuations, rural tenancies, strategic estate management, and infrastructure and utility projects. She is dedicated to providing trusted advice and practical solutions tailored to the diverse and unique needs of her rural clients. Beyond her professional role, Alice is Vice Chairperson of the National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) South Ayrshire Branch and serves on the committee for the Ayr Agricultural Show. Outside of work, Alice is an active sports enthusiast, playing hockey for Ayr Hockey Club and rugby for Ayr RFC. Christina Smith joined Galbraith in September 2022 and is a qualified Rural Surveyor. She is primarily involved in valuations, sales, and estate management, as well as a broad range of other rural professional work. Christina has served on the Agri-Rural Affairs Committee for three years and is passionate about advocating for the next generation of young farmers, helping to ensure a prosperous future for the agricultural industry. Originally from a dairy farm in Kintyre, Christina enjoys returning home regularly to lend a hand on the family farm.
	Cefetra Workshop Facilitators	

	Jason Hayward-Jones Philip Storey Rebecca McKirgan	
	RBS & Lombard Workshop Facilitators Emma Cowie	
Afternoon	Top Gun Challenge	BASC
7:00pm	Dinner	
8:00pm	Panel Debate “Gadgets, Gimmicks or Game Changers”	With Panellists: Calum Smith joined Galbraith as an Associate in November 2023 and is an Agricultural consultant throughout Scotland. His main job roles include agricultural estate/ farm management, Grant applications and management, farm tenders and Carbon audit's. Calum's role allows him to work with a broad range of clients and farming systems which gives him a good insight into the Agricultural industry's needs. Out with work Calum owns his own farming enterprise in South Ayrshire, he runs Herds of Pedigree Hereford and Aberdeen Angus cattle along with a commercial sheep enterprise. Other than farming Calum is an avid sports enthusiast playing rugby, golf, football, and many other sports. Emma Cowie (RBS) Jason Hayward-Jones (Cefetra)

Sunday

10:30am	Farm Tour Tour begins 10:30am	Auchinbay (by kind permission of D Morton) David Morton is a third-generation farmer from Ayrshire. The family's farming journey in the area began in 1969 when David's grandfather secured a tenancy on a 72-acre farm near Ochiltree called Low Carston. David's father, originally a part-time joiner, returned home to assist his own father, who had mobility issues. In 1976, when David was just six years old, his father had the opportunity to purchase Low Carston from the landlord. Recognizing the need for more land, David's father expanded the operation in 1988 by purchasing Auchinbay—a well-equipped, 200-acre dairy farm located just a mile down the road. David vividly recalls the day they walked 70 cows along the main road to their new farm—the very day he left school. The family's ambition and growth continued. In 2009, they acquired Barturk, a 145-acre dairy farm, which enabled them to further increase their herd. In 2023, they privately purchased Millerston Farm, a neighbouring property. This acquisition marked a significant
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		investment, including land, a 50-point GEA rotary parlour, and facilities to accommodate an additional 250 cows. From humble beginnings, the family has steadily built their enterprise. Today, David, alongside his wife Gillian and their two sons, Jack and Jamie, farms 750 acres, milking 600 cows. Reflecting on their journey, David said: “Every single step of the way was hard work, with its highs and lows—but so far, we have enjoyed every step!” Note delegates will use their own transport as bus not provided.
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