

# The Monitor Farm Scotland Programme



## What is the Monitor Farm Programme?

The aim of the programme is to instigate positive transformational change through innovative sustainable farming practices on nine farms across Scotland. We want to use the learnings and the example set by Monitor farms for the benefit of farmers across Scotland.

The aim of the programme is to help to build resilient, dynamic farms focused on reaching full economic, social, and environmental sustainability, by optimising production.

How each of the nine farms chooses to optimise their business and improve their profitability will be as unique as the businesses themselves. The programme will be grounded in expert advice and will embrace innovative practices to support farms on their journey.

## How could it help my business?

If you are interested in becoming a monitor farm the most important quality, we look for is open minded-ness. The most successful monitor farmers have been the ones who have embraced change to evolve their farming businesses.

While there is no direct payment for being part of the Monitor Farm Programme as a monitor farmer your business will be uniquely able to develop skills, gather industry knowledge, and collect data that the rest of the industry wouldn't have access to.

Some of the benefits for your business will include:

- Innovation project funding
- Expert advice on sustainability, finance, succession, animal health, agronomy etc.
- A marketing and business plan
- Detailed environmental surveys, soil health evaluations, Natural capital accounting
- Enterprise costings & profitability
- Carbon Audit
- Integrated Land Management Plan
- Biodiversity, key species, and habitat evaluation

## What kind of businesses are you looking for?

The Monitor Farm Programme is designed to be a representation of Scottish farming as a whole. The Scottish agriculture sector is as varied as the people who work within it and as such the programme should reflect that. What we are looking for is nine farms across Scotland that can accurately reflect the diverse tapestry of livestock and mixed farming.

This programme is at its best when other farmers around the country can identify with the producers that drive it by taking up the mantle of 'Monitor Farmer.'

## What makes a good Monitor Farmer?

There is no blueprint for a perfect Monitor Farmer as each one is different, and each one approaches the role in a different way. There are however qualities we would look for in any potential Monitor Farm business.

The most important of these is openness. Any previous Monitor Farm Business will say that you get out of the Monitor Farm Programme, what you are willing to put in. That means that the more open you are with regional advisers, and with specialists the more they can help to improve and evolve your business. Giving the delivery team as much financial, environmental, and management information will let them chart a path to better optimise your business.

Another essential quality is a willingness to change. The people who have benefited most from the Monitor Farm Programme are the people who have been willing to make changes to their businesses based on evidence and expertise. Usually the bolder, the better!

Ultimately, a willingness to try new things and be up front about successes and failures may be the most important quality in any Monitor Farmer. This programme works best when we can learn from each other.

## What else is involved?

Our ambitions for this programme are to make sure that our Monitor Farmers leave the programme as better businesspeople, better leaders, better managers, and better communicators than they start as.

There is a lot of outwards facing communications from the programme and people will become very familiar with your business, but you will build a strong relationship with the Monitor Farm Programme delivery team who will support you on your journey.

Aside from the programme you will have the opportunity to learn new skills, gain qualifications, and meet influential people, from politicians to other business leaders.

Any information produced or gathered as part of the programme will be, of course available to the business at any time.

## How do I apply?

If you are interested in becoming a Monitor Farmer, then please contact us using the details below, and we can send you an application form.

Once we have an application form filled out, we can make an assessment and may visit your business to consider whether or not the programme would suit you.

Simply visit the QMS website for more information and an application form.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with Bruce McConachie:

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