

# **The Quality Meat Scotland Publication Scheme**

## **Produced as required by the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002**

### **Section 1 Introduction**

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) provides individuals with the right of access to information held by public authorities. FOISA also explains the circumstances where that right might not apply and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

QMS is required under section 23 of FOISA to adopt and maintain a publication scheme setting out the information we routinely make publicly available. Our publication scheme has been approved by the Scottish Information Commissioner, who is responsible for enforcing FOISA. We will review this scheme from time to time.

Our publication scheme must:

- Set out the classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;
- Say how we will publish this information in each class; and
- Say if we will provide the information free of charge.

The purpose of our publication scheme is to let you know what information is routinely available from us and which can be obtained from us on request or is published on our website. Where information is not published under this scheme, you can make a request for it from us under FOISA. For further information on accessing information not covered by this scheme see section 9 – *How to access information not available under this scheme*.

QMS is also subject to the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 that allow you the right of access to the environmental information we hold.

### **Section 2 About QMS**

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) is a non-departmental public body established under Quality Meat Scotland Order (2008) and is responsible to Scottish

Ministers. The powers and functions of QMS as set out in the Order are as follows:

The purpose of QMS is to increase efficiency or productivity in the red meat sector, improve marketing in the red meat sector, improve or develop services that the red meat sector provides or could provide to the community and to improve the ways in which the red meat sector contributes to sustainable development.

QMS has responsibility for a range of statutory functions relating to the development and promotion of the red meat industry in Scotland, as set out in Schedule 1 to the Order, including promoting or undertaking scientific and market research and promoting the production and marketing of the products of the red meat industry in Scotland.

QMS own several self-financing assurance schemes designed to offer consumers assurance about how beef, lamb and pork is produced within Scotland and which form the basis for the protected geographic indicators, *Scotch Beef* and *Scotch Lamb* and the *Specially Selected Pork* brand. Under European wide rules for assurance schemes called EN45011, QMS is not allowed both to set standards and carry out its own inspections. Consequently, although the schemes are owned by QMS, the assessment of the businesses applying for assured status has been contracted out to qualified independent inspectors. These are typically three-year contracts procured within the European Union Procurement Directive 2004/18/EC procedural rules, with the current contracts awarded in 2008.

QMS has a board of 12 non-executive members appointed by Scottish Ministers in accordance with the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies. The Board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that QMS fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Scottish Ministers and for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by QMS in accordance with the principles of Best Value.

QMS's predecessor organisations, Quality Meat Scotland Ltd, Scotch Quality Beef and Lamb Association Ltd and Scottish Pig Industry Initiative Ltd were companies limited by guarantee.

### **Section 3 How to access information from this Publication Scheme**

To comply with FOISA we have designed this publication scheme to provide access to a wide range of information collected, held and used by QMS. However, the scheme does not include a list of individual published documents, as they will change as new documents are published and out of date items are withdrawn. For example, information is removed if it is no longer accurate or relevant to our current work.

Most of the information included in this publication scheme is available on our website ([www.qmscotland.co.uk](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk)) by using the website's "Search" facility. For those without access to the website or those wishing to make a request for information in paper form (where available), the following methods can be used; post, phone or email. When requesting information by letter or email please include your full name, address and telephone number so we can contact you to clarify details if necessary.

By post to:

Freedom of Information Manager  
Quality Meat Scotland  
The Rural  
Centre Ingliston  
Newbridge  
Midlothian  
EH28 8NZ

By phoning

the Freedom of Information Manager on 0131 510 7920

By Email to: [info@qmscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@qmscotland.co.uk)

If you have difficulty identifying the information you are looking for or have specific requests not covered by this publication scheme, please contact

Debbie Phillips  
Quality Meat  
Scotland The Rural  
Centre Ingliston  
Newbride  
Midlothian  
EH28 8NZ

Tel: 0131 510 7923

Email: [dphillips@qmscotland.co.uk](mailto:dphillips@qmscotland.co.uk)

#### **Section 4 Information that may be withheld**

All information covered by our publication scheme can be either accessed through our website or will be provided promptly following our receipt of your request.

Our aim is to be as open as possible however, there may be limited circumstances where information is not available or will be withheld where FOISA expressly permits it.

Where information is withheld, we will inform you of this and the reasons why within 20 working days of receiving a valid request. If you wish to complain about any information which has been withheld from you, please refer to the *feedback and complaints* section below.

## **Section 5 Charging policy**

Most of the information made available under this scheme is available free of charge. However, if you ask for several copies of documents we may charge for the cost of retrieval, photocopying, postage etc. We will tell you if we intend to charge at the time of your request. Any charge will be payable in advance.

Where charges are applied, photocopied information will be charged at a standard rate of 10p per A4 side of paper (black and white copy) and 30p per A4 side of paper (colour copy). Computer discs will be charged at the rate of £1.00 per CD-Rom. We will pass on the postage charges to the requester at the cost to QMS of sending the information by first class post.

If your request requires additional work, we will apply the following considerations:

We will respond within 20 working days to requests that will take less than 40 hours of aggregated staff time to fulfil. This information will be provided at no cost to the applicant.

Where a request will require more than 40 hours of aggregated staff time, we will make a charge for this request within the limits established in FOISA. We will notify you of this charge, which will be payable in advance of carrying out the work needed to address your request.

## **Section 6 Copyright policy**

The supply of documents under Freedom of Information Act does not give the person or organisation that receives them the right to re-use them in any way that would infringe copyright. Infringements include making multiple copies, publishing and issuing copies to the public.

Brief extracts of the material may be reproduced under the fair dealing provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (sections 209 and 30) for the purposes of research for non-commercial purposes, private study, criticism, review and news reporting.

Details of arrangements for reusing material owned by Quality Meat Scotland are available by contacting the Head of Marketing and Communications by phoning 0131 510 7920 or by email at [info@qmscotland.co.uk](mailto:info@qmscotland.co.uk). Authorisation to re-use material not owned by QMS should be sought from the copyright holders concerned.

## **Section 7 Records management and disposal policy**

We operate records management procedures that control how long we keep information and when we dispose of it. However, within the lifetime of this publication scheme it is likely that we will remove information if it is no longer accurate or relevant to our current work.

The policy is currently under review and a revised copy of the policy will be available by September 2013.

If we receive a request for information that has been disposed of we will make this clear and try to assist in any other way we can.

## **Section 8 Feedback and complaints**

FOISA requires that we review our publication scheme from time to time. As a result, we welcome feedback on how we can develop our scheme further. If you would like to comment on any aspect of this publication scheme, then please contact us. You may, for example, wish to tell us about:

- Other information that you would like to see included in the scheme;
- Whether you found the scheme easy to use;
- Whether you found the publication scheme useful;
- Whether our staff were helpful;
- Other ways in which our publication scheme can be improved.

Our aim is to make our publication scheme as user-friendly as possible, and we hope you can access all the information we publish with ease. If you do wish to complain about any aspect of the publication scheme however, then please contact us and we will try and resolve your complaint as quickly as possible.

You can send any comments or suggestions to:

Debbie Phillips  
Quality MeatScotland  
The Rural Centre  
Ingliston  
Newbride  
Midlothian  
EH28 8NZ

Tel: 0131 510 7923

Email: [dphillips@qmscotland.co.uk](mailto:dphillips@qmscotland.co.uk)

Any complaint will be acknowledged within two working days of receipt and we will respond in full within twenty working days.

You have legal rights to access information under this scheme and a right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner if you are dissatisfied with our response. These rights apply only to information requests made in writing or another recordable format. If you are unhappy with our responses to your request you can ask us to review it and if you are still unhappy, you can make an appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

The Commissioner's website has a guide to this three-step process, and an enquiry service is available Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. The Scottish Information Commissioner's office can be contacted as follows:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes  
Road St. Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS

Tel: 01334 464 610

Email: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

Website: [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

## **Section 9 How to access information not available under this scheme**

If the information you are seeking is not available under this publication scheme, then you may request it from us. FOISA provides you with the right of access to the information we hold, subject to certain exemptions.

Should you wish to request a copy of any information that you think we hold and that is not available under this scheme please write to:

The Freedom of Information Manager

Quality MeatScotland  
The Rural Centre  
Ingliston  
Newbride  
Midlothian  
EH28 8NZ

If we do not hold the information or it is exempt from release under FOISA legislation, we will notify you of this and offer advice and assistance to find the information where possible.

If we do hold the information, we reserve the right to charge for its collation and delivery to you and notify you of the cost. The principles we will use in determining the charge are:

- There will be no charge for information requests which cost under £100 to process.
- Where information costs between £100 and £600 to provide you may be asked to pay 10% of the cost.
- We are not obliged to respond to requests which will cost us over £600 to process.
- In calculating any fee, staff time will be calculated at actual cost per staff member hourly salary rate to a maximum of £15 per person per hour.
- We do not charge for the time to determine whether we hold the information requested, nor for the time it takes to decide whether the information can be released. Charges may be made for locating, retrieving and providing information to you.
- In the event that we decide to impose a charge we will issue you with a notification of the charge (a fees notice) and how it has been calculated. You will have three months from the date of issue of the fees notice in which to decide whether to pay the charge. The information will be provided to you on payment of the charge. If you decide not to proceed with the request there will be no charge to you.

You may be aware that you can request information that relates to the environment under Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. The act makes provision for charges to be levied for providing environmental information. QMS will use the general charging structure detailed above for processing a request for environmental information. In addition, QMS will charge for photocopying and postage. Photocopied information will be charged at a standard rate of 10p per A4 side of paper (black and white copy) and 30p per A4 side of paper (colour copy). We will pass on the postage charges to the requester at the cost to QMS of sending the information by first class post.

## **Section 10 Classes of information**

This section provides details of the classes of information that we routinely make available through our website or the QMS office.

## Quality Meat Scotland Publication Scheme – 2013

### Classes and sub-classes of information

All information included in this publication scheme is available free of charge except where indicated.

Class	Sub class	Description	Format/availability
<b>Corporate Information</b>	Overview of establishment, functions and constitution	<p>The Quality Meat Scotland Order sets out the establishment, functions and constitution of Quality Meat Scotland</p> <p>The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum setting out the broad framework within which QMS operates is available on the Scottish Government website</p>	<p>Hard copy on request</p> <p>Statutory Instrument Available on Scottish Government legislation website.</p> <p>Hard copy available on request</p>
	Corporate plan	Sets out the industry operating environment and QMS' strategies for the delivery of its work	Website or hard copy on request

<b>Class</b>	<b>Sub class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Format/availability</b>
<b>Corporate Information</b>	Board Members and senior managers	<p>Short biography profiles of QMS' current chair and board members</p> <p>Code of practice for board members</p> <p>Register of interests of Board members</p> <p>Remuneration of Board members</p> <p>Organisational structure and contact details of senior staff</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Available on request</p> <p>Available on request</p> <p>Detailed in Annual report and accounts - available on web or by request</p> <p>Website</p>
	Minutes of Board meetings	<p>A copy of minutes of Board meetings available following approval by the board. A small number of confidential papers that are discussed in closed sessions may be withheld. Decisions on closed session papers are taken with regard to the requirements of FOI (Scotland) 2002 and the Data Protection Act 1998</p>	<p>Website or hard copy on request</p>

	Planning and performance management	An annual summary of completed management plan with objectives, activities and performance measures	Hard copy on request
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<b>Class</b>	<b>Sub class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Format/availability</b>
<b>Finance</b>	Finance Report and accounts	Annual summary of income and expenditure reported in QMS' Annual Report	Website or hard copy on request

	Finance guidance	QMS operates within the framework of the Scottish Public Finance Manual	This information is not held by QMS but is available from the Scottish Government via Internet access – charges will be in line with Scottish Government's general charging policy
	Procurement	Policy statement and guidance on tendering	Hard copy available on request
<b>Information management</b>	Freedom of information publication scheme		Website and hard copy on request
<b>Human resources</b>	Vacancies		Job vacancies are published on the QMS website as opportunities occur
	Employee Handbook	Staff management policies, procedures and guidance	Available for inspection at the QMS office. Hard copies of relevant sections available on request
<b>Corporate news</b>	News releases	Current news releases and archived releases (since January 2009) are available on the website	Website
	Industry events	Calendar of events on website	Website

<b>Class</b>	<b>Sub class</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Format/availability</b>
<b>QMS activities</b>		Details of the individual schemes (which may include environmental information) are published on the web	Website or hard copy by request
	Assurance schemes	Membership application forms	Website or hard copy by request
		PGI status checker allowing Farm Assurance status of livestock producer to be checked	Website
		List of scheme members (excluding farm assurance)	Website or hard copy by request
	Commissioned Technical Research	Research reports and updates	Website or hard copy by request
	Research opportunities	Business opportunities – tenders for research activity are published on the website	Website or hard copy on request
	Research and Development activities	Annual R&D report	Website or hard copy on request

	Marketing and promotion	Information leaflets for the general public	Website or hard copy on request
		Recipe leaflets and booklets	Website or hard copy on request
		PGI brand criteria	Hard copy on request
		List of butchers club and beef club members	Website or hard copy on request

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