

DICTIONARY



Month end date	EU Spec GB SPP (p/kg)	Change on month (£)	Average Pig Weight (Kg)	UK weekly clean kill-000head	LIFFE wheat futures-nearby contract (£/tonne)	Soyameal 46% Braz. (£/tonne) ex store
February	145.66	-1.17	84.25	210.4	135.74	355



Do you have an innovative challenge or business idea on your farm that would benefit from collaborating with other farmers and industry experts from academia or the private sector?

If **YES** then the **Rural Innovation Support Service (RISS)** may be able to help.

The Rural Innovation Support Service (RISS) is a Scottish Government funded project encouraging a

support to farmers, crofters or foresters who require expertise and assistance to help them adopt innovative ideas or practices.

SRUC are among the project partners in the delivery of RISS, providing a facilitator and the **Í Vfc_YfUj Y gYfj JWf** linking farmers with researchers, commercial companies and the best expertise available to take your innovative or business idea off the ground. Innovative ideas can vary from developing and implementing a new technology to establishing a new quality standard.

What are the opportunities for producers?

form a working group around you and your farm, bringing in members from any useful sector depending on what kind of knowledge or experience you need, be it from the technology, supply chain, business or research sectors. Facilitators can also

- Complete survey work and carry out small feasibility, field labs or demonstration projects
- Identify suitable funding to help support the project
- Identify technologies and areas of best practice from out with Scotland which can be duplicated

How does RISS work?

Step 1: You become part of a group

- Tell us briefly about your idea: get in touch
- We can link you up with the right facilitator and talk it over in more detail with them
- They bring in the other group members you will need (from any sector)

The facilitator applies for group approval

Step 2: You work as a group

The facilitator enables a period of group working: defining, developing and testing ideas and solutions. The way the group works and the time it will take depends on what you are trying to do. The group produces a project plan, with next steps in mind.

Step 3: You have everything you need to get going

You have a final project plan that can be used to access funding if necessary, or just to get started.

Examples

The first RISS Group was set up earlier this year and was investigating the **Speeding up of dairy breeding** and involved

Three dairy farmers interested in harnessing genetics to improve the quality of their herds. Identify the genetic make-up of their cross-bred cattle, starting with being sure of the parentage. Find an economical system of embryo transfer, so they can get 10 calves from one cow, keep the calves and get them back into the herd more quickly therefore speeding up breeding.

To this end, the group's facilitator, a project manager from the SAOS, is recruiting a geneticist, a data recorder



Marketing



Small to medium pig producers may lack the economies of scale of their larger peers however there are numerous opportunities for them to add value to their livestock.

Farm Shops

First appearing in the 1970s farm shops have multiplied as farmers have diversified in order to add value to their produce and boost the profitability of their businesses.

Markets Association), there are now over 4000 farm shops in the UK. Demand has been promoted by food-savvy consumers looking to reconnect with the countryside, purchase fresh, high-quality food with strong provenance. Farm shops showcase local food and drink and provide the opportunity to buy products which may not be available elsewhere. Location is a key factor for setting up a farm shop so is not for everyone however another option may be to supply existing ones. What needs to be considered when thinking about supplying farm shops?

Speak to the owners; are they looking to sell pork products?

Do you have a Unique Selling Point or point of difference from other suppliers? E.g. speciality meats or rare breeds.

Can you contribute to their story of showcasing local, high quality, traceable food?

Continuity of supply

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DIG



Tail biting in growing and finishing pigs is a costly problem which can be frustratingly hard to control, for a number of reasons:

There are many different risk factors involved,

Outbreaks can occur without warning or apparent cause and

Once started, the problem can quickly spread to affect many victim pigs in a pen.

DIG



When plotted over time, it was clear that the 3D data also showed a clear increase in low tails as a tail biting outbreak approaches, and a decline after an outbreak (see graph which shows daily proportions of low tails for the 15 outbreak groups).



Tail injury scoring showed us that if you get into the pen and look closely at all tails, you can see early signs of tail biting far sooner than we would detect it from outside the pen. These changes to tails include loss of hair, and small injuries including bite marks and scabs become visible. Our scoring also revealed that reduced tail length (part of the tail has been bitten off) and tail

after an outbreak.



The recent Pig and Poultry Fair saw nearly 10,000

The recent Pig and Poultry Fair saw nearly 10000 attendees with the revamped SRUC stand being very busy. Visitors to the stand were able to find out about ongoing pig research including managing pig aggression, predicting tail biting and rapeseed

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Over the past 2 – 3 years we have had an increasing number of requests by vet practices to freeze harmful bacterial isolates from their pig submissions in case they are needed for autogenous vaccine production.

When managing an outbreak of bacterial disease, the initial approach involves antibiotic treatment appropriate



Policy



With the uncertainty of Brexit and the need for CAP reform, the future of agriculture policy and support in Scotland is still very unclear.

Several groups and sectors are currently discussing what they think this future vision should look like. While a mammoth task, there is the opportunity to create better support mechanisms and policies than are currently in place, with now being the ideal time to try and influence future decisions.

Scottish and UK farmers already operate to some of the highest and most stringent welfare and environmental standards found anywhere in the world. The pig sector in particular has seen the adoption of welfare and health practices that place it ahead of its competitors both on the continent and further afield with producers in Scotland at forefront of several key initiatives.

The initial fears that any post-Brexit agreements could lead to a reduction in these standards, due to trade between non EU countries, appears to have been replaced by a requisite to maintain or improve on these world leading standards. The various devolved administrations agreeing there will be **improvements on animal welfare, environmental and food**

In Scotland produced by the Scottish Government's Agriculture Champions provides their vision for the future of Scottish agriculture. It recommends the actions that the industry should take looking at the long term, beyond the current uncertainties with emphasis on the need to change from past agricultural policies that have not been fit for purpose. In addition to this there is a need for agricultural policy not to be considered in isolation but alongside and in balance with other policies including the wider food industry and environmental sustainability.

“There is an opportunity to evolve agricultural activity and support in Scotland to suit the pressures of our time, as part of a more holistic system across the rural and agricultural ecosystem.” - A Future Strategy for Scottish Agriculture (May 2018).

