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Welcome

Welcome to AIC Scotland's spring newsletter, bringing you key updates on policy developments, stakeholder engagement and activity across Scotland's food and agri supply chain.

As we move through an important year for Scottish agriculture, AIC Scotland continues to engage actively with Members, the Government and stakeholders, with a strong focus on policy reform, sustainability and food security ahead of the Scottish Parliamentary elections.

In this edition, you'll find updates on AIC Scotland's manifesto, stakeholder engagement, recent events and developments affecting our sectors, alongside a look ahead to upcoming meetings and priorities.

AIC Scotland spring meetings

Members are invited to book to join AIC Scotland's spring meetings on 29 April 2026, at McDiarmid Park in Perth.

Tea & coffee will be served at 9:15, with the joint meeting starting promptly at 9:45am. AIC Scotland Chair, Graeme Logan will give an introduction, followed by an update on activity and key issues from AIC. The meeting will conclude at 13:00 with lunch provided.

Sector Committees for **Animal Feed, Combinable Crops, Fertiliser, and Seed** will be held from 10:15.

AIC Dinner & Conference

10-11 November, Holiday Inn West Peterborough

AIC Scotland Meeting and AGM & AIC Scotland Dinner

25 November, voco Grand Central Glasgow

Scottish Parliamentary election manifesto 2026

AIC Scotland has published its manifesto setting out six priority asks for the next Scottish Government to strengthen the nation's food supply chain and support one of Scotland's most strategically important sectors.

The manifesto outlines what supply chain businesses need to support high quality food production, climate action and long term economic growth.

Key asks include:

1

Support the Scottish Government's objective of "High Quality Food Production" with growth measurables.

2

Delivery of a ring-fenced multiannual agricultural budget for farmers with real time increase of the current budget of £660m.

3

Support the agrifood supply chain towards meeting targets laid out in the proposed Climate Change Plan with clear identification of measurable and targeted objectives and baselining.

4

To commit to investment in innovative research and development to provide industry leading, practical and scalable practices for the agri-food sector to adopt in delivering climate friendly food on an economically sustainable basis.

5

Ensure recognition and understanding of the importance of AIC's supply assurance schemes and associated professional registers.

6

Build political engagement with AIC and its membership to raise awareness of Scottish educators, students and workforce of the knowledge and transferrable skills that will provide rewarding career opportunities in the agri-supply chain.



Graeme Logan,
AIC Scotland Chair

"I'm pleased to launch a manifesto that sets out clear priorities to support a productive, sustainable and competitive future for Scotland's food supply chain. With long term stability through a ring fenced, multi annual agricultural budget, continued support for science led innovation, and recognition of the assurance schemes that give cast iron confidence in our food system, the next Scottish Government can help strengthen food security and continue to support high quality food production across Scotland".

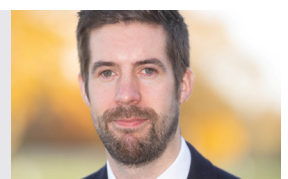
Developed in consultation with Members and Committees, the manifesto highlights the vital role of supply chain businesses in delivering food security, environmental outcomes and rural employment across Scotland.

For full details and to download a PDF copy of the manifesto please scan the QR code.



FAST and Agricultural Reform updates

The most recent Food and Agriculture Stakeholders Taskforce (FAST) meeting was attended by Ian Muirhead in his role as Special Advisor to the Scottish Government. The meeting provided updates on future farm business support and precision breeding. A clear message was that there will be no "cliff edge", with reform continuing to be based on the previously proposed budget split and tiered approach.



Ian Muirhead
Special Advisor



Climate Change Plan

Scotland's Climate Change Plan 2026–2040 has now been published following the close of public consultation. AIC Scotland is reviewing the final Plan and its implications for supply chain businesses, with ongoing policy engagement expected to focus on delivery of the Scottish Government's commitments, including its approach to livestock policy.



SPS updates

At the Scottish Government pesticide stakeholder meeting in December, discussions focused on ongoing Sanitary and Phytosanitary reform, glyphosate availability and future roadshows. Separately, several non governmental organisations have resigned from the Agricultural Reform Implementation Oversight Board, citing concerns over the pace and focus of reform ahead of the forthcoming election.



Scotland stakeholder engagement

AIC Scotland has continued its programme of stakeholder engagement to ensure alignment on key policy issues affecting Scotland's food supply chain.

This has included a meeting with National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS) policy leads towards the end of November, providing an opportunity to build shared understanding of the challenges facing both organisations and to engage with recently appointed members of the NFUS policy team. Discussions covered a wide range of issues, including dairy, cereals, sustainability, precision breeding, the EU reset and the forthcoming Scottish elections.

AIC attended the NFUS Scotland Annual Conference 2026 in Glasgow, with Chief Executive Robert Sheasby and AIC Scotland Policy Manager Ian MacDougall representing Members across two days of discussion, debate and political engagement. The conference brought together senior policymakers, industry leaders and farming representatives to consider the challenges and

opportunities facing Scottish agriculture. Key themes included long term stability, attracting investment, support for downstream supply chain development, and a strong emphasis on fairness and sustainable growth.

Attendance provided an important opportunity for AIC to engage directly with farmers and stakeholders, contribute to dialogue on shared priorities, and ensure the perspectives of supply chain businesses were represented in discussions shaping future policy.

Engagement has also continued through participation in the Food and Agriculture Stakeholders Taskforce (FAST), as well as the Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) Red Meat Resilience and Climate and Biodiversity groups, helping ensure sector-wide interests are represented consistently to the Scottish Government and key stakeholders.

AIC Scotland has also been represented at QMS-led farm political engagement meetings, with further events planned in the first quarter of the year.



Cabinet Secretary opens fertiliser facility in Dundee

In February, Cabinet Secretary Mairi Gougeon officially opened a new liquid fertiliser facility at the Port of Dundee, on behalf of OMEX Agriculture. The day saw farmers and industry partners come together to see the new storage facility. The Cabinet Secretary, as local MSP, also toured the new site.



Glyphosate renewal

A decision on glyphosate renewal in Great Britain is due before the current expiry on 15 December 2026. Ahead of this, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is expected to consult on the Draft Assessment Report.

Consultation responses will be analysed and a decision considered by Defra and the Minister. There are concerns that a GB decision on the conditions of glyphosate use could mirror EU conditions, which prohibit the pre-harvest use as a desiccant. However, pre-harvest uses of glyphosate for weed control remains permitted in the EU.

AIC continues to stress the importance of glyphosate for Scottish growers, particularly for oilseed rape pre-harvest desiccation to even crop ripening, thereby reducing harvest times, losses and drying costs. The consultation is expected in Q2, and AIC will keep Members informed.



FSS extend emergency authorisations for cobalt compounds for use in animal feed

AIC welcomed the decision to extend emergency authorisations for cobalt compounds for use in animal feed. Food Safety Scotland (FSS) has confirmed that the Minister signed the ministerial determination for the two-year provisional authorisation of the four Cobalt(II) compounds as feed additives.

The provisional authorisation will come into force in Scotland on the 15 July 2026. This will allow for the continued use, availability and distribution of Cobalt(II) compounds within Scotland until 14 July 2028 and aligning Scotland with the rest of Great Britain and the EU. The **register of regulated Food and Feed Products for Great Britain** will be updated accordingly.



International Barley Hub stakeholder meeting

AIC attended the International Barley Hub (IBH) stakeholder meeting at the James Hutton Institute, Invergowrie. The meeting brought together representatives from across the barley supply chain, alongside researchers and industry partners including Diageo.

Discussions focused on the challenge of delivering the "triple bottom line", economic viability, environmental responsibility and social value, within an increasingly volatile market, with a particular emphasis on barley production. Speakers explored how science, collaboration and market insight can support supply-chain resilience, as well as the potential role of regenerative farming approaches.

The IBH continues to provide a valuable forum for sharing research and industry insight, and AIC welcomes the opportunity to engage on behalf of Members with an interest in barley, malting and distilling supply chains in Scotland.

Scottish Quality Crops (SQC) – Standards review

Scottish Quality Crops (SQC) has begun a full review of its assurance standards, comparable to a whole-scheme review such as Red Tractor. The review will assess whether existing requirements remain relevant, proportionate and fit for purpose, while aligning with wider farm assurance developments and supply chain expectations.

It will also provide SQC members with an important opportunity to share practical insight, highlight operational impacts and help shape future standards. Members are encouraged to engage as consultation opportunities arise to support workable, evidence-based outcomes and deliver confidence for both growers and markets.

