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Welcome

Welcome to the autumn edition of the AIC Scotland newsletter.

Having recently joined AIC Scotland as Policy Manager, I am looking forward to working with Members and ensuring that the interests of Scotland's agricultural supply chain are clearly represented with government, elected representatives and other stakeholders.

This edition provides an update on recent policy developments and AIC Scotland's engagement across Scotland, Westminster and Brussels. I have already begun meeting Members and stakeholders and look forward to seeing many of you at our autumn meetings, Annual General Meeting and dinner in Glasgow in November.

Book Now for the AIC Scotland Meetings, AGM and Dinner

Join fellow AIC Scotland Members in Glasgow on 25 November 2026 for the autumn sector meetings, Annual General Meeting and annual dinner.

The day provides an opportunity to hear the latest policy updates, discuss the issues affecting Scotland's agricultural supply chain and engage directly with the AIC policy team and fellow Members.

Alex Fleming will be the after-dinner speaker. His fast-paced, engaging style has made him a popular choice for events across the UK and internationally.

Wednesday 25 November 2026
Voco Grand Central Glasgow



MEETINGS



DINNER

Scottish Parliament election outcome

The 2026 Scottish election saw the Scottish National Party (SNP), led by John Swinney, win the largest number of seats (58), marking its fifth consecutive election victory. Following the continuation of leadership at Holyrood, AIC Scotland has welcomed commitments to support active farming and food production. These include direct payments that provide certainty for the industry and a continued commitment to the four-tier support framework.

The election also saw a significant turnover in Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), with 50% elected for the first time in May. There have also been changes to the ministerial line-up, with Gillian Martin taking on the newly created role of Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Rural Affairs, while Jim Fairlie remains Minister for Agriculture, Marine and the Islands.

Finally, the Rural Affairs Committee is under new leadership. Green MSP Mark Ruskell is now Convener, while newly elected Liberal Democrat MSP Andrew Baxter has been appointed Deputy Convener.



 **Scottish Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

AIC Scotland presents evidence to Scottish Parliament inquiry

In August, AIC Scotland responded to the Scottish Parliament Rural Affairs Committee's inquiry into the Scottish Government's Rural Support Plan (RSP).

AIC Scotland welcomed the certainty provided by the RSP but highlighted the need for greater consideration beyond 2031. While the five-year framework provides valuable confidence for farmers and the supply chain, longer-term funding commitments, inflation-proofing and a clear assessment of the investment required to deliver outcomes are still lacking.

Key recommendations included:



Put productivity at the centre:	Deliver climate outcomes through practical farm improvements:	Recognise the agri-supply chain's role in rural communities:
1 The Plan should include clear productivity targets and metrics, while placing greater emphasis on feed efficiency, the efficient use of nutrients, genetics, and Scottish-led agricultural innovation.	AIC Scotland supports the focus on climate adaptation and mitigation. However, stronger recognition is needed for nutrient management, fertiliser and feed efficiency, and the role of integrated advice from Fertiliser Advisers Certification and Training Scheme (FACTS), BASIS Registration Ltd (BASIS) and Feed Adviser Register (FAR) advisers.	AIC Scotland Members provide jobs, investment, infrastructure, advice and knowledge transfer that are essential to productive farms, resilient supply chains and thriving rural communities. However, this contribution is not sufficiently recognised in the Plan.

As part of the Committee's inquiry, AIC was invited to give evidence to the Scottish Parliament in September. Policy Manager Ed Barker responded to a range of questions from Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to help shape the Committee's report, which is expected to be published in October.

AIC meets with Scottish Government office in Brussels

In June, AIC met with representatives from the Scottish Government Office in Brussels to discuss key policy developments affecting the agri-supply sector.

Discussions covered a range of shared priorities and how specific issues will affect Scottish Member businesses. These included the UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement, pesticides and active substances, the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), and developments in precision breeding in both the UK and the EU.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss AIC's work in Brussels and how it can continue engaging with partners to represent the views and interests of AIC Members in Scotland.



Scottish Government consults on price cap plans

During the election, the Scottish National Party (SNP) pledged to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis by reducing the price of up to 50 everyday supermarket items. Announcing the policy in April, John Swinney said his government would require supermarkets to limit the cost of products such as bread, milk and cheese.

The policy was included in the first Programme for Government delivered by the SNP following the election, but the plans were met with significant criticism. Stakeholders wrote a joint letter to the Scottish Government warning that the proposal was "unnecessary, ineffective and likely to deliver significant adverse consequences".

While a consultation has now been launched by Ministers, key questions remain unanswered, including which products would be subject to price caps and how the baseline price for each item would be determined. Ministers have said they

would set prices "by observing the recent price history of a product based on the lower end of the market".

While intended to reduce food prices for consumers, the proposal could have implications across the wider food and agricultural supply chain. With key details on how the scheme would operate yet to be confirmed, AIC Scotland is engaging with the consultation process on behalf of Members.

The Scottish Government consultation was launched on 1 September and closes on 25 November.



SNP Business Day

The Scottish National Party (SNP) hosted a Business Day in Edinburgh in early September, bringing together Scottish Government Ministers, Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and business leaders. There were discussions on economic growth, inward investment, the UK-EU reset, supply chain resilience, sustainability, and the role of industry in addressing and finding solutions to shared challenges.

AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby attended the event and held productive discussions on the importance of resilient agricultural supply chains and the contribution they make to Scotland's economy with First Minister John Swinney and Deputy First Minister Jenny Gilruth. He also met Jim Fairlie, Minister for Agriculture, Marine and the Islands, and Minister for Europe Stephen Gethins.

During the event, the First Minister highlighted the importance of working with businesses to help solve problems and support economic growth. Discussions throughout the programme also highlighted opportunities to support economic development, strengthen links with Europe and create an environment in which businesses can thrive.



Feed Sector meetings held in Scotland

The AIC Fish Feed Committee held its spring meeting at The Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh on 1 April 2026, where industry representatives were joined by AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby.

The Committee received an update on the ongoing negotiations between the UK and the EU on a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement. It was confirmed that the removal of official controls on fish feed being placed on the EU market would be of significant benefit to the sector.

However, a note of caution was expressed regarding the approach being taken by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to authorisations of regulated products during the SPS negotiation period. These included feed additives and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The decision not to proceed with authorisations that have already received a positive risk assessment from UK Government Scientific Advisory Committees could have negative implications for the fish feed sector.

The Scottish Feed Sector Committee meeting, held in Perth on 29 April, was well attended by feed industry representatives. Chair Ross Paterson of Harbro also welcomed representatives from Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to the meeting.

The Committee expressed concern about the number of animal disease challenges facing livestock farmers in Scotland and across Europe, including avian influenza, bluetongue, African swine fever and foot-and-mouth disease. Members called for a continued focus on biosecurity and vigilance across the UK.



Left to right: Daniel Zeichner MP, Dr Neil Hudson MP, and Jonathan Lane

AIC Westminster Reception

Scottish Members of Parliament (MPs) joined their colleagues from across the UK at AIC's Westminster reception in September. AIC Scotland Chair, Graeme Logan, and several Members took the opportunity to engage with MPs from across the political spectrum on the key issues affecting the agricultural supply chain north of the border.

Many of the issues that are important to AIC span both reserved and devolved policy areas, making engagement with both the UK and Scottish Parliaments essential. As a result, a similar engagement event is currently being planned with Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and is expected to take place in the Scottish Parliament early in the new year.

Dates for your diary



AIC Dinner and Conference 2026,

10-11 November, Holiday Inn West, Peterborough

AIC Scotland Dinner,

25 November, Voco Grand Central Glasgow

AIC Scotland AGM,

25 November, Voco Grand Central Glasgow

