

Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat

From Quality Meat Scotland
in partnership with the
Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group.



Why the Red Meat Industry Matters

Scotland's Red Meat Industry supports around **40,000 jobs** and contributes **£3.5 billion** to the economy each year. From farms and butchers to abattoirs, transport, agri-tech and business support, it offers a wide range of **meaningful, skilled jobs** and **career opportunities**.

This toolkit builds on the [Meating Our Potential](#) campaign launched by the [Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group](#) (2025), which aims to **raise awareness** of, and **support** the significant economic opportunity from growing our domestic beef herd. With labour challenges being a key barrier to productivity, our Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat campaign – including this toolkit – has been designed to help stakeholders promote rewarding opportunities right across the supply chain.

By sharing real “day-in-the-life” stories, highlighting sector benefits, and providing practical guidance, this toolkit aims to inspire the next generation and help attract and retain talented people for the future.

[🔗 Learn more: Visit the Meating Our Potential Hub](#)



How This **Toolkit** Can Help You

The Cutting-Edge Roles in Red Meat toolkit equips you to:

- Showcase authentic employee stories and the variety of roles available.
- Highlight sector benefits such as security, flexibility, and progression.
- Use research-based messaging to reach students, school leavers, career changers, and mid-career entrants.
- Access recruitment tips and ready-to-use assets for campaigns.

Contents:

- Research & Insights
- Target Audiences & Behaviours
- Recruitment Guidance & Tips
- Toolkit Assets

For Job Seekers:

- Case Studies & Best Practice
- Role & Career Highlights
- Resources & Links

Who this toolkit is for:

- **Industry employers (Toolkit Owners/Users):**
Everyone working across the Scottish red meat supply chain — HR, recruitment, and communications teams, as well as operational colleagues — will access, distribute, and use the toolkit within their networks. It is designed to support the industry in recruiting workers for their businesses.

- **Job seekers (Message Targets):**
The content and messaging within the assets are designed for job seekers and career changers, encouraging them to consider opportunities within the Scottish red meat sector.

What **Jobseekers** Want

Essencemedia's research shows strong openness to careers in the red meat sector — and enthusiasm grows as awareness increases.

Interest & Appeal

- **92%** would consider a role in the sector.
- **43%** became more likely to apply after learning about the variety of roles.
- **85%** were strongly motivated by practical work, food production, or agriculture/livestock roles.
- **70%** held a positive view after receiving more information (up from 49% initially).

Impact of Incentives

- **94%** would be likely to work in the sector if at least one appealing perk were offered.

[Find out more](#)

Source:

Research was carried out in two stages in early 2025: Stage 1: Omnibus study of 1,000+ nationally representative Scottish respondents (28 March–7 April), exploring general perceptions of red meat careers. Stage 2: Bespoke survey of a further 1,005 respondents interested in the sector (20–30 June), examining motivators and barriers in more depth. Together, the results give a clear picture of attitudes toward the sector and the opportunities it offers.

Top perks

- Competitive pay & benefits (**88%**)
- Job security (**85%**)
- Flexible working (**84%**)
- Learning new skills (**82%**)
- Training & development (**81%**)

Employer Brand Matters

- **97%** research a company before applying — reinforcing the importance of a strong online presence and clear communication.

What this means for You

Tell real stories, highlight flexibility and development, and ensure your website, social media and online reviews reflect your values, culture, and opportunities. Offering the right perks and highlighting what makes roles rewarding can significantly improve recruitment and retention across the sector.



Tailor Your Approach

Different audiences value different things — shaping your messaging helps maximise engagement.

Key Motivators

- 16–24 yrs → Purpose & sustainability → "Make a difference in your first job."
- 25–34 yrs → Security & progression → "A career you can grow in."
- 35–54 yrs → Skills alignment → "Bring your skills — we'll handle the rest."

Audience Behaviours (Insights from Essencemedia & Skills Development Scotland)

The audiences listed in the table are considered to be key target groups.

Useful Links

[Skills Development Scotland – Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)

[Guidance on online employer branding](#)

Audience	Job search frequency	What they look for	Where they search	Workplace values	Tips
School leavers	Weekly.	Apprenticeships, internships, shift work, mentoring, entry-level roles, school leaver programmes.	Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), school careers events, social media, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Inclusion, career pathways, job purpose, transparent pay structures.	Partner with DYW to offer visits, placements and talks.
Graduates / university leavers	Weekly.	Graduate schemes, internships, entry-level roles.	University career services, social media, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Career progression, learning opportunities, company culture.	Promote graduate schemes, networking events, mentoring opportunities, early career support.
Returner*	Weekly.	Full-time, hybrid, remote.	Job centres, career fairs, LinkedIn, Indeed.	Teamwork and trust.	Highlight supportive management and mentoring.
Career changers	Monthly.	Full-time, hybrid, remote.	Job boards, LinkedIn.	Balance, respect.	Use inclusive language, show training pathways.
Retirees / part-time seekers	Rarely.	Part-time or flexible work.	Local networks, recruiters.	Purpose, reputation.	Offer flexible hours and community connection.

*Example, Parents or carers returning after family leave, individuals recovering from illness or injury, those returning after redundancy, people transitioning from self-employment, individuals returning after study, travel or personal development, and ex-offenders re-entering employment

The Benefits of a Career in the Sector

Working in Scotland's red meat industry offers security, variety and a real sense of purpose. Many roles provide structured training, apprenticeships, and clear progression pathways — from butchery and processing to marketing, animal health, and agri-tech.

[Find out more in Lantra's Careers Toolkit](#)

Hear more from a variety of inspiring real people working across the Scottish red meat supply chain, why they choose to work in the sector and how they got to where they are today in our case studies and video diaries from pages 15-17.



How to Create a Great Place to Work

People stay where they feel valued, supported, and part of something bigger. Building a positive workplace culture helps attract talent and boost productivity — and it doesn't need to be complicated.

The 4 P Model (adapted from Skills Development Scotland's People, Place, Practice & Values framework):

Guidance on creating great workplaces

[Feeding Workforce Skills \(Food Education Scotland\)](#)

[Fair Work Employer Support Tool \(Scottish Government\)](#)

[Skills Development Scotland – Find Business Support](#)

Values

- Involve your team when developing company values so they reflect everyone's input.
- Communicate values on an ongoing basis clearly through internal communications, social media, recruitment materials and on-site notice boards for those not using PCs.
- Values need to be lived every day — not just written somewhere and forgotten.

Place

- Provide safe, comfortable and well-equipped workplaces.
- Review facilities regularly — including break areas, restrooms and PPE.
- Consider flexibility where possible, such as staggered shifts or hybrid options.

People

- Encourage two-way communication — make time to listen, not just talk.
- Create recognition systems such as "employee of the month" boards or internal shoutouts.
- Offer mentoring or buddy systems to support new team members and show career paths within your business.
- Make sure communication reaches everyone — for staff without PC access, share updates through notice boards, team briefings and printed materials.

Practice

- Ensure management practices are fair, transparent and consistent.
- Invest in developing good people managers who can motivate and support staff.
- Encourage employees to share ideas for improving productivity and sustainability.

Promoting Careers & Opportunities **Effectively**

Key Points

- Use clear, honest job descriptions covering the role, salary/pay pattern, working hours, training, and progression opportunities.
- Write in inclusive, friendly language. Focus on real benefits and highlight transferable skills.
- Offer flexible application formats (e.g., video submissions or phone calls) to support different needs.

Tips for Impactful Adverts

- Avoid jargon and gendered wording.
- Highlight key benefits: competitive pay, structured training, flexible working, job security, and development opportunities.
- Showcase authentic culture through real employee voices — case studies, short videos, quotes or day-in-the-life stories.

Where to Promote / Recommended Platforms

- Local networks, colleges, company website & social media
- Scottish Association of Young Farmers (SAYFC) – [Jobs & Opportunities](#)
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) – [School Engagement & Regional Support](#)

- Apprenticeships.scot – [Training, Apprenticeships & Employer Support](#)
- Skills Development Scotland – [Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)
- Lantra Scotland – [Agriculture Careers](#)
- Tasty Careers – [Food & Drink Industry Map](#)
- Butchery Careers – [Role Guidance & Learning Resources](#)

Digital & Social Channels

- Facebook, LinkedIn
- TikTok & Instagram – great for showcasing culture, short videos, success stories, and “meet the team” content

Guides & Templates

[SF&D Recruitment & Retention Toolkit](#)

[CIPD Recruitment Factsheet](#)

[ACAS Recruitment Guidance](#)

Pro Tip

Share authentic success stories and workplace highlights on social media. Real employee voices and images resonate far more than stock photos.



Attract, Grow, Retain

A job description is often the candidate's first impression of your business. It's more than a list of tasks — it's your chance to showcase culture, values, pay, and growth opportunities. Well-written descriptions attract the right people and set expectations clearly.

Tips for Strong Job Descriptions

- **Clear, concise language:** Avoid jargon and overly technical terms.
- **Inclusive wording:** Use gender-neutral and welcoming language.
- **Showcase your uniqueness:** Culture, community links, sustainability, training & development opportunities.
- **Skills & potential:** Focus on transferable skills, not just formal qualifications.
- **Include key details:** Role responsibilities, working hours, salary/pay pattern, contract type, reporting lines, progression opportunities.
- **Outline benefits & support:** Flexible working, mentoring, structured training, career pathways.
- **Encourage applications:** Emphasise that motivated candidates from diverse backgrounds are welcome.

Source: CIPD

Checklist for Recruitment Best Practice

✓	Communicate your values clearly through the website and social media.
✓	Use fair and transparent recruitment processes.
✓	Hire for attitude and potential as well as skills.
✓	Treat all applications respectfully, updating them at each stage.
✓	Encourage managers to reflect the company's culture during interviews.

Useful Resources

[CIPD Inclusive Employers Guide](#)

[Fair Work Framework – Scottish Government](#)

[People, Place, Practice Checklist \(SF&D Toolkit\)](#)



Attract, Train & Retain Through Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a powerful way to attract new talent, develop skills, and grow future leaders. They give individuals hands-on experience while learning, and help businesses build a skilled, loyal workforce.

Benefits of Apprenticeships

- **Develop talent internally:** Train apprentices in your way of working, culture, and values.
- **Boost retention:** Apprentices often stay longer, having been invested in from the start.
- **Enhance diversity:** Opens opportunities to people from different backgrounds, including school leavers and career changers.
- **Support business growth:** Apprentices can contribute to productivity while learning.
- **Access funding and support:** Many UK apprenticeship schemes are partially funded by government or industry bodies.

Key Considerations

- **Define clear roles and expectations:** Outline responsibilities, learning objectives, and career pathways.
- **Structured mentoring and supervision:** Assign experienced staff to guide and support apprentices.

- **Combine practical work with training:** Ensure apprentices have hands-on experience and access to formal learning.
- **Regular feedback and assessment:** Monitor progress, celebrate achievements, and adjust training where needed.
- **Integration into culture:** Include apprentices in team activities, social events, and company initiatives.

Pro Tip

Highlight apprenticeship success stories on social media or your website. Real-life examples of progression and achievement resonate strongly with potential candidates.

Useful Resources

[Lantra's Agriculture Apprenticeship Toolkit](#)

[Apprenticeships.scot](#)

[Developing the Young Workforce \(DYW\)](#)



Using SCQF Levels for Inclusive Recruitment

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is a system that maps all Scottish qualifications and learning programmes to levels based on their complexity and difficulty. It allows employers to compare skills and experience more fairly, making it easier to recognise transferable skills and alternative learning routes.

Using SCQF levels instead of asking for specific qualifications can open doors for a wider range of applicants. It helps you focus on skills and experience rather than formal education, supporting fairer and more inclusive recruitment.

Example

Instead of saying "must have a degree", specify "skills equivalent to SCQF Level 9 (degree level)" or "practical experience in similar work". This approach benefits school leavers, apprentices, career changers, and those re-entering the workforce.

Learn more

[Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#)

[SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)





How to Run **Great** Interviews

Interviews aren't just about evaluating candidates — they're your chance to showcase your business. Make them welcoming, structured, and fair.

Practical Tips

- Prepare open-ended questions that focus on skills, behaviours, motivation, and fit.
- Use a consistent scoring system to reduce bias.
- Let candidates know in advance if they need to give a presentation, complete a task, or prepare anything specific.
- Involve more than one interviewer to bring diverse perspectives.
- Share your company story, benefits, and values to help candidates visualise their future with you.
- Always provide feedback — it shows professionalism and builds reputation.

Helpful Resources

[🔗 SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)

[🔗 ACAS Interview Checklist](#)

[🔗 CIPD Selection Methods & Interview Guide](#)

Onboard, Train, Empower

A robust onboarding experience sets the tone for an employee's entire journey. It goes beyond introducing the role — it's about helping new starters feel supported, confident, and connected to your culture from day one.

Key Elements of Effective Onboarding

- **Structured induction:** Introduce company values, policies, team members, and expectations.
- **Role-specific training:** Ensure employees have the skills and knowledge to succeed.
- **Mandatory training:** Cover all essential compliance and safety requirements, not just role-specific tasks, to reduce risk.
- **Mentoring and support:** Assign a buddy or mentor to guide the new starter through their first weeks.
- **Regular check-ins:** Monitor progress, answer questions, and provide feedback early to build confidence.
- **Culture integration:** Share stories, success examples, and ways to get involved in wider company initiatives.

Why It Matters

Builds confidence, engagement, and loyalty.
Reduces mistakes and misunderstandings.
Reinforces company culture and expectations.
Supports retention and accelerates productivity.

Pro Tip

Document your onboarding process and share it internally. Consistency ensures every new starter receives the same high-quality experience.

Useful Resources

[Indeed UK – Onboarding Guide](#)

[Growth Engineering – Employee Onboarding Complete Guide](#)

[CIPHR – Employee Onboarding Guide](#)

[Talent Insight Group – The Impact of Effective Onboarding](#)

[Actus Software – Effective Onboarding Best Practices](#)



Keeping Your Team Happy & Engaged

Retention is about more than pay — it's about creating a workplace people want to stay in. Focus on wellbeing, recognition, growth, and feeling heard.

Key Actions

- Offer clear development pathways and promote from within where possible, supported by regular training and skills development.
- Encourage flexibility — explore shift variety, job sharing, or part-time options where this works for the business.
- Recognise and reward achievements, both publicly and privately.
- Encourage open communication through regular check-ins, one-to-ones, and annual appraisals to discuss wellbeing, performance, and future goals.
- Support employee wellbeing by providing access to appropriate support, such as an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), where possible.
- Embed Fair Work principles: effective voice, respect, security, opportunity, and fulfilment.

[Flexibility Works](#)

[CIPD – Employee Retention Factsheet](#)

[Skills Development Scotland – Upskilling & Reskilling Hub](#)

[Find Business Support – Training & Grants](#)

[Performance Reviews | Factsheets | CIPD](#)

What You Can Share

Make it easy for others to champion careers in the red meat industry by using the promotional assets provided. These are designed for flexibility across digital, print, and in-person channels.

Included Assets

- Short "day-in-the-life" video clips for social media, events, or recruitment pages
- Professional photography and stills from campaign filming.
- Case studies

[Download Images](#)

Pro Tip

Use consistent campaign hashtags and tag relevant organisations (e.g. QMS Scotland, Lantra, SDS, DYW) to amplify your reach. (If you have any questions, please contact: externalaffairs@qmScotland.co.uk)



SELINA



LOGAN



FARQUHAR



INDIAH



MATTHEW



ALICE

[Download Videos](#)

Case Studies

We also have case studies of people working in the industry telling their story – click the link below to download them and share.

[Download Case Studies](#)

Cutting Edge Roles in Red Meat Case Study...

Fraser Chapman
Livestock Auctioneer

What made you want to work in the red meat sector?
I have always had a keen interest in agriculture and livestock markets.

What does a typical day look like in your role?
A typical day involves canvassing for stock, engaging with customers and buyers, and on sale days, being in the market either selling or assisting the sale runs smoothly.

What common misconception about working in the red meat sector would you like to address?
There can be a common misconception that welfare standards are not at the forefront of farming, but having visited many farms it is evident that farmers take pride in maintaining high levels of animal welfare to help produce a high-quality product.

What is your ultimate goal in your career, or what's next for you?
I hope to continue doing my best for our customers while learning and building relationships with both farmers and buyers.

My advice would be to grab the bull by the horns. There are plenty of opportunities, and you don't have to be born and bred on a farm to work in the red meat sector.





Cutting Edge Roles in Red Meat Case Study...

Abby Tang
Insight Specialist, QMS

What does a typical day look like in your role?
A typical day in my role involves collaborating with data reporters and fellow insight professionals to analyse the latest meat trends and assess their potential impact on red meat sales, as well as how consumer behaviour is evolving. I am also responsible for producing regular reports and articles that support industry stakeholders in making informed and strategic decisions.

Do you have any advice for people who are considering a career in the red meat sector?
Don't be put off by the perception of the red meat sector as traditional – there are opportunities in many areas beyond farming, from insight and data to marketing and supply chain roles. Be curious, keep learning, and collaborate with colleagues across the supply chain to make a real impact.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
There is no single day that is the same in this role. We face changing operating circumstances every day, which means insights are constantly evolving. One day I may be analysing price inflation, and the next I could be exploring why consumers prefer a particular red meat cut. There are no boring days!

What is your ultimate goal in your career, or what's next for you?
My ultimate goal is to become a leading insight professional within the red meat sector, using data and research to drive strategic decisions that benefit the whole industry.

I was surprised by how scientifically advanced and innovative the red meat industry is. Across the sector, stakeholders are continuously working to improve meat quality, animal welfare, and sustainability.





Cutting Edge Roles in Red Meat Case Study...

Aysha Ohal
Meat Hygiene Inspector

Where did it all begin?
I have always been passionate about the science of animal welfare and health and disease in a one health approach. This is why I pursued an undergraduate degree in Animal Science and a Masters in epidemiology of infectious disease in animals.

What inspired you to become a meat hygiene inspector?
When I saw the advertisement for a trainee meat hygiene inspector, it piqued my interest because it incorporated my favourite things, animal welfare and public health against disease.

Is there anything that surprised you working in the industry?
Personally, the thing that surprised me most about the industry was just how much effort goes into ensuring such a high standard of animal welfare and the efforts that go into the protection of public health. It is a truly fascinating industry, and I feel it does not quite enough credit for what it does on a daily basis.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
I really enjoy that no two days are the same, and that I get to do my part in keeping the public safe alongside ensuring welfare standards are upheld. I really enjoy being part of a team that all share a common goal, it really is a humbling experience for me every day.

Do you have any advice for people who are considering a career in the red meat sector?
Don't be put off by the misperceptions of the industry, you have the opportunity to make a difference and find yourself in a very rewarding career. If it does not reach out and ask questions. There are so many opportunities within the industry you won't be disappointed.

The ultimate goal for me is to continue progressing my career in the industry and continue to make a difference to animal welfare and protect public health.





Cutting Edge Roles in Red Meat Case Study...

Charlie Reid
Trainee Auctioneer

What made you want to work in the red meat sector?
After spending most of my life working on farms from the age of 13 onwards, I really fell in love with the industry. I was then given a great opportunity at Lawrie and Symington Ltd.

What does a typical day look like in your role?
Speaking to customers, canvassing for stock, sorting lambs into lots for sale days, and making sure all paperwork is correct.

What common misconception about working in the red meat sector would you like to address?
That the sector is 'old fashioned'. In reality, the genetics and science involved are unbelievable.

Do you have any advice for people considering a career in the red meat sector?
Ask questions – farmers love people who show genuine interest in the industry, as there aren't many who do. Be open to opportunities, because there are plenty in this sector. If you work hard and prove yourself, you can do very well.

The red meat sector isn't old fashioned at all – the genetics and science involved are unbelievable. If you work hard, ask questions and prove yourself, you can do very well in this industry.





Cutting Edge Roles in Red Meat Case Study...

Emily Robertson
Environmental and Sustainability Coordinator at Kepak

What does a typical day look like in your role?
My day is varied. I spend time in the office and out in the yard completing audits, as well as odor and noise assessments. I am also working towards being more involved in the production process to identify opportunities to save resources. Additionally, I assist the Food Safety and Quality department with internal audits, which I really enjoy because they are a great learning opportunity.

What do you enjoy most about your job?
I enjoy the opportunities to learn on the job the most. If you show interest in something, people are willing to teach and support you.

What common misconception about working in the red meat sector would you like to address?
A common misconception is around animal welfare. The animals on-site are looked after with the utmost care by trained staff and are regularly audited by vets and animal welfare auditors.

What is your ultimate goal in your career, or what's next for you?
I want to continue expanding my knowledge in food quality systems.

I love that in this industry, if you show curiosity and a willingness to learn, people are always happy to teach and support you, and you get to see the whole process from farm to fork while making a real difference in sustainability.





Inspire the Next Generation of Talent

Scotland's red meat sector has a strong story to tell — one of innovation, craftsmanship, and community.

Use this toolkit to

- Showcase the diversity of roles across the supply chain.
- Highlight the benefits and training opportunities available.
- Make recruitment inclusive and engaging.
- Share authentic stories that reflect the pride and purpose of working in the red meat industry.

Together, we can build a vibrant, skilled, and sustainable workforce for the future.



Useful Links & Resources

Here's a handy list of all key links featured throughout this toolkit for quick reference:

Industry Careers & Pathways

- [Lantra Scotland – Agriculture Careers](#)
- [Lantra's Careers Toolkit](#)
- [Tasty Careers Map](#)
- [Butchery Careers](#)
- [SAYFC Opportunities](#)

Workplace Culture, Wellbeing & Retention

- [Fair Work Employer Support Tool](#)
- [Fair Work Framework](#)
- [Flexibility Works](#)
- [CIPD Retention Factsheet](#)
- [Find Business Support \(Scotland\)](#)
- [Feeding Workforce Skills](#)

Recruitment & Employer Support

- [SF&D Recruitment & Retention Toolkit](#)
- [Skills Development Scotland – Employer Hub](#)
- [Inclusive Recruitment Hub](#)
- [Apprenticeships.scot](#)
- [Developing the Young Workforce](#)
- [CIPD Recruitment Factsheet](#)
- [ACAS Recruitment Guide](#)

Training, Skills & Qualifications

- [SCQF Framework](#)
- [SCQF Inclusive Recruiter Programme](#)
- [SDS Upskilling & Reskilling Hub](#)
- [Funded training courses through Lantra](#)
- [Lantra's Next Generation Practical Training Fund](#)

Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group



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