

# UK Government to join Royal Highland Show bicentenary celebrations



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The UK Government will show its support for Scotland's agriculture, food, drink and farming sectors from today (Thursday 23 June) when it takes part in the Royal Highland Show.

The four-day event, the first full show since 2019, will give the rural industries and members of the public the chance to speak to Ministers and staff from a range of government departments about what is important to them.

They will also be able to find out more about how the UK Government is delivering for people in Scotland.

On Thursday Scottish Secretary Alister Jack and UK Government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord will be touring the Ingliston showground. Friday will see UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart in attendance and Environment Secretary George Eustice is also due at the show.

Between them they'll be meeting with a range of key stakeholders to discuss issues across agriculture, farming and Scotland's world famous food and drink sectors, including gene editing technology, which farmers and bodies like the James Hutton Institute have been vocal in supporting.

Ministers will continue to urge the Scottish Government to join the UK Government in introducing legislation to cut red tape and support the development of innovative tech to grow more resistant, more nutritious and more productive crops - reducing the need for pesticides and lowering costs to farmers.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

It's fantastic that the Royal Highland Show is back, bigger and better than ever. It's Scotland's biggest agriculture event and made even more special this year with it being the 200th anniversary.

The UK Government will be making full use of this opportunity to meet with key players from the various sectors who make such a huge contribution to our everyday lives and Scotland's economy.

It's vital that the UK and Scottish Governments work together – as well as with businesses – to ensure our rural economy can continue to grow. Gene editing is an area where we can collaborate – and where we can really make a difference as we seek to strengthen our food security, tackle climate change and bring down food prices.

Gene editing is not genetic modification. It is using science to speed up what farmers have done for generations - breeding new strains of crops that are more disease and drought resistant. The industry in Scotland is clear - it does not want to be left behind.

Attracting almost 190,000 visitors, Scotland's biggest outdoor event provides an important platform for show-goers to find out how the UK Government is delivering for people in Scotland.

This year representatives in the UK Government marquee include the department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Border Force, Her Majesty's Coastguard, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), the Department for Transport (DfT), the Department for International Trade (DIT), the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The British Armed Forces will also be present.

The Scottish Secretary will also host a reception with the Scotch Whisky Association, showcasing the best of the UK's biggest food and drink export.

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