SRUC’s Research, Education and Consulting Divisions working together in support of Scotland’s Food and Drink sector
SRUC (incorporating SAC Consulting) is extremely active in the food and drink sector and this publication outlines the broad reach of our food and drink expertise. SRUC is unique in the market place as it encompasses a depth of expertise and service provision from producer to consumer. This position provides a unique insight into supply chain issues and solutions and ensures expert supply chain wide knowledge is transferred from Research through Consulting and Education to end users.

SRUC works collaboratively with a number of institutions and organisations to support industry and policy development. Detailed below are some of these organisations:

- Scottish Government
- Scotland Food & Drink and its partners including AHDB, DairyUK, Improve, LANTRA, NFUS, QMS, SAOS, Seafood Scotland and SFDF
- Scottish Funding Council
- Interface Food & Drink
- Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise, including Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Development International
- SFQC
- FARMA
- Scottish Organic Forum and the Organic Certification Bodies
- Scotland’s HEI’s and Research Partners including Aberdeen, Abertay, Edinburgh, Glasgow, James Hutton Institute, Queen Margaret’s University, Robert Gordon University and University of the Highlands and Islands
- Scotland’s Local Authorities
- Scotland’s Regional Food Networks
- The Community Food Sector including Nourish, SenScot and The Plunkett Foundation
- Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)
- British Institute of Innkeeping Approvals Board
- Quality Assurance Agency
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Primary Production

Getting the basics right at the primary end of the supply chain is key to the success of Scotland’s food and drink industry. SRUC is Scotland’s market leader in advice and service provision to Scotland’s farmers. General business advice is provided to over 7,500 farmer and crofter customers, supported by advice from a number of specialists in a range of areas including beef & sheep, dairy, crops and organic farming.

Our market leading animal health schemes play a vital role in highlighting the health status of Scottish livestock. These schemes, coupled with SRUC’s animal disease surveillance work for the Scottish Government, support the competitiveness of the Scottish agricultural sector which in turn produces quality products for the food and drink industry.

Our world class integrated research helps to tackle the complex and interrelated challenges caused by dwindling natural resources, a changing climate, a growing human population and an increasing demand for food. Strategic and applied research aims to tackle global and local food security issues. Specific food related research activity has analysed technical and cost efficiency issues and looked at producers’ market orientation.

Initial studies, using SRUC’s award winning GreenCow facility, indicate the methane output from different animals can depend on the bulls used within a breed. This confirms there are opportunities in breeding programmes for improved efficiency to also reduce the impact ruminant animals have on climate change. [www.sruc.ac.uk/greencow](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/greencow)

Fluke roadshow 2013 (above) and Suckler Cow Management workshop 2013 (above right).

SRUC’s market leading animal health schemes

The Dairy Cattle Research Centre, based at Crichton Royal Farm, Dumfries, aims to develop sustainable systems of dairy production and to support the dairy industry with expert advice and training. [www.sruc.ac.uk/dairyresearchcentre](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/dairyresearchcentre)
Local Food

In recent years there has been an increasing focus on supporting the growth of local foods, encouraging new food and drink businesses and in developing added value. This has developed from the trend towards shortening supply chains. Much local food has grown out of primary production activities and part of developing the food offering is helping to develop the skills and management activities required to meet the needs of the market. Key activities include:

- Market research and analysis
- Product development
- Business and marketing planning
- Improving customer service
- Preparing businesses for market entry
- Supporting local food and drink companies at events

Think Local is a Scottish Government funded project, helping to develop a commercial and sustainable local food and drink sector in Scotland. This includes support for:

- Added value activities
- Farmers’ markets and events
- Local Food retail and tourism
- Regional food networks
- Collaboration

The World Championships in Dundee and Think Local Stands at the World Curling Championships in Dumfries.
Supply Chains and Market Access

SRUC has worked with many different supply chains both domestically and internationally and has built an expertise that has created a demand for its input into a range of key projects and initiatives. Effective and beneficial vertical and horizontal collaboration within supply chains ensures efficient and successful business relationships that benefit all involved. SRUC delivers support across the supply chain; working on a one-to-one basis with producers examining supply chain efficiency and productivity and assessing impact.

The Market Driven Supply Chains (MDSC) project has set priorities to engage with food and drink supply chains to exploit opportunities in both UK and international markets. This project offers support across the Scottish food and drink sector, with expertise targeted where it is needed, to unlock barriers to potential growth.

Areas of supply chain research in SRUC include:

- Policy evaluation and economic analysis
- Supply chain management
- Consumer demand analysis
- Industrial organisation

Farmers delivering milk by bicycle in Malawi (above) and Dairy farmer in central Malawi (left).

A selection of independent and impartial Briefings relating to the food industry and production research can be found on the Rural Policy Centre website: www.sruc.ac.uk/ruralpolicycentre
Product Development

Innovative product development is key to the success of food and drink businesses across Scotland. Developing new products requires expert support and resource. The ProductMAX service from SRUC helps businesses to develop products from concepts, through market research and recipe development to customer presentation.

SRUC has a background in undertaking market-leading research into new development areas. In the past decade these have included supply chain linkages, food networks and local food in a variety of sectors. SRUC is able to incorporate these topics into up-to-date market assessment to ensure any new products developed take into account the key strategic themes in Scotland of reputation, premium and provenance.

SRUC has expertise covering each of the stages of new product development including market research, recipe creation, production, branding, market testing, market targeting and customer relationship management. SRUC’s specific food and drink industry knowledge enables SRUC staff to advise industry in relation to the new product development and production processes alongside issues such as productivity and production capability.

SRUC research and subsequent collaboration with QMS led to the development of Tenderscot – an instrument used for meat quality testing in laboratories and abattoirs.

SRUC Elmwood Hospitality department works collaboratively with Chilliicious developing new dishes incorporating their produce. Students compete annually, producing different recipes to help raise the profile of this local company.
Farmers’ Markets and Local Food Retail

Scotland produces world class raw materials and SRUC works with many businesses in this sector to capitalise on the potential to diversify into direct consumer supply. Understanding the customer is key to this type of enterprise development and we work to develop consumer focus through market research and understanding.

SRUC has helped to grow and develop farmers’ markets and farm shops by undertaking research and development to understand the customer base and build sustainable strategies for future growth. Through the Think Local initiative a farm retail business club is receiving support to improve business practices and undertake business benchmarking. Information is available from specialists, local offices and also online from www.thinklocalscotland.co.uk and www.sruc.ac.uk/diversification.

Local food retailing can also provide additional public benefits through initiatives such as community supported farms helping to provide the public with a better knowledge and awareness of how and where our food comes from. SRUC engages with a range of companies as part of its education programmes to demonstrate diversification opportunities and alternative approaches to food production.
Food & Drink Networks and Rural Tourism

Food and drink is part of Scotland’s cultural heritage and identity and one of its major advantages is the link to the spectacular landscape of rural Scotland. Using local knowledge SRUC works with customers to capitalise on the many unique opportunities that arise to build food and agri tourism.

Many of Scotland’s food and drink networks capitalise on their location by focussing on visitors to the region. Initiatives support the development of regional collaboration and interaction to maximise the market potential and develop the individual skills of producers. Coupled with this activity local food and drink events and trails promote regional specialities across Scotland. SRUC works closely with Scotland’s food forum network to enable producers to share best practice and build on networking opportunities.

Ayrshire Food Network at the Scottish Summer Cabinet.

SRUC - A REHIS & BIIAB Approved Training Centre
SRUC offers REHIS and BIIAB courses on a regular basis throughout the year. Please contact us for dates and more information. Alternatively, take a look at our website. Courses can be undertaken at SRUC or delivered in-house using your own business premises.

0800 269 453
training@sruc.ac.uk

Courses in:
• Food Hygiene
• Food Safety (HACCP) & Hazard Analysis
• Intermediate HACCP Practices
• Food & Health
• Health & Safety
• Personal Licence Holders
• First Aid

www.sruc.ac.uk/training

SRUC receives financial support from the Scottish Government
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Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting

Training Services for the Food, Catering & Hospitality Industries

REHIS Courses
• Elementary Certificate
• Intermediate Certificate
• Advanced Diploma

BIIAB COURSES
• Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (SCPLH)
• SCPLH Refresher Course

HSE COURSES
• Emergency First Aid at Work

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• First Aid
Hospitality

Hospitality skills are at the core of a range of food and drink sector activities that have been identified as key to the growth of Scotland’s food and drink industry. At our Elmwood campus we have a state-of-the-art kitchen, bakery and training restaurant. A number of services are provided including:

- Full and part-time hospitality courses
- Training chefs
- Field to fork

Winner of the CIS Award for Excellence in Hospitality Education 2014.
Business Development

It is sometimes difficult to work out which market to target to achieve the best rate of return. With input from SRUC businesses are able to understand different market opportunities and can develop the right marketing strategy for their products. This work enables companies to consider varied approaches for example developing premium products, a unique selling point or new markets for products.

SRUC provides support to individual companies including the evaluation of business efficiency and planning, developing new propositions for the market and preparing for new areas such as improved environmental impact, export or diversification projects. Delivery can take the form of feasibility studies, financial analysis & budgets, business skills & training programmes and grant & funding applications.

SRUC helps companies to develop their reputation through the use of food awards. SRUC has developed and delivered support in best practice in both entering and using awards. Through the Scottish Government’s Veterinary and Advisory Service (VAS) programme, SRUC also delivers support in the development of the EU’s Protected Food Name scheme, which provides a system for the protection of food names on a geographical or traditional recipe basis.
Skills Development

SRUC has developed and delivered training in adding value for food and drink businesses and regional courses are now delivered across Scotland through the support of the Scottish Government’s Think Local programme. Support in these programmes is delivered to groups of companies across a range of topics where practical and food and drink industry specific information is provided, together with the opportunity to network and learn from others.

A range of education courses is available including City and Guilds Introduction to Professional Cookery, City and Guilds Level I & II Diploma in Professional Cookery and HNC Professional Cookery. Details of the full range of hospitality courses is available from www.sruc.ac.uk/hospitalitycook

SRUC also provides short courses including:

- **REHIS and BIIAB courses in:**
  - Food Hygiene
  - Food Safety (HACCP)
  - Food & Health
  - Health & Safety
  - Personal Licence Holders
  - First Aid
- Poultry Production
- Horticulture

**Food Tourism and Hospitality courses available at SRUC:**
- HNC/HND/BA/BA(Hons) Activity Tourism Management with a Food Stream
- BA/BA(Hons) Food Tourism Management

Further information can be found at www.sruc.ac.uk/training and www.sruc.ac.uk/hospitalitytraining
SRUC has experts with experience and understanding of the scientific, regulatory and economic aspects of waste management, providing clients with products and services across a range of waste streams. We have a range of consultancy solutions including waste management strategies, feasibility studies and design of waste treatment systems, carbon footprinting and carbon management strategies, odour and particulate measurement and control, legislative and regulatory compliance, and planning and licensing. This capability enables businesses to consider by-products as a resource rather than a disposal problem.

SRUC has an in-depth expertise of renewables projects relevant for food and drink businesses, manufacturing and processing. This covers a wide range of renewable energy technologies, from wind energy, hydropower, biomass and anaerobic digestion, to solar thermal and solar photovoltaic.

With an increasing global population and more extreme weather patterns food security has become a critically important issue for societies around the globe. Food security and sustainability are subjects that feature in SRUC’s course provision and SRUC researchers are working with others to develop appropriate strategies for food security.
Organics

SRUC runs the Scottish Government’s Organic Market Link project, which aims to improve the flow of information on supply and market demand between organic producers, processors and retailers in Scotland. www.sruc.ac.uk/organicmarketlink

SRUC also facilitates the Scottish Organic Forum, an industry led body whose key objective is to strengthen and promote Scotland’s organic food and drink supply chain through collaboration. The group is made up of representatives from organisations with an interest in promoting and developing organic production in Scotland.

The organic sector requires highly trained individuals to work as certification officers, advisers, agronomists, farmers, farm managers and livestock specialists. SRUC offers an Organic Farming MSc which enables students with a variety of academic and working experiences to gain a fast-track understanding of the key technical production, marketing and management aspects of organic farming and food.

A number of SRUC organic experts are on hand to provide information through local offices, the organic helpline and the Organic Market Link project. www.sruc.ac.uk/organicfarming
International Activities

SRUC’S food and drink specialists have been involved in international food and drink projects for many years. This provides an insight into overseas markets, their challenges and the opportunities, and adds to the wealth of experience brought to all SRUC food and drink activities. Detailed below are just some of the international projects:

- Regional Food Networks and Quality Systems in Kosovo
- Food & Drink and Activity Tourism in Finland and Estonia
- Food & Drink Business & Marketing Planning in Estonia and Russia
- Food & Drink Organic Co-operation in Turkey
- Food & Drink Market Research in United Arab Emirates
- Dairy Supply Chain in Malawi
- Meat Quality Measurement
- Raspberries are Good for You
- International Agri Business MBA programme

SRUC’s collaborative research activity has strong links to industry and has research alliances in over 55 countries. This international engagement deepens our understanding of rural issues and through knowledge transfer activities this is communicated across the sector.

This commitment enables SRUC to lead innovation and sustainable development in agriculture and associated industries and supports the development of new solutions to the many challenges.
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