

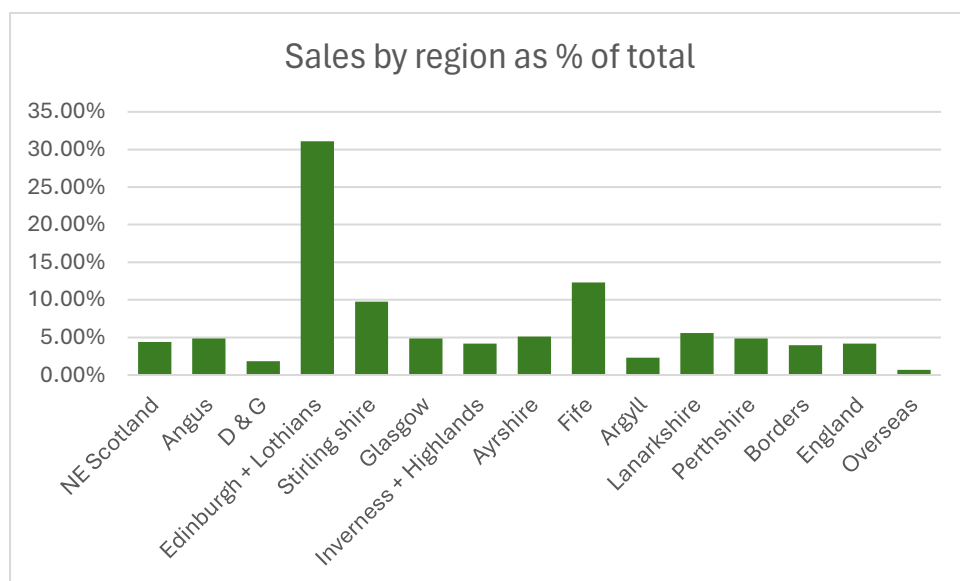
Report to the AGM 2026

The Trustees remain committed to focusing on the Annual Festival as a proven means to fulfil our core purposes.

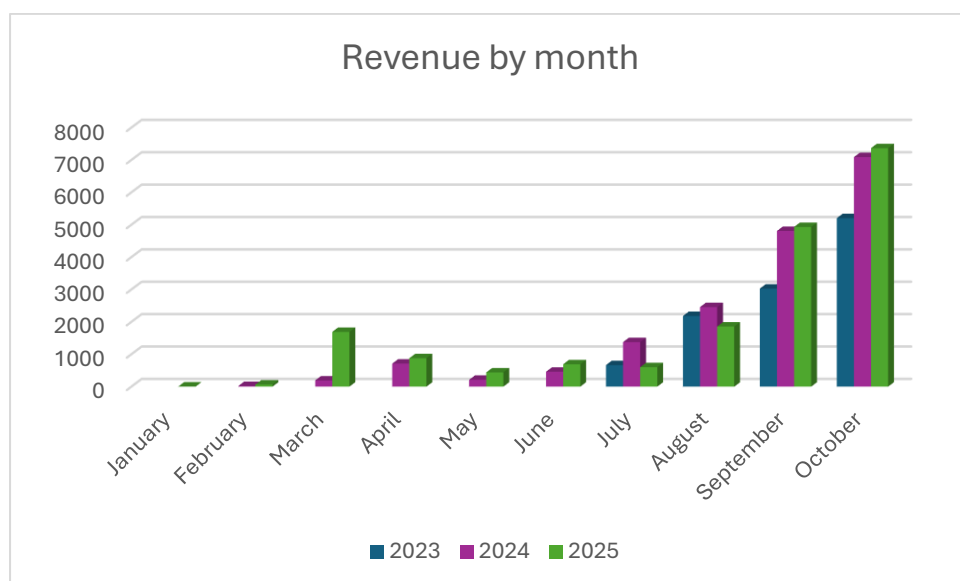
The 2025 Festival was yet another success, with improved attendance all round. We are indebted to the speakers at the many seminars, and grateful for the teaching opportunities offered by our Training partners who support the Festival.

The Festival has been run for the last fourteen years with a very clearly defined purpose – to showcase smallholding and its part in the agricultural economy. Our goal to Inform, educate and inspire has continued to be the strategic principle that we follow, and it has been followed successfully.

The 2025 festival attracted interest from the whole of the country: albeit the “local” audience in the Lothians and Fife were the best represented.



Our revenue is building as can be seen in the below and the advent of early bird tickets helped our cashflow.:



The government has been very focused on promoting small producers, and we were involved in the small producers pilot fund steering group. The Festival delivers on

virtually every aspect of the small producer environment; as evidenced by a list of the people involved in the 2025 Festival.

Small Producer Outputs at the Festival 2025:

We had a wide range of small producers either speaking, taking part in the commercial area or selling cooked produce in the Food Court. Areas covered this year included:

- Flower farming
- Floral art displays
- Hand-made decorations
- Meat Production and sale (including Pies)
 - Pork
 - Mutton
 - Venison
- Cheese
- Bread
- Vegetables
- Preserves
- Alcoholic Drinks
- Oils and Vinegars
- Honey and Beekeeping
- Plants
- Poultry and Eggs
- Fleece and Wool
 - Raw fleece
 - Felting
 - Tanning
 - Spinning
 - Weaving
 - Knitting
 - Crochet
 - Yarn
- Wood craft
 - Turning
 - Pyrography
- Tea (booked but didn't make it)
- Hemp
- Fudge and home made confectionary.

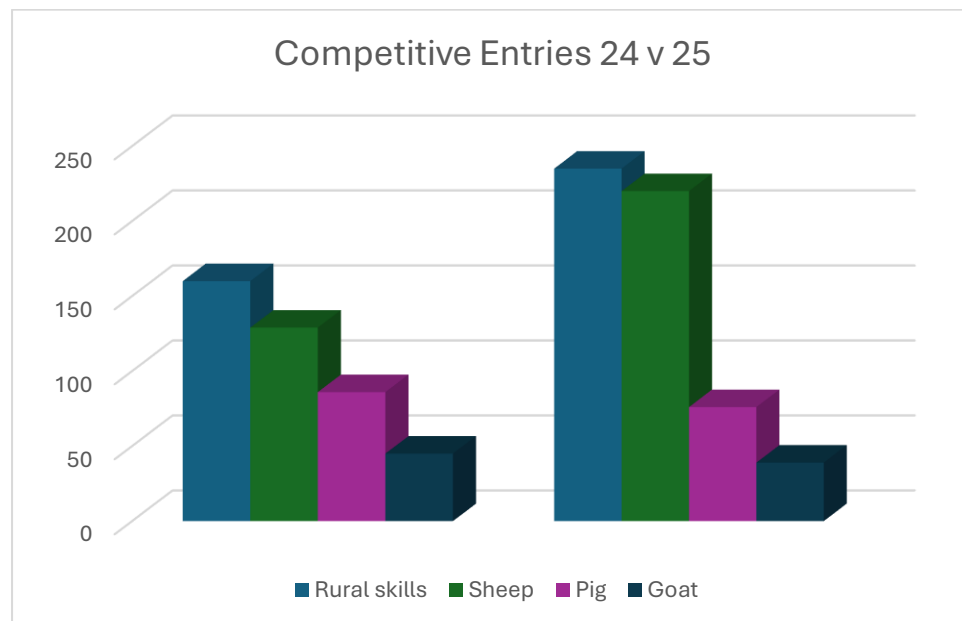
Our plan for 2026 is to expand and enhance this area with more small producers, whilst not renewing businesses selling bought in goods in the market area.

Competitive Classes

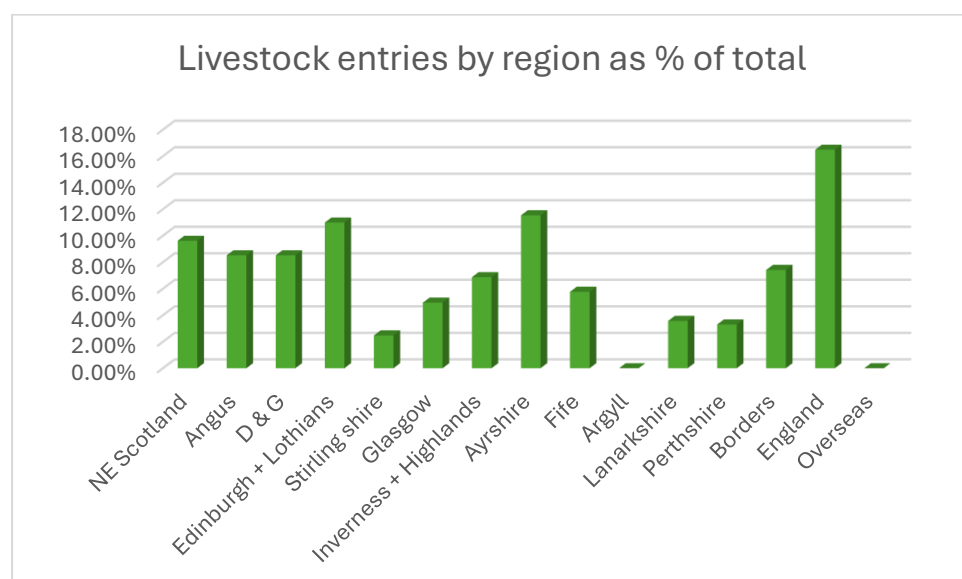
The competitive classes were much healthier than in 2024. In particular the sheep competition was significantly up, with some of the rise due to the specialist classes

for Icelandic, Hebridean and Valais Blacknose breeds. These were quite well supported and this seems to be an area that we could continue to exploit.

The rural skills competition also underwent significant changes with the removal of the entrance fees and prize money for classes in favour of free entry and section based prizes. Whilst still not quite right, the new set up clearly found favour with entrants.



It was particularly good to see that competitive entries again spanned Scotland with most regions putting entries forward. The removal of restriction for Bluetongue was important, and if this were to continue to next year, we would hope to see a rise in numbers from the very north of England. The number is however heavily skewed by the numbers entering the Pig competition from England and Wales.



Seminar Attendance

The seminar rooms, the SRUC and Scottish Food Guide Theatres were consistently busy all day. All 30 tickets for the two tasting sessions were sold beforehand, and the second session on lambing in the SRUC Theatre filled 40 seats with more standing.

The most popular talks related to abattoirs, growing, soil, government and AI (artificial insemination). Attendance at these seminars and demonstrations attracted a participant number in the region of 550.

2026 Planning

The festival will look different in 2026, with a new name “The Scottish Smallholding and Countryside Festival” –



Our aim is to reflect all aspects of rural life in Scotland with the focus still very much upon family farms, rural affairs and small production. The event will also see an expansion with the addition of the Lowland Hall facilitated by a grant from the RHASS which covered 80% of the cost. We are expanding the Highland Hall livestock to include competitive Poultry classes, Alpacas, and a larger sheep section with seven unique breed classes. The Highland and Central halls will be very focused on livestock and equipment.

The Lowland Hall will be more focused on rural life, and this area will see a vintage and classic tractor competition for the first time. The market area will move to the Hall as will the craft area, and all things food and drink will be based here including the Scottish Food Guide Theatre. We are hoping to see a number of new features in here, including the Scottish Field Ring – sponsored by the leading magazine for rural life in Scotland.

The team are very focused on delivering an event that will be part of the landscape in Scotland. As part of this development the charity is sharing a stand at the Royal Highland Show with the Scottish Agroecology partnership – a range of organisations who have similar goals and a focus on sustainable agriculture.

Trustees

May 2026