

Scottish Dairy Cattle Association AGM, Monday 19th January 2026.
SC009282

Chairman's Report for 2025.

2025 started well for most Scottish dairy farmers, with a more stable farmgate milk price resulting in greater investment in new buildings and milking facilities. However, the sharp drop milk price towards the end of 2025 will call on the resilience of dairy farmers to weather the storm until prices, which are forecast to improve during the second half of 2026.

Scottish dairy farms saw a net loss of 14 herds over the year, bringing the total to 750. The current total of milking cows within Scottish dairy farms is 181,797, an increase of 1,466 over the year, The average herd size is 242 cows. 85% of these herds milk record or regularly test for somatic cell count or heath test to ensure good herd management and animal health and welfare protocols are maintained. These figures are collated and updated twice per year by SDCA, and is recognised by Scottish Government, AHDB and SNFU as being an accurate account of the number of dairy herds and cow numbers within Scotland.

SDCA representatives were invited to a Teams meeting with representatives of the Office for the Internal Market (OIM) to discuss Bovine EID and the pros and cons of UHF or LF frequency within the eartag. The conclusion of their report is that OIM recommend that Defra and the Scottish and Welsh governments, at the earliest opportunity, issue a clear statement about the status of data derived from EID reads from technology other than their respective mandated national standards. This will help industry decide on the best investments to make in both the short term and the long term and minimise the risk of redundant investments.

The link to the subsequent report is:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6900c6fb84b816d72cb9aa7b/Bovine_electronic_id_entification_report.pdf

Janette Mathie continues to be an industry representative on the Scottish Health & Welfare Stakeholder Group, the Scottish Johne's Disease Working Group and the Scottish Blue Tongue working group. All these groups follow the stated aims of SDCA to improve the health and welfare of Scottish dairy cattle.

SDCA committee members continue to undertake stewarding roles at AgriScot, the main dairying event held in Scotland. SDCA Trustee, Gilmour Lawrie, has been elected as AgriScot Chairman. Cow numbers were up and the quality of cows was outstanding and a credit to the exhibitors. Evening Sidekick Jennifer won Supercow for the third consecutive year, thus showing the sustainable qualities within dairy cattle.

I take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support during 2025, and I wish you good health and resilience to face the challenges our industry may face during the coming year.

Robert Hunter

Chairman SDCA
19th January 2026

Trustee Signature:

Gilmour Lawrie:

Or

Jack Lawson:

