

BRITISH CATTLE BREEDING CONFERENCE



Joining the Dots: From Blue Skies to Green Fields

19–21 January 2026

To be held at
**Telford Hotel &
Golf Resort**

Great Hay Drive
Sutton Heights,
Telford
TF7 4DT

President: Duncan Sinclair
Chair: Dr Alex Brown
Secretary: Heidi Bradbury



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Message from the Chair, Dr Alex Brown

As you explore this year's programme, I hope you'll notice a thread running through every session and speaker: the idea of "joining the dots." Whether it's connecting research with practical breeding, linking generations of experience with new technology, or simply bringing people together from across our industry, this theme echoes our shared belief that progress happens when we work together.

I hope this year's sessions reflect the ongoing conversations we have in our community, whether they take place in sheds or in offices, online or in person: how do we turn new science into practical solutions? How do we ensure that innovation is accessible and relevant to every breeder, regardless of scale or system? And how do we keep our industry resilient and forward-looking in the face of change? We've invited speakers who are not only leaders in their fields, but also passionate about sharing knowledge and learning from others.

This year, we've built in more opportunities for discussion and exchange, because one of the strengths of our conference lies in the conversations that happen between sessions, the ideas sparked over coffee, and the willingness to challenge assumptions together. You'll find dedicated sessions designed for open dialogue, where your questions, challenges, and ideas can help shape the direction of our industry.

This event truly wouldn't be possible without the dedication and support of so many people. I want to thank our committee for their help and enthusiasm in shaping this year's event. To our sponsors and industry partners, many of whom I have leaned on heavily for advice and encouragement, your generosity and partnership are invaluable. And above all, the person truly responsible for bringing everything together is our secretary, Heidi Bradbury. Quite simply, without Heidi's tireless effort, attention to detail, and steady hand, none of this would ever be possible.

My call to you is simple: Whether you're a first-time attendee or a familiar face returning for another year – make the most of this opportunity. Share your experiences, ask questions, and connect with someone new. The British Cattle Breeders Club is, at its heart, a community built on curiosity, collaboration, and a shared commitment to progress.

Thank you for being part of this ongoing journey. Here's to a conference that inspires, connects, and moves us all forward.

Alex Brown



Joining the Dots: From Blue Skies to Green Fields

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Monday 19 January

12.30 - 13.30 Networking Lunch - sponsored by Genus

14.00 - 17.00 Bovine Workshop



The vet's guide to bovine breeding & genetics

Your guide to what tools and information are available for beef and dairy farmers to help improve the genetics of their cattle. Get to grips with the basics: why genetics and how can you support farmers with breeding decisions? Then join us for live interactive breeding planning sessions with vet Tonia Simms, along with beef and dairy farmers. Finally, get your chance to share what you need from the breeding and genetics industry to better support your farmer clients.

The Workshop is included Free of Charge to delegates booked to attend the conference sessions on Tuesday or Wednesday.

For Monday Workshop attendance only there will be a fee of £90.

Vet CPD Points Available

18.30 Wine Reception - sponsored by Neogen



19.30 Dinner served in the Restaurant

Tuesday 20 January Beef Day

09.00 Club Chair Dr Alex Brown opens the conference

09.05 Session 1 - Ideas with legs

Sponsored by: QMS

Chaired by: Bruce McConachie



Henry Blain, Head of Livestock, Sainsburys

Partnering for Progress: The Future of Sustainable British Beef

More customers than ever want consistently high-quality beef with a reduced environmental footprint. Following a decade of research and development, embracing the very best in Aberdeen Angus genetics, Sainsbury's proudly launched its reduced carbon premium beef. Partnering with ABP to innovate and grow their industry-leading integrated supply chain, Gamechanger, Sainsbury's is committed to working with British farmers to keep great tasting, high-quality British beef in consumers' baskets.

Sarah Haire, Head of Agriculture, Dunbia

Making an Impact

How do we ensure we can make a scalable impact from research? Evolving consumer and customer needs put increasing demands on the supply chain but how can we get the right R&D pipelines in a timely enough fashion to meet these needs and then adopt the results at scale and pace? Juggling long term projects with short term decision making whilst delivering a positive impact for all.

Scott Donaldson (FIA) Scot, FLAA, Group Director & Livestock Auctioneer, H&H Group plc, Carlisle

Completing the Data Circle

Pedigree beef breeders invest considerable time and resource into recording performance data for the cattle they produce. This gives bull buyers the information they require to make informed decisions when purchasing their next stock bull. But what information does the store cattle buyer have when he is investing huge figures to fill his sheds. It is time we completed the data circle.

Panel Discussion

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Session 2 - When ideas take root

Sponsored by: Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society

Chaired by: Ben Harman



Jonathan Chapman BVM&S MRCVS CertAVP, Atlantic Angus, Devon

Joining the Dots between Genetics, Grazing and Eating Quality

Jonathan Chapman runs Atlantic Angus, a 850-acre pedigree beef enterprise based in Cornwall and is both the 2025 Farmers Weekly Beef Farmer of the Year and Farmers Weekly Environmental Champion of the Year. Combining his experience as a farm animal vet with a passion for practical, data-driven farming, Jonathan has developed a system that produces efficient, sustainable and high-quality beef from grass.

Andy Rumming, Farmer & Butcher, Waterhay Farm, Wiltshire

From field to fashion - data matters!

Whether it's selling leather, bone product, tallow or meat direct to customers, data on final yield, quality and losses are critical. Linking this info back to the original beef animal, shows the true value but more importantly allows the prediction of future potential income. Andy will give a brief presentation on how he does this on a small scale and what makes the perfect animal when you are selling and processing absolutely everything you can from each animal direct to consumer.

John Elliot, Rawburn Aberdeen Angus, Kelso

Breeding fuel efficient, profitable cattle

The Rawburn Angus herd has been unparalleled for high performance Angus genetics in the UK for over 25 years. To move the herd to the next level of profitability and performance, for itself and its customers, they decided they must embrace the science of feed efficiency. Five years on, John will explain his decision and findings that currently shape the Rawburn breeding programme and its future direction.

Panel Discussion

12.20 Lunch

13.50 Session 3 - Joining the Dots:

Does Insight + Innovation Always = Impact?

Sponsored by: Livestock Information

Chaired by: Helen Brookes



What does "impact" really mean — and how do research insights and fresh ideas actually create change? This panel brings together researchers, funders, and farmers to challenge the traditional trickle-down model of impact, exploring diverse perspectives across the innovation chain. We'll dig into what it really takes to move beyond good ideas and deliver real, valuable change on farms — because impact isn't one-size-fits-all.

Panel members:

Chris Lyons, Agricultural Lead, InnovateUK Business Connect

Dr Laura Palczynski, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Harper Adams University

Katie Thorley, Agri Sustainability Manager, ABP UK

Robert Neill, Beef Farmer, Scottish Borders

15.05 Tea

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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15.35 Session 4 Bovine - Perspectives from outside UK cattle breeding

Sponsored by: Genus

Chaired by: Dr Harriet Bunning

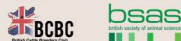


Dr Ana Granados Chapatte, Director of European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders / General Manager ICAR (Jan 2026)

Collaboration beyond borders: Breeders' perspective

Academia and the private sector can operate in different time frames, but they all share a common goal: to deliver tangible impact on farms. Co-creating to deliver impact by bridging the time gap is a challenge. Expanding to policymaking, the exercise of what needs to be delivered becomes a bit more challenging. And if we go beyond borders, trade adds a burden. We will explore the role of European and international organisations in overcoming those challenges.

Dr Craig Lewis, PIC Europe Genetic Services - Animal Breeder & Sir John Hammond Award Recipient 2025



When 'I have always done it this way' doesn't cut it anymore... Innovation only counts when it's used

Genetics is the foundation of livestock agriculture. It sets both the baseline and the upper limit. Livestock breeding has always blended the art and science of animal husbandry and raw data to make meaningful decisions, however times have changed. The how, why, and rate of breeding is changing rapidly. Awareness is key, but without the impact reaching the farm it's meaningless. Agriculture was built on innovation, today is no different.

16.50 Chair Dr Alex Brown to close the beef day sessions

17.10 BCBC Annual General Meeting

19.00 Champagne Reception sponsored by Co-op



19.30 Annual Club Dinner, with Beef provided by Jurassic Coast Fine Foods & Table Wine sponsored by Weatherbys Scientific



After Dinner Charity Event 'Heads & Tails' game raising funds for Farm Safety Foundation



Dress code: Smart/Casual

Wednesday 21 January Dairy Day

09.00 Club Chair Dr Alex Brown opens dairy day

09.05 Session 5 - Ideas with legs

Sponsored by: Co-op

Chaired by: Andrew Wilson



Dr Emma Gregson, Environment Manager, DairyUK

The Power of Collaboration

This paper explores how collaboration across the dairy sector — between farmers, advisors, industry, and government — can drive practical environmental improvements. By sharing knowledge and working together, farmers are better supported to adopt sustainable practices that benefit both their businesses and the planet. The message is simple: collaboration leads to better results, and no one has to do it alone.

Dr Sophie Eaglen, International Program Director, NAAB

Bringing Innovation to Farmers around the world

Two regions, North America and Europe, drive global bovine genetics, supplying innovation to more than 120 countries. Yet genetics developed in one context often face unexpected challenges elsewhere. This session explores how culture, environment, and markets influence the success of global breeding programs, and what the next decade might bring as the world, and the cattle that feed it, continue to change.

Andy Warne, AHDB Dairy Sector Council

Does the sustainability concept still have legs?

Some sceptics might talk about "Buzzword burnout" or "Greenwashing", others might just find the whole climate crisis too over-whelming BUT climate change is still very real. I would argue, sustainability is actually becoming more concrete, measuring it is becoming more credible, and supply-chains are becoming more transparent. The key to keeping the legs on the sustainability idea is to evolve our thinking into a sharper concept. We need to define what we actually mean by sustainability and the role of genetics and genomics in making it happen.

Panel Discussion

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Session 6 - IVF: Big Gains or Big Gamble?

Sponsored by: Neogen

Chaired by: Matt Gue



A panel discussion covering all things advanced reproductive technologies. How and when to adopt OPU/IVF over traditional MOET. The panel is made up of experts in their fields and farmers who have first hand experience of how these technologies can rapidly improve your herds genetic potential.

Panel members:

Rob Simmons BVMS MRCVS, Veterinary Surgeon, Paragon Veterinary Group

Keith Gue, Dairy Farmer, Huddleston Farmers Ltd

Ben Lewis, Beef Farmer, Haven Herefords

Chris Bailey BVMS MRCVS, Veterinary Surgeon, Paragon Veterinary Group & Dairy Farmer

12.10 Lunch

13.30 Session 7 - When ideas take root

Sponsored by: ForFarmers

Chaired by: Victoria Ashmore



Matthew Dobbs, Veterinary Surgeon, Herdvision

Vision technologies to advance bovine fertility

Vision technologies provide new "eyes" for livestock farmers providing objective, repeatable, accurate, non-invasive and cost-effective feedback on the health, welfare and performance of cattle. With advancing 3D technology, edge computing and AI, the best technologies can now provide detailed assessments that are not visible to the human eye, provide early warnings and allowing health and fertility challenges to be addressed earlier, improving profitability and mitigating carbon.



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Aled Rhys Davies NSch, Director & Founder of Pruex Ltd

Achieving Rapid Soil Regeneration by Reducing Pollution

Who knew that rotting fermenting slurry could have such a detrimental effect on cow health, grazing and silage quality? When we first started measuring what was happening on farms, it became clear that pollution from slurry wasn't just an odour problem – it was making cows sick, spoiling feed, polluting the environment, and driving the demand for synthetic fertiliser. Ammonia on farms wasn't just an air issue – it was holding back soil.

Cath Ratcliffe, Dairy Farmer, Weavian Farm, Devon

Cow-centric Innovation

Focusing on core values of high welfare, free-range, and sustainable farming has shaped our autumn block calving dairy business. Our small bottling enterprise, 'Webbery Moos,' engages with consumers locally and has helped strengthen the culture we set within the business. With a background in farm consultancy, I have a very analytical approach, which helps us to target investment in technology and innovation to optimise cow performance and enhance sustainability.

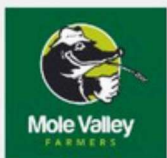
Panel Discussion

15.00 Chair Dr Alex Brown to close the conference

15.10 Tea available



Thank you to ALL our sponsors



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#BCBC26