

SCOTTISH DAIRY CATTLE ASSOCIATION

Representing the Dairy Cattle Industry of Scotland

Secretary: Janette Mathie

Registered Charity No. SC009282

6 Lambhill Terrace
Lockerbie, DG11 2HX

Tel: 01576 202 129

Mobile: 07810 128 649

Email: janette.mathie@btinternet.com

Scottish Dairy Herds under 800

The 1st of January 2024 dairy herd statistics for Scotland, released by the Scottish Dairy Cattle Association, show a net decrease of 10 dairy herds during 2023, bringing the total to 794.

During the same period there was an increase of 2,086 cows making a total of 180,648, the highest number this century.

The average herd size continues to rise and now stands at 227, up by 6 on the year.

Ayrshire saw the biggest decrease with a net loss of 6 herds followed by Dumfriesshire with a net loss of 4 herds.

However, there was a net increase of 3 herds in Aberdeenshire and Wigtownshire, respectively.

Cows officially milk recorded are 72% of the dairy cow population with an average herd size of 241 cows.

There is also an increase in milk sample monitoring for somatic cell count, pregnancy diagnosis and disease testing, with dairy farmers, milk processors, and industry partners all aware of animal welfare and the importance and financial benefits of improving milk quality and reducing disease.

Commenting Janette Mathie, the secretary of the SDCA said:

“2023 was a challenging year for Scottish dairy farmers, with reductions in milk prices, labour issues and the cost-of-living crises but there is optimism and resilience with new dairies due to start up during 2024 and dedication in producing high quality milk and dairy products and breeding superior dairy cattle”.

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For further enquiries and information please contact: -

Janette Mathie on 07810 128649 or janette.mathie@btinternet.com