

SCOTTISH DAIRY CATTLE ASSOCIATION

Representing the Dairy Cattle Industry of Scotland

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Scottish Dairy Cow Numbers Increase Despite Less Herds

The 1st of January 2022 dairy herd statistics for Scotland, released by the Scottish Dairy Cattle Association, show an increase in cow numbers but dairy herds continue to fall, with an increase of 3023 cows and a net loss of 11 herds compared to January 2021.

The average herd size continues to rise and now stands at 216, up 7 on the year, with the total milking cows at 179,361.

In Scotland there are now 832 dairy herds, a decline of 195 over the last 10 years.

Kintyre and Lanarkshire showed a net decrease in herds with three each, but there is still confidence in the future with new herds, especially in Dumfriesshire, with more to start in 2022.

Cows officially milk recorded are 72% of the dairy cow population with an average herd size of 229 cows.

There is also an increase in herds somatic cell count monitoring and disease testing, with farmers, milk buyers, and industry partners all aware of the animal health and financial benefits of improving milk quality and reducing disease. Pregnancy diagnosis, through milk samples, continues in popularity as it incurs no stress to the cows and is giving good results.

Commenting Janette Mathie, the secretary of the SDCA said:

“Although farm gate prices increased during the latter part of 2021, the pandemic continues to be challenging, especially due to labour shortages and the rising cost of living, effecting costs such as fertiliser, fuel and energy prices. But there is still commitment within Scottish dairy farmers to produce high quality milk and dairy products and breed superior dairy cattle”

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