

SCOTTISH DAIRY CATTLE ASSOCIATION

Representing the Dairy Cattle Industry of Scotland

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Scottish Dairy Herds Scottish Dairy Herds Decrease by 23.7% in the last Decade.

The 1st of January 2025 dairy herd statistics for Scotland, released by the Scottish Dairy Cattle Association, show a net decrease of 30 dairy herds during 2024, bringing the total to 764. This is a 23.7% decrease over the last 10 years.

During the same period there was a decrease of 257 cows making a current total of 180,391.

The average herd size continues to rise and now stands at 236, up by 9 on the year.

Ayrshire saw the biggest decrease with a net loss of 15 herds followed by Dumfriesshire with a net loss of 5 herds.

However, both counties saw new dairy herds start up with more to start in 2025.

Cows officially milk recorded are 73% of the dairy cow population with an average herd size of 250 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:

“ Some Scottish dairy farmers will be making difficult decisions about their future during 2025, but there is still determination and dedication in producing high quality milk and dairy products and breeding superior dairy cattle”.

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