

From the Farm



Farmers in Scotland have been continuing to work at this time because they are doing the vital job of producing food for us – and many of them are looking after animals. Spring is an important time for livestock farmers with cows calving and sheep lambing.

At the Hirsel, the cows and heifers (young cows that hadn't had a calf before) of the Douglas Fold have given birth to their calves over the last few months. Highland Cattle are a beef breed, native to Scotland and so are able to live out on grass all the year round. As the temperature warms they will shed a lot of their long hairy coats grown to keep them warm through the winter (many birds will line their nests with it!). Because they mostly belong remote areas, Highland cows are able to calve without any help from the farmer.

Activities

1. Make: Highland Cow Craft

2. Watch:

'Scotland's Farming Year – Spring' (produced by RHET) at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYxly-hiGbM>

'Livestock' (Royal Cornwall agricultural Association) <http://www.royalcornwallshow.org/education/farm-and-country-activity-sheets/livestock-activities/>

3. Investigate: what foods you have 'From Scottish Farms'

4. Design: a poster for a food produced in Scotland

5. Bake: Sheep Cupcakes

Lots more videos, information and ideas on food and farming at <https://eatfarmnow.com/category/lockdown-learning/> and <https://www.qmscotland.co.uk/news/country-kids-star-new-farm-diary-series>, especially <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRDEJMRb8JQ>

Highland Cow craft

The Highland cattle are very much part of the Hirsell Estate and we love to see them on your visits especially in spring when they have their calves.

Already the calves are growing hard, feeding on their mothers milk which they produce from grazing on grass.

They do look just like teddy bears!



Can you make your own Highland Cow/calf from what you have around – here are a couple of ideas. If you don't have suitable craft materials you could collect some dead brown leaves, twigs, cones etc when you are out and make a natural collage – the colours would be perfect!



Remember the cows (female) horns point upwards but a bulls (male) horns grow outwards

From Scottish farms

Scottish farms produce many foods for us to eat from meat and dairy products to eggs, grains, fruit, vegetables and even fish.



- What foods have you eaten today have been produced in Scotland? A Scottish flag on the packaging or a closer look at the labels will hopefully help you find out.

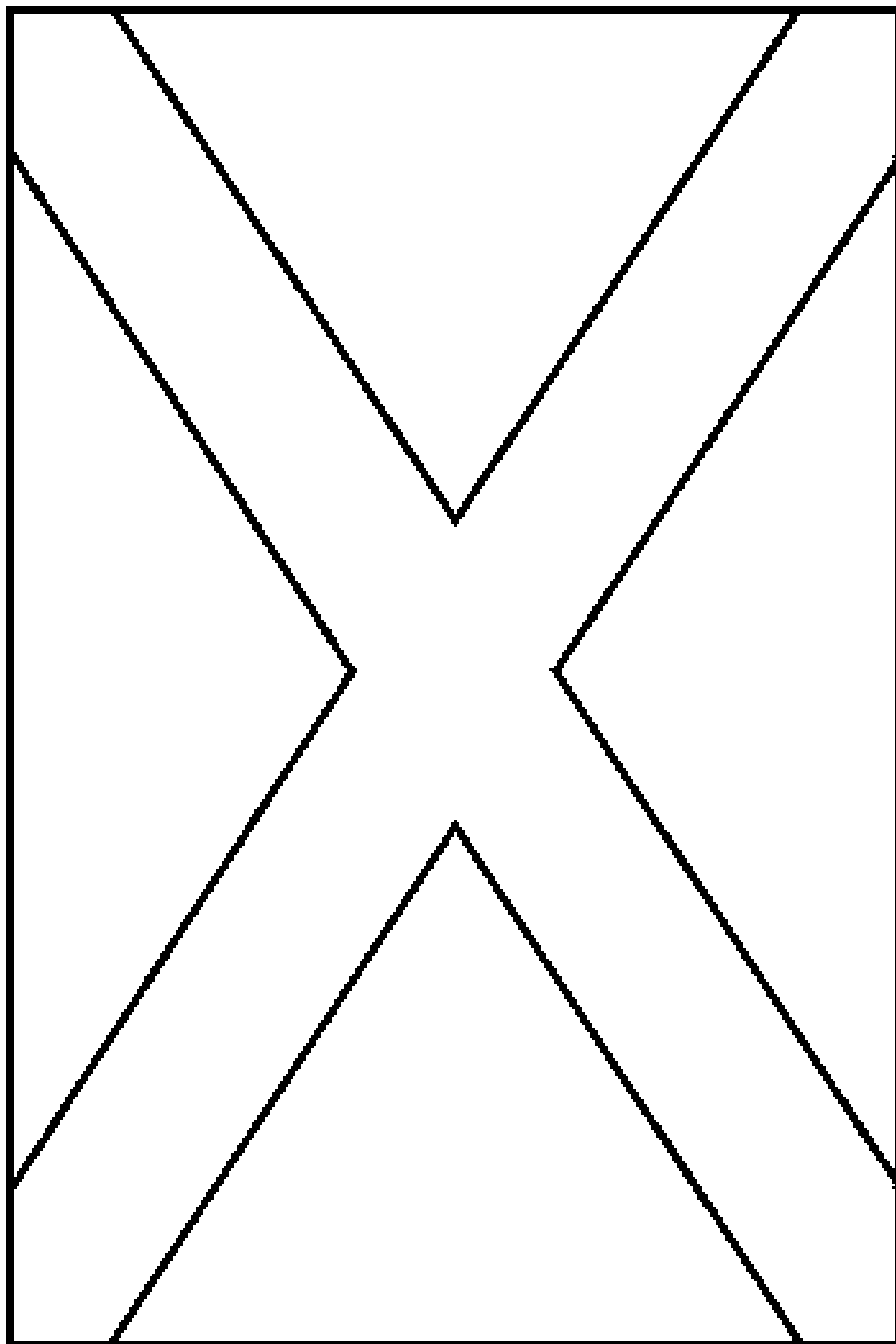


(A British flag may also mean it is produced in Scotland)

- What other foods in your cupboards or fridge have been produced in Scotland?
- Print the attached Scottish flag outline or draw your own and then fill the triangle sections with drawings of the foods you can find. Alternatively you could make a big flag and stick on labels and packets or cut pictures from food magazines.



- Now design your favourite meal using with foods produced in Scotland.



Design a poster

Farms in Scotland produce some of the highest quality food in the world. Scottish farmers take great care of their animals and there are lots of rules and checks to make sure the food that is produced is safe, sustainable and of a high standard.

Design a poster/leaflet/power point/video showing what is good about Scottish farming and encourage people to buy Scottish produce.

You might like to concentrate on one type of food produced or be more general.

You might give reasons as:

- Low food miles, no aeroplanes or long journeys needed
- Supports Scottish farm businesses
- Good for local economy
- Quality is high and safe
- Foods help a healthy, well balanced diet
- Animals well cared for, high standards and checks
- Farmers care for the environment, rules
- Carbon capture – grassland absorbs and holds carbon

Younger children draw a picture of a Scottish farm



Sheep cupcakes

Ingredients:

150g self-raising flour
½ level tsp baking powder
100g soft butter or margarine
100g caster sugar
2 eggs
1 tbsp milk or water



What to do:

1. Turn oven on to 180C or Gas 5. Put 12 paper cases in a bun tin.
2. Sieve flour and baking powder into a bowl.
3. Add all other ingredients and beat together to make dropping consistency.
4. Divide between 12 paper cases.
5. Bake for 10-15 minutes until well risen, golden brown and firm to touch.
6. Allow to cool.

To decorate you will need:

- Butter icing made by beating together 100g sieved icing sugar, 50g softened butter or margarine and ½ tbsp boiling water
- White mini marshmallows
- Giant chocolate buttons
- Cake decoration eyes – optional

Cover the cooled cupcake top with butter icing. Stick the mini-marshmallows all over as wool. Use some icing to stick on giant button for head, sections of button for ears and the eyes (alternatively use icing to make eyes).