



'People. Product. Knowledge' was the theme for the seventeenth annual Farming Scotland Conference, where delegates heard that farmers and others involved in the sector must use storytelling to build public trust and add value to the goods it produces.

Marion MacCormick, food sector consultant and a member of the Scottish Government's farming and food production policy group said that marketing efforts must focus on the next generation of shoppers who are mainly "thoughtful shoppers" with an interest in animal welfare and sustainability.

Chair of Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), Kate Rowell, developed the theme of focusing on sustainability from the perspective of Scottish livestock revealing that QMS is looking to add sustainability checks into its farm assurance schemes by capturing information on sustainable initiatives farmers are already doing and then quantifying them.

Cambridge arable farmer and Nuffield Scholar, James Peck entertained delegates with his talk on his multi enterprise business, PX Farms. James has a passion for scale and innovation and has focused on both to develop and grow his farming business. He also stressed the need to take people with you and explained how he always takes the time to speak to the people and communities he is operating alongside.

Simon Haley, agricultural consultant and social media guru said the farming sector needed to take advantage of the amount of time consumers spend on the internet, and use online platforms to tell their story and build a brand for Scottish and UK produce. He urged farmers to stick their necks above the parapet to explain what they do and how they do it.

Thanks to all the delegates for supporting the conference and for making it such a success. Thanks also to sponsors EQ Accountants, Bell Ingram, Thorntons and Royal Bank of Scotland.