

News story: UK Government to support Scottish rural businesses at this year's Royal Highland Show

Scotland's biggest agricultural event gives the rural industries and members of the public the chance to speak to UK Government ministers and staff about what is important to them, and find out more about how the UK Government delivers for people in Scotland.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

I'm very pleased to be attending the Royal Highland Show – it's a fantastic event which shows rural Scotland at its very best.

The Royal Highland Show is an important opportunity for the UK Government to hear views from farmers and others in the rural economy, and for us to talk about our plans to support them.

Agriculture is vital to Scotland's economy, and I look forward to discussing with the industry and show-goers how the UK Government can help the sector flourish.

The Scottish Secretary will attend the event on its opening day, Thursday June 20. A number of other UK Government ministers will also visit the four-day show and eight UK Government departments, plus partner organisations will be represented.

As well as touring the show site and meeting industry representatives, the Mr Mundell will host a whisky reception showcasing the best of Scotland's distillers and toasting their success.

The whisky industry makes up 70 per cent of Scottish food and drink exports, employs more than 10,000 people, and contributes £5.5 billion a year to the UK economy.

In total hundreds of thousands of jobs are reliant on Scotland's farming, food and drink sectors which produce billions of pounds of exports annually.

To help boost sales further, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will be promoting the 'Food is GREAT Britain and Northern Ireland' campaign at the show. And the Department for International Trade (DIT) will be promoting the 'Exporting is GREAT' campaign and encouraging Scottish food and drink businesses to join its community of Export Advocates to provide advice, encouragement and support to other companies looking to sell their products and services overseas.

UK Government departments will also be on hand to give advice about a number

of initiatives, including opportunities available through the Industrial Strategy, and information about pensions and Tax-Free Childcare. Meanwhile Diesel, a Scottish Fire and Rescue search and rescue dog with his own Twitter page, will be the star of the Department for International Development (DFID) display showcasing UK aid work.