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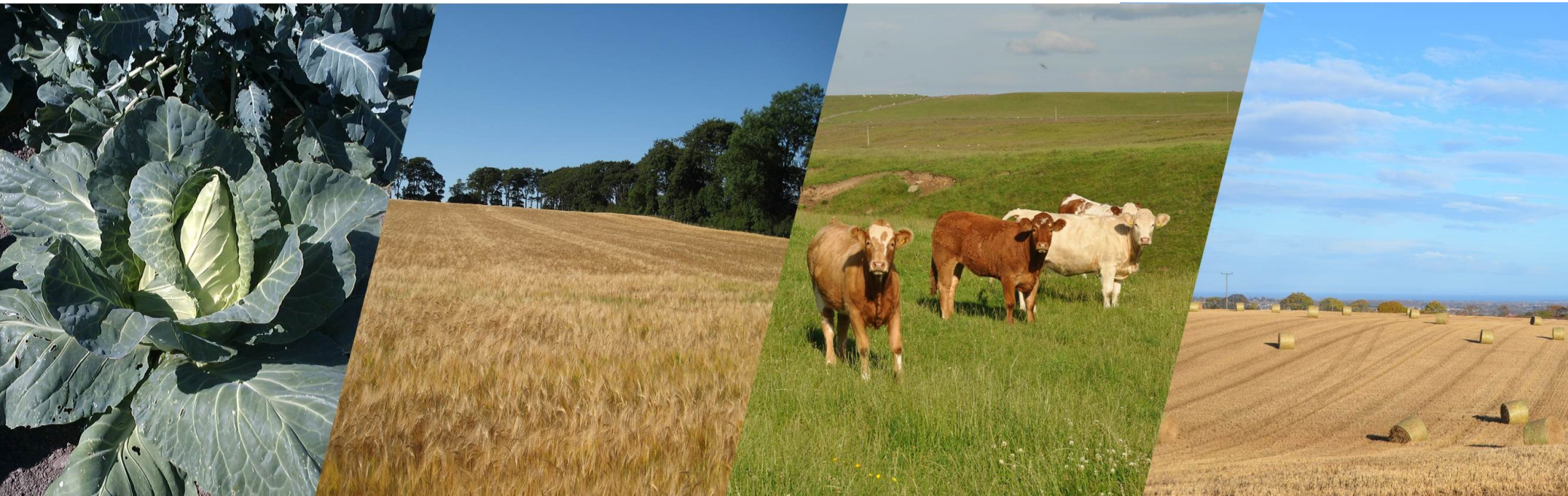
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A National Statistics
publication for Scotland



June Agricultural Census 2019

8 October 2019



CORRECTION: The chart relating to owned and rented land on page 13 was revised on 17th December. The overall message from the chart remains unchanged.

June Agricultural Census 2019

Introduction

Main Findings

The number of cattle in Scotland has now hit a 60 year low. The number of dairy cattle is similar to 2018, but the overall trend continues a decline in the total number of livestock.

Lamb numbers have made a recovery in 2019. Numbers were lower last year due to the spring snow and general poor weather conditions that hit the lambing season.

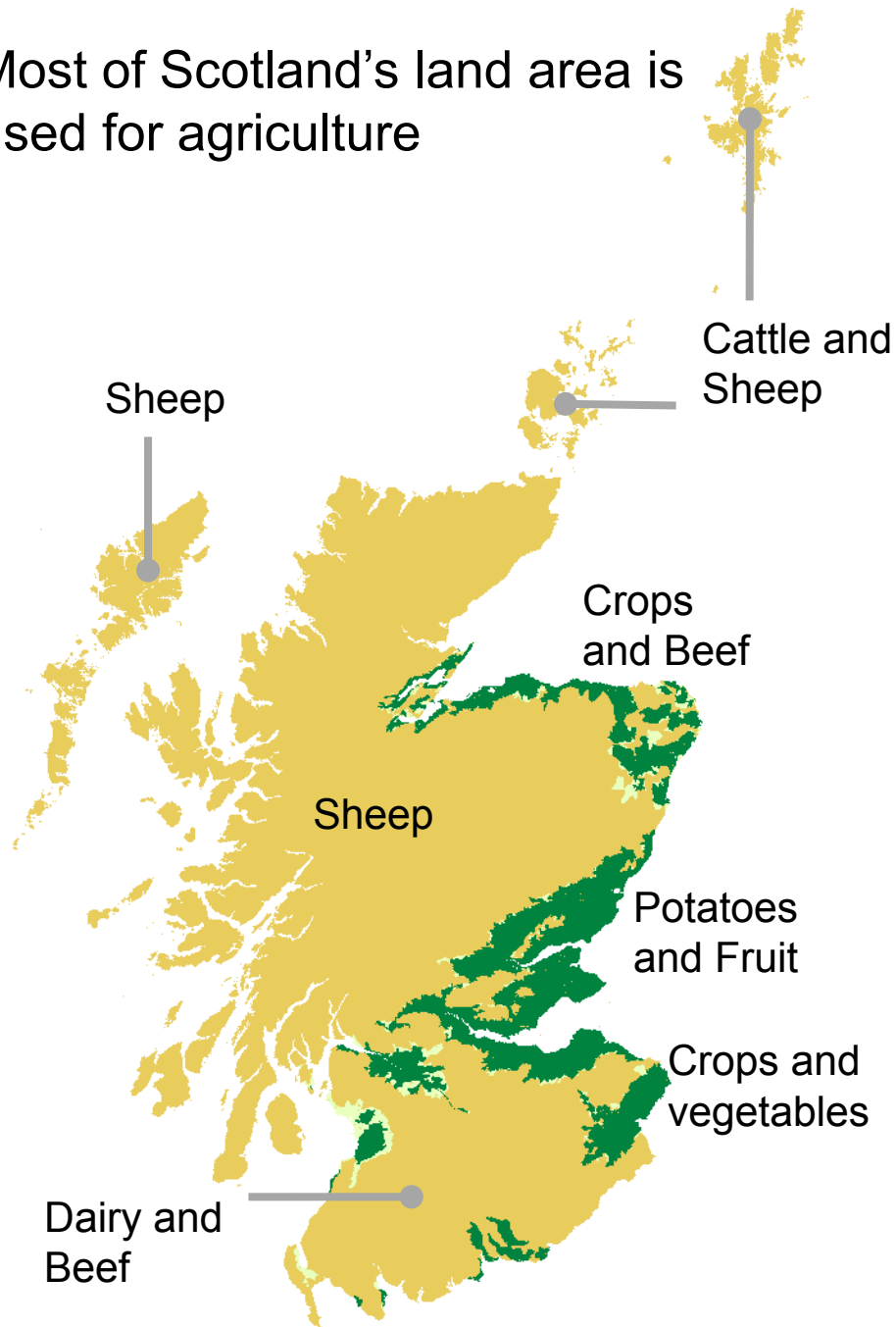
The area used to grow vegetables, excluding potatoes, for animal consumption was larger than the area intended for human consumption.

Winter planting of crops improved at the end of 2018, which had the effect of increasing total cereal planted areas despite a small drop in spring planting at the start of 2019.

There are some early signals indicating that the use of migrant labour has declined, however actual figures should be used with caution.

The amount of short-term leased land continues to increase and long-term leased land likewise is decreasing. The total amount of tenanted land remained steady.

Most of Scotland's land area is used for agriculture



Agricultural Area 5.66 million hectares

Orange areas have limited growing conditions, usually hilly or rocky land suitable for livestock.

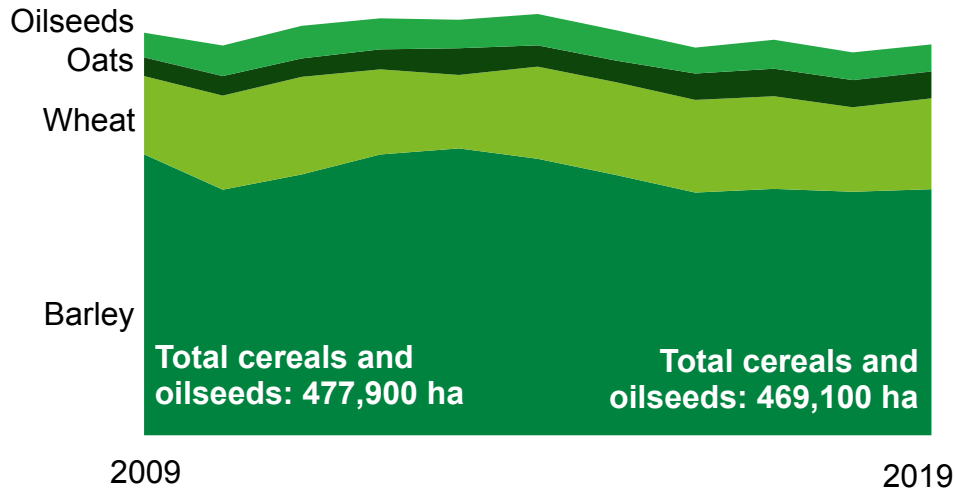
Light green areas have better soil and can support crops usually grown for animal feed.

Dark green areas can support vegetables, fruit and cereal farming for human consumption.

This map shows the main farming types found in each area.

Hectares (ha) is the land measurement used in agriculture. One hectare, or 10,000 square meters, is roughly the full-size of a rugby pitch.

Barley and wheat continue to dominate planted areas



Barley and wheat continue to be the dominant crops. Barley is 62 per cent of the total cereals while wheat is 23 per cent. Over the past year the total area increased by three per cent to 469,100 hectares.

The total area of cereals and oilseed rape planted in 2019 is below the ten-year average.



Area of
barley 290,900 ha

Area of
wheat 107,500 ha

Cereals have a strong association with the whisky industry. Both barley and wheat, the two biggest crops, are used to make whisky.

Oil-seed rape is predominantly a winter grown crop, however its popularity decreased around the millennium.

Other crops grown, such as rye and triticale are still minority crops. Rye has experienced a slight increase and is predominantly used in bio-fuels and specialised whiskies.

An increase in winter planting was followed by a decrease in spring crops

Spring Planting - Barley & Oats



Winter Planting - Wheat, Barley & Oats



The amount of winter crops grown increased in 2019. Barley, the largest cereal, rose one per cent over the past year to 290,900 hectares, due to a 30 per cent increase in the winter variety.

Wheat, which is predominantly a winter crop and the second biggest crop, also increased by nearly eight per cent on the previous year.

The larger areas of winter crops grown was helped by slightly lower than average rainfall when planting began in autumn 2018.



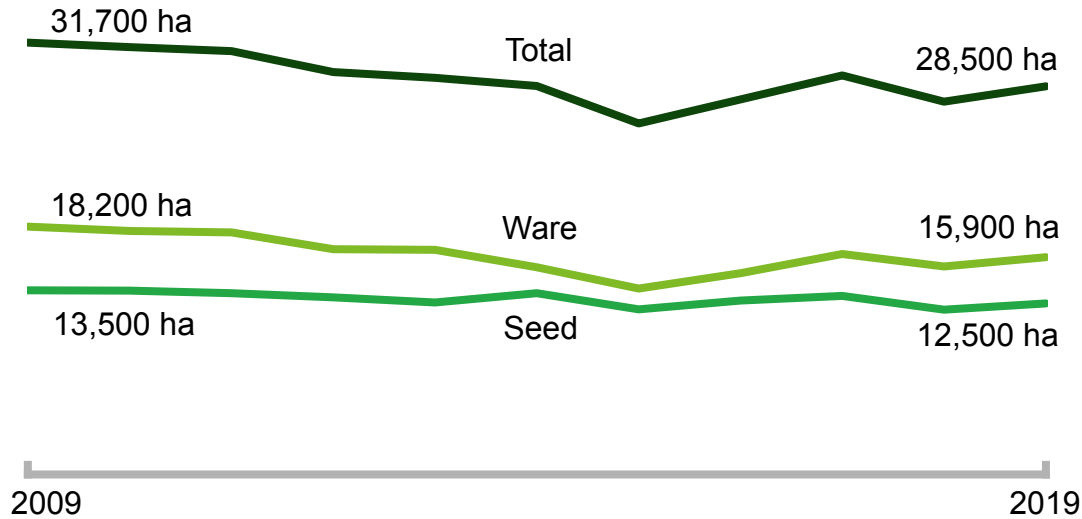
Area used to grow cereals and oilseed rape **469,100 hectares**

Factors such as crop-rotation, the use of fallow land and expected prices will influence farmers decisions on what crops to plant in the next season.

As with previous years when winter areas increase, the area of spring planted crops fell by three percent in 2019. While minimum temperatures were above average when planting started, the decrease is a predictable trend after an increase in winter planting.

The area of barley planted in 2019 is below the ten-year average.

Strong prices drive increase in planted potato area



Area used to grow potatoes in 2019 : **28,500 hectares**

Scotland has a reputation for growing high quality potatoes, particularly seed potatoes. Scottish seed potatoes are sold all over the world and a register of seed potato producers is kept by Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (SASA)

The area used to grow potatoes rose in the past year. The area increased from 27,400 hectares to 28,500 hectares, a rise of four per cent. The increase in area is most likely caused by strong market prices over the past year. Despite the increase the areas of potatoes is currently below the ten-year average.

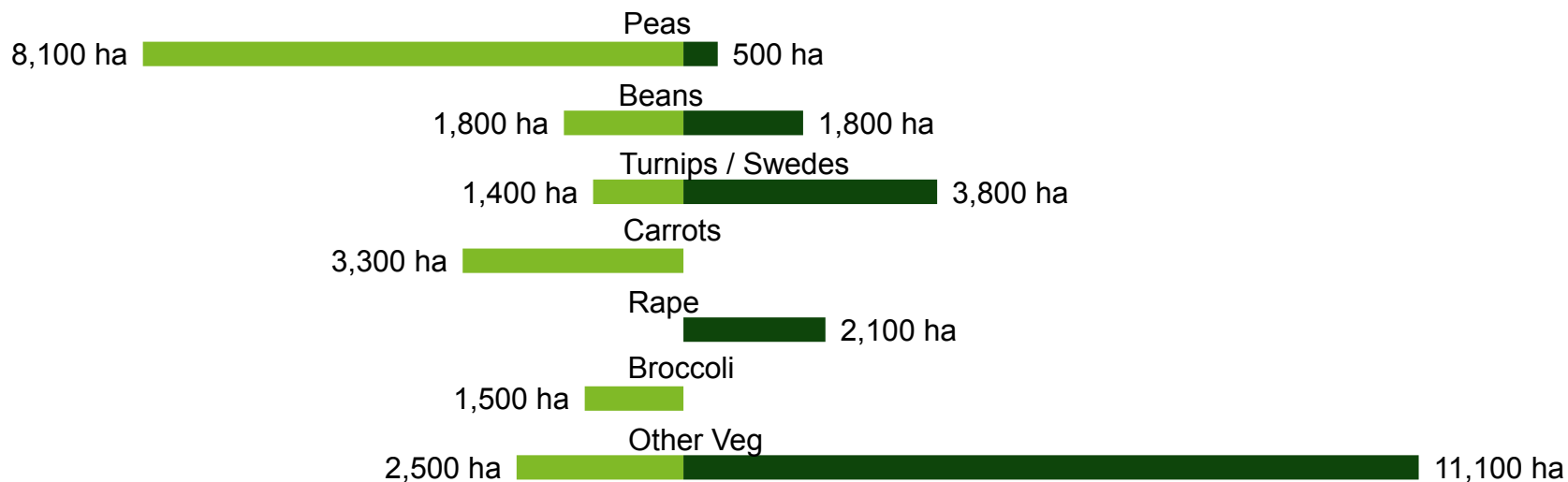
Both seed (planting) and ware (eating) potatoes increased in area. The area of seed and ware potatoes both increased by approximately four per cent. Seed potatoes increased from 12,100 in 2018 to 12,500 in 2019 and ware potatoes increased from 15,300 to 15,900 in the same period.

Vegetable area falls while stock-feeding crops increase



Area used to grow vegetables for human consumption **18,600 hectares**

Area used to grow vegetables for stock-feed **19,400 hectares**

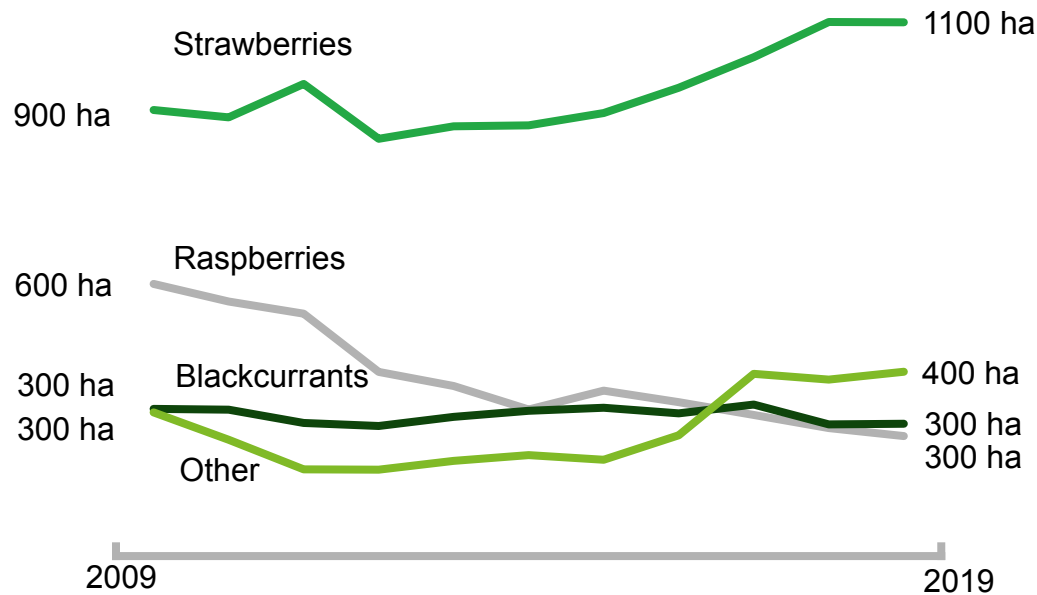


The area used to grow vegetables intended for human consumption (excluding potatoes) fell over the past year. In June 2019 there were 18,600 hectares of vegetables, a drop of two per cent from June 2018. The area is still above the ten-year average.

The area used to grow animal feed remained stable. In the past year the total area of vegetables for stock-feeding rose from 19,300 to 19,400 hectares. The area is 14 per cent below the ten-year average.



Soft fruit growing areas remain steady



Area of 2,000
Soft fruit hectares

Most fruit is grown under cover in either glasshouses or walk-in plastic structures called 'Poly-tunnels'. This allows for a much longer growing season and over 70 per cent was grown this way in 2019.

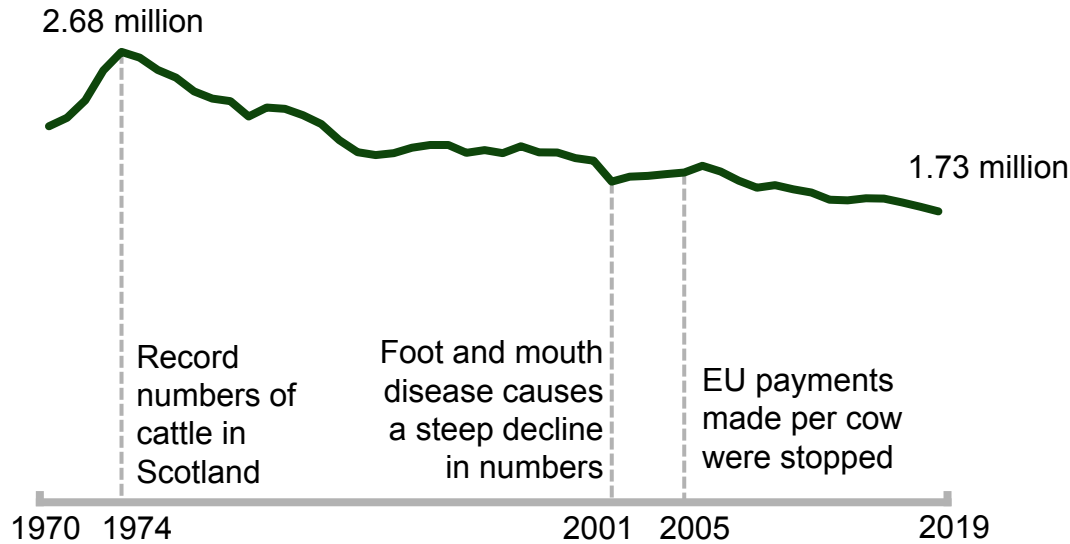
Steady growth in strawberries since 2012 has halted. As the most popular grown fruit, the area remained steady over the past year at 1,100 hectares. This slow down in growth is most likely due to market uncertainty.

The total area used to grow soft fruit in Scotland remained steady over the past year. In June 2019 there was around 2,000 hectares of soft fruit.

Delicate soft fruits, such as raspberries fell in total area grown, while blueberries increased. These fruits require the most skilled pickers and are heavily reliant on migrant labour.

Blackcurrants, which are mainly produced for the soft drink industry and do not require as careful picking, fell slightly in the total area grown.

The total cattle numbers hit sixty year low



Number of cattle 1.73 million

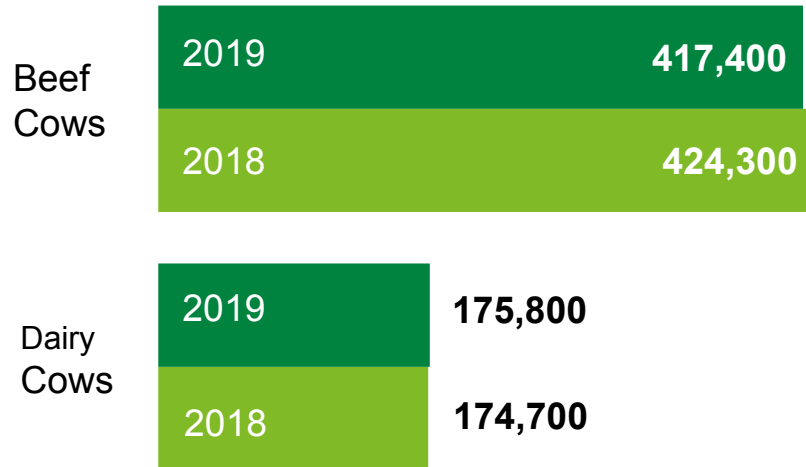
Office of National Statistics environmental figures show methane emissions in the agriculture and related land use sector fell by just over 16 per cent between 1990 and 2017. This reduction is partly linked to a fall in livestock numbers.

Total cattle numbers have steadily declined to a 60 year low. In 2019, there were 1.73 million cattle in Scotland, a two per cent drop on 2018 and the lowest count since 1957.

Cattle numbers in Scotland have been trending down since a peak in 1974 when there were 2.78 million cattle.

Factors which may have impacted the falling cattle numbers include the cost of keeping cattle. In recent years the cost of feed, vets and animal housing have increased. Combined with the introduction of the Single Farm Payment in 2005, which stopped payments based on the number of cattle owned (coupled support), led to a fall in the profitability of cattle.

Dairy cow numbers remained steady as beef cow numbers fall



Number of
beef cows

417,400

Number of
dairy cows

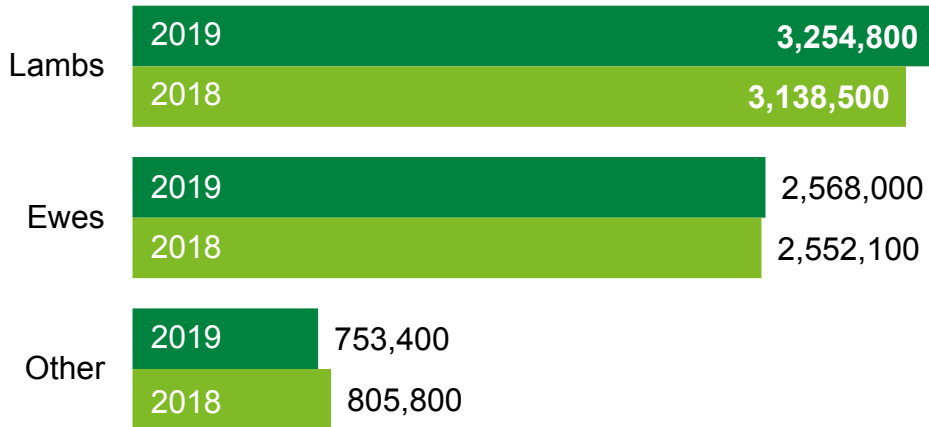
175,800

The number of beef cows has fallen in the past year. In June 2019 there were 417,400 beef cows in Scotland, down from 424,300 in June 2018, a fall of two per cent.

Dairy cow numbers remained steady in the past year. In June 2019 there were 175,800 dairy cows in Scotland, up from 174,700 in June 2018, a rise of less than one per cent.

Dairy cow numbers are likely benefiting from strong milk prices over the past year meaning they are more profitable than beef cows.

Scottish sheep flock recovers after poor weather



Lamb numbers recovered over the past year. In 2019 there were 3.25 million lambs, an increase of four per cent. This increase was likely caused by better weather conditions during the spring lambing season, after the 'Beast from the East' snowstorm caused a drop in numbers in 2018.

Breeding ewes remained steady. Overall the increase of one per cent in total sheep numbers was driven by the rise in lambs.



Number of sheep : 6.67 million

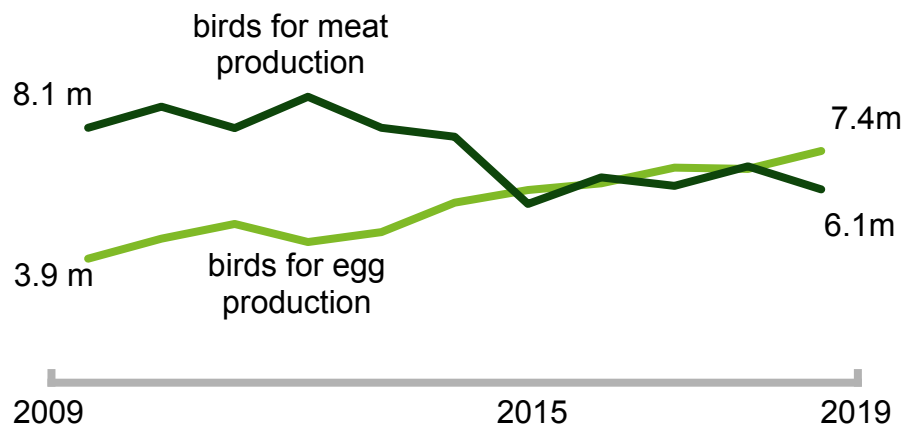
The favoured UK cuts of meat are leg and loin which means the value of imports is slightly more than exports.

Most imports of sheep meat to the UK are from New Zealand. Because their spring is during the UK's autumn, the nature of imports and exports is highly seasonal.

Despite the small increase over the past year the Scottish flock size is still below levels seen before 2005 when farm support payments based on the number of sheep owned stopped.



Number of poultry | **14.9 million**

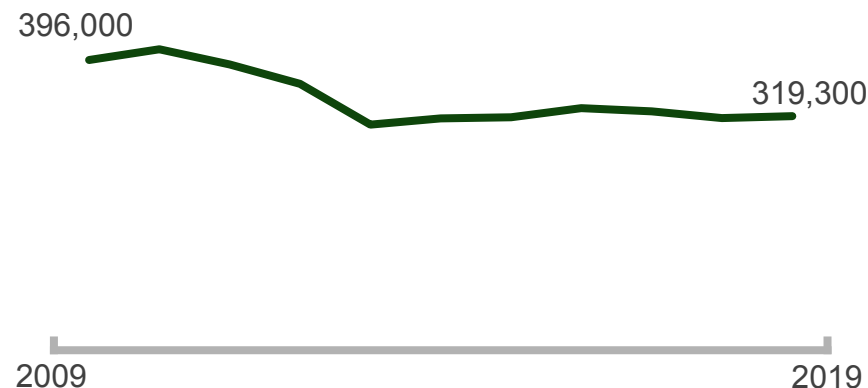


Poultry numbers increased over the past year. In June 2019, there were an estimated 14.9 million poultry birds in Scotland, a rise of two percent.

The number of birds for egg production continues to outnumber the number of birds for meat production (broilers). The number of broilers decreased over the past year.



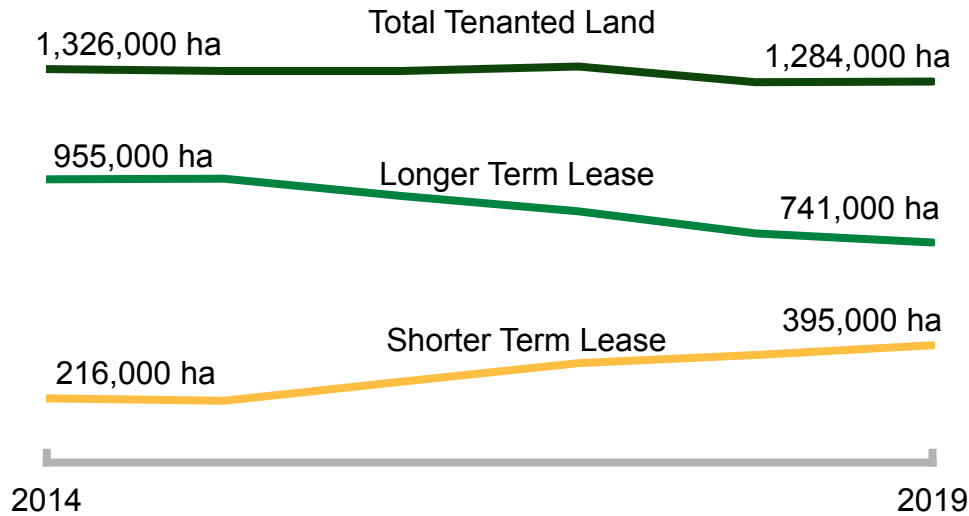
Number of pigs | **319 thousand**



The number of pigs increased over the past year. In June 2019 there were an estimate 319,000 pigs, a rise of one per cent. Pig numbers in Scotland have been trending downwards since a peak in 1973.

Other livestock: farms also had:
 34,400 horses 13,200 farmed deer
 1,400 donkeys 4,700 beehives
 2,000 camelids

Area of rented land remains stable as shorter term tenancies increase



Area of 1.28 million
rented land hectares

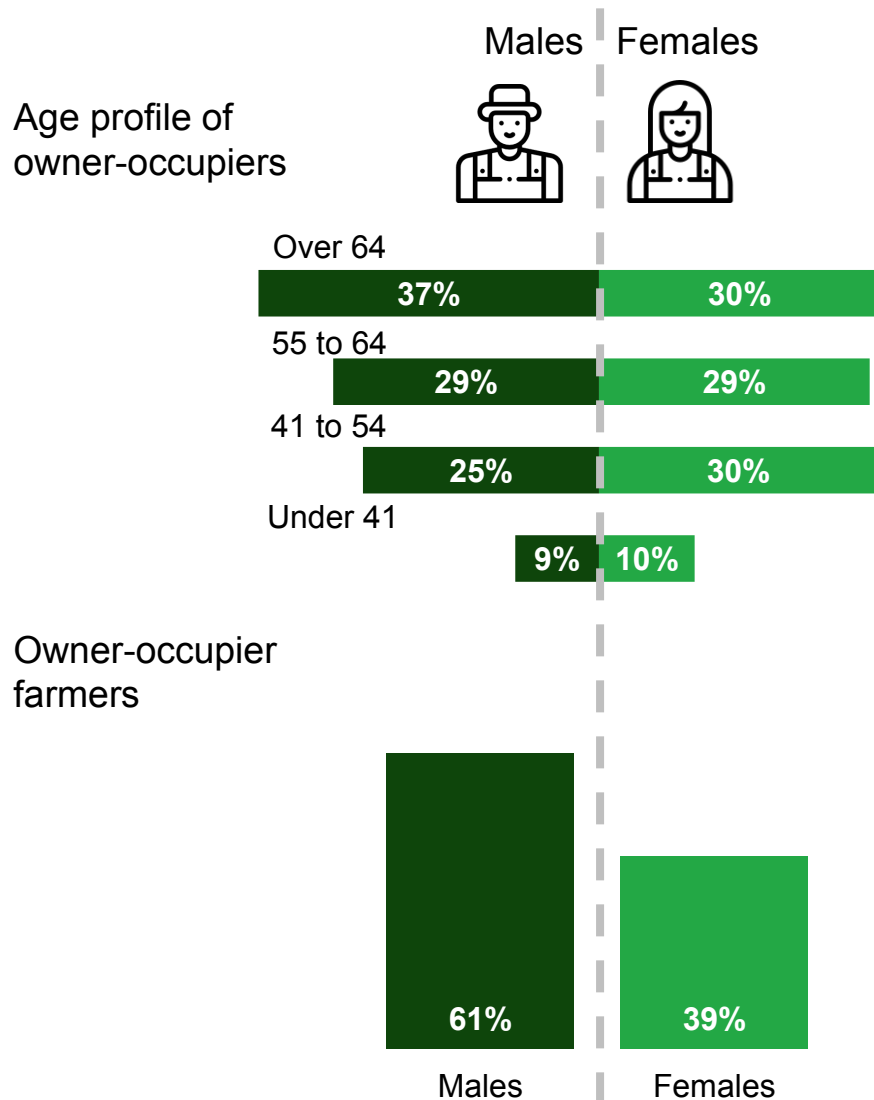
In 2019, the number and area of land covered by longer term tenancies both fell by four per cent.

Newer, limited period tenancy arrangements have been increasing in recent years. Shorter term arrangements accounted for one third of all tenancy types in 2019.

In 2019, the area of agricultural land that was rented remained stable compared to 2018. Over the longer term, the amount of rented agricultural land have fallen steadily over the past ten years from 27 per cent in 2009.

CORRECTION: The chart on this page was revised on 17th December. This version corrects an error spotted in the way that missing values were treated and results in a slight increase in the area of both longer term and shorter term leases in 2019. The overall message from the chart remains unchanged.

The majority of working farm occupiers are older than 55



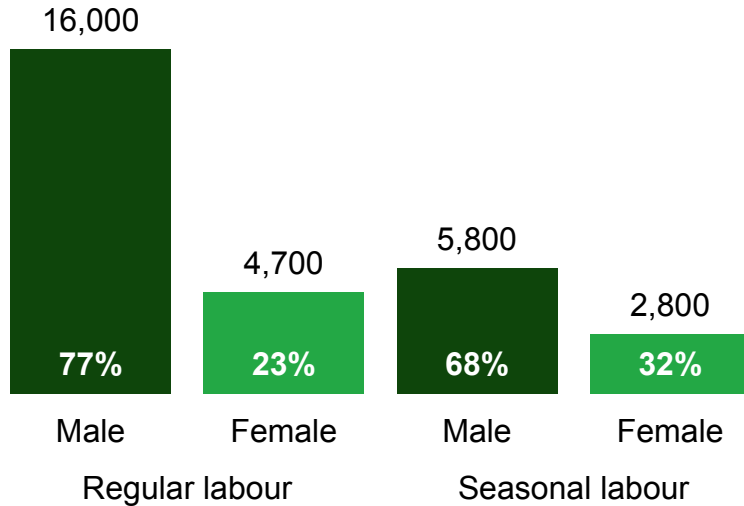
Agricultural workforce **67,100**

Total workforce in agriculture is estimated to be around 67,100 workers. Although this estimate may not include some family members who also provide some labour.

The majority of the workforce are owner-occupiers, made up of people who own or rent the farm and work on it. Males represent 61 per cent of working farm occupiers, and 39 per cent are females.

Farm occupiers are getting increasingly older. In June 2019, a combined 63 per cent of farm occupiers were older than 55, and 34 per cent of farm occupiers were older than 64. Male occupiers were older than female occupiers: 66 per cent of male occupiers were older than 55, compared to 59 per cent of females.

Slight increase in women working in agriculture



Agricultural Employees **29,200**

In addition to 37,800 farm occupiers, there were 29,200 regular and seasonal employees working in agriculture. The majority of these people working in agriculture were males: namely 77 per cent of regular labour, and 68 per cent of seasonal labour.

Migrant labour information is collected in the June Census. Quality issues with the data make it difficult to provide accurate estimates, but the trend indicates that migrant labour has decreased in 2019.

More information is available in the notes accompanying this report.

Although the overall number of employees remained relatively stable, in June 2019 there were 270 more women employees working in agriculture than there were in June 2018. This is an increase of four per cent, and mostly due to a six per cent increase in women working as seasonal labourers.

June Agricultural Census 2019

Data sources and more information

Data source

This data is collected via an annual Agricultural Census run by the Rural and Environmental Science & Analytical Services Division of the Scottish Government. The census collects various data from agricultural holdings across Scotland.

A full quality assurance and methodology report can be found accompanying this report.

www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839602382

For more information on the data in this publication contact Scott McFarlane agric.stats@gov.scot

Data tables

The data used to create the charts in this publication are available online in the accompanying spreadsheet.

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