

Scottish Parliament Election 2021

A snapshot of key commitments from the main parties' manifestos affecting animal health and welfare, and other relevant issues

Green text highlights where BVA manifesto pledges are mirrored (in full or part) – see [BVA Scottish manifesto](#)

SNP

[Full manifesto](#)

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Food and Drink

- Create a single independent Scottish Food agency to promote food, drink and horticulture, attract investment, help increase processing capacity and improve supply chains and infrastructure (p55)
- Develop a single marketing brand for all Scottish produce – Sustainably Scottish (p55)
- Seek to use the £1.5 million additional funding from the newly devolved red meat levy to support Scotch beef, lamb and pork to become the first Sustainably Scottish products (p55)

Farming and Food Production

- *With independence*, advocate rejoining the EU and return to CAP (p55)
- Stay broadly aligned with new EU measures and policy developments, like the Farm to Fork Strategy, while transforming how we support farming and food production in Scotland (p55)
- **Support farmers to produce more of our own food needs sustainably and to farm and croft with nature, including through enhanced animal welfare and health approaches and better adoption and deployment of technology and innovation (p55)**

Farm Payments

- By 2025, shift half of all funding for farming and crofting from unconditional to conditional support and there will be targeted outcomes for biodiversity gain and a drive towards low carbon approaches which improve resilience, efficiency and profitability (p55)

Low Carbon Farming

- Create a National Protein Strategy that enables appropriate sustainable production of livestock and more plant-based proteins to be cultivated here in Scotland (p56)
- Double the amount of land used for organic farming – and double the amount of organic produce that comes from Scotland, with a focus on more of it being used in public sector food procurement (p56)

Animal Welfare

- Adopt the highest possible animal welfare standards, including shifting to entirely free range, woodland or barn chicken and egg production (p56)
- Modernise and update the Animal Welfare Act from 2006 and implement the new livestock worrying legislation (p56)
- Seek to reflect so far as we can, new EU animal welfare labelling to promote food produced to higher than EU welfare standards (p56) [*Aligns with BVA policy*]
- **Create a new Scottish veterinary service to ensure that we have enough people with the right qualifications in veterinary services, animal health and food safety to meet all our needs across the public and private sector for land and marine based animal health issues (p56)**

- Ban live exports of animals for fattening and slaughter and only allow live transport of livestock to and from islands and the mainland with stringent welfare standards in place (p56)
- Legislate to close loopholes in the law protecting foxes and other wild mammals and remain committed to implementing the licensing of driven grouse shooting (p56)
- Implement the recommendations of the Deer Working Group and modernise deer management legislation (p56)

Fish farming

- Support innovation in aquaculture, for example by exploring the development of closed containment fish production on land and explore the potential to produce more shellfish in warm water, land based farms to cut the amount of unsustainably produced fish and shellfish being imported to Scotland (p57)

Trade, investment and exports

- Taking action to reduce anti-microbial resistance (AMR) is vital to improving human and public health and trade agreements provide the best way of progressing this. We will press the UK Government to include action on this as a priority in new trade agreements – and press them to resist trade deals which compromise progress, particularly for developing nations. (p53)

Scottish Conservatives

Full manifesto

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Protecting our natural environment for the next generation

- Strengthen environmental and animal welfare protections to preserve these areas for the future (p41)
- Bring forward an ambitious Nature Bill to strengthen environmental protections on land and sea for Scottish species and their habitats (p41)

Delivering the highest standards of animal welfare

- Continue to work with other parties across the Scottish Parliament to strengthen protections for animals in Scotland by bringing forward a new Animal Welfare Bill (p42)
- **Ban the sale of dogs with cropped ears in Scotland (p42)**
- **Follow Wales and ban the use of electric shock collars (p42)**
- Amend the Dangerous Dogs Act, so that dogs are not automatically put down due to their breed (p42) *[Aligns with BVA policy]*
- **Take forward measures to improve the welfare of farmed animals in transportation, taking into account Scotland's geography and established farming models (p43)**

Cracking down on rural crime

- Deliver tougher and more comprehensive legislation to tackle livestock worrying and compensate farmers in our Animal Welfare Bill (p43)

Supporting Scotland's farming communities

- Alongside a new farm payment system, work with Scotland's world-leading food and drink sector to boost demand for Scottish produce and ensure the farming sector is sustainable by supporting new innovations and technology as well as new entrants (p44)
- Work to improve the Basic Payment System, remove the Crop Diversification requirement and amend the Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme. Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme and Beef Efficiency Scheme must continue (p44)
- Reverse cuts to the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme and agree a multi-year extension until the new agricultural policy is implemented (p44)

- Review the value of the Agricultural Transformation Programme, while ensuring the funding is spent effectively to support low emission farming (p44)
- Ensure Regional Land Use Partnerships sufficiently represent the agricultural sector and support the delivery of the new agricultural policy (p44)
- Work closely with the UK Government to deliver a UK-wide funding framework which supports Scotland's new agricultural policy and recognise the importance of trade within the UK to our agricultural producers (p44)
- Invest an additional £10 million a year in agricultural research and development and support pilot farms to trial new ways to improve farm efficiency and spread best practice across Scotland (p44)
- Work with the UK Government to ensure the Shared Prosperity Fund includes schemes which promote farm diversification (p44)
- Launch a comprehensive 'farm to fork' review of Scotland's food policy as a key part of Scotland's economic recovery from COVID-19 (p44)
- Build on Ambition 2030 and use Scotland's new agricultural policy as a foundation. It should be led by an independent figure and report by summer 2022. Its remit should include ways to strengthen producers' bargaining power, support them to upscale and export, **better label Scottish produce**, ensure public procurement utilises Scottish produce wherever possible, promote Scottish produce at home and abroad, including in our schools, reduce food waste and boost food and agri-tourism (p44)

Promoting our fishing sector

- Negotiate a transformative sector deal for Scottish fishing so that we can bring together catchers and processors with the Scottish and UK Government around a shared vision for the future of the industry (p44)

Scottish Greens

[Full manifesto](#)

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Restore Scotland's natural environment and halt the declines in nature

- Require 30% of all publicly owned land to be used for rewilding, including land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland, Crown Estate Scotland, and Scottish Water (p32)
- Support the gradual reintroduction of species native to Scotland where appropriate and in cooperation with local communities, including a lynx reintroduction trial (p32)
- Ensure that farmers, crofters and land managers are financially rewarded for delivering public goods, including rewilding and species reintroduction projects (p32)

A woodland nation

- Address grazing pressure in the uplands by increasing the deer management grant, implementing the recommendations of the Deer Management Working Group, and encouraging a reduction in sheep numbers via existing agricultural support schemes (p34)

Environmental governance

- Review the role of SEPA, NatureScot, Marine Scotland and Environmental Standards Scotland to ensure they are empowered and fully aligned behind tackling the climate and nature emergencies (p35)

Reform farming subsidies

- Deliver a new Agriculture Bill that enshrines the principles of climate and nature recovery into a new agricultural support scheme (p37)

Support high farming standards

- Maintain EU bans on bee-harming pesticides, and phase out the use of neonicotinoids in the forestry sector (p38)

- Maintain the ban on Genetically Modified foods and production in Scotland (p38)
- Deliver a £20m per year Land Advisory Service, supporting the roll out of climate-friendly farming practices and diversification of farm businesses to maximise public benefits including carbon sequestration, soil health, and biodiversity (p38)
- Roll out a network of mobile abattoirs for rural and island communities, to support crofters whilst minimising live animal transportation (p38)
- Restore funding to Scotland's renowned agricultural research institutes, with a focus on developing farming techniques, plant breeds and soil science that tackles the climate and nature emergencies (p39)

A transition to sustainable salmon farming

- Introduce a moratorium on the licensing of new salmon farms and the expansion of existing ones until environmental and animal welfare concerns are addressed (p42)
- Insist on stricter monitoring regimes for environmental impacts and fish health and welfare (p42)
- Phase out open cage farming (p42)
- Support levies on the industry to invest in innovation with the aim of delivering high welfare systems that prevent pollution, livestock escapes and parasite outbreaks (p42)

Animal welfare

- Deliver a watertight fox hunting ban (p49)
- End driven grouse shooting (p49)
- Ban glue traps, snares and Larson traps (p51)
- Push for an end to the use of farrowing crates for pigs and 'enriched' cages for hens (p50)
- Ban the culling of male chicks in the egg industry, as Germany has done (p50)
- Fight to maintain standards, including the ban on the use of antibiotics and hormones to stimulate unnaturally fast growth in farm animals (p50)
- Press for trade deals to include restrictions on the importation of animal products from countries with poor animal welfare standards (p50) [*Aligns with BVA policy*]
- Fight for a legal ban on live animal exports for slaughter and fattening from Scotland to the continent and beyond, including via Ireland and England (p50)
- Provide greater support for calf-at-foot dairies that keep young calves with their mothers and prevent the exportation of young animals (p50)
- Press for a significant reduction in the stocking densities on Scotland's salmon farms and an end to risky practices such as thermolicer treatments, which can have a high mortality rate (p50)

Companion animal welfare

- **Ensure new requirements for the licensing of pet vending, animal rehoming, animal shelters and sanctuaries, and the breeding of dogs, cats and rabbits are fit for purpose, and focus on their robust implementation (p51)**
- **Introduce a complete ban on the use of shock collars and other pain-based animal training aids (p51)**
- Reverse the SNP Government's decision in the last Parliament to re-introduce the docking of puppy tails for hunting and other 'working' dogs (p51)
- Ban the breeding, import and export of dogs for racing, ending greyhound racing in Scotland (p51)

Scottish Labour [Full manifesto](#)

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Community safety

- Carry out a full review of Scotland's outdated animal welfare legislation, with a view to strengthening wildlife protection law and animal welfare (p105)
- Introduce a National Animal Cruelty Register to support enforcement agencies (p105)
- Reform the law on keeping domestic pets in different tenures after life events, including domestic violence (p105)
- Support a more comprehensive approach to public education on animal welfare (p105)
- Introduce a comprehensive ban on fox hunting and snares and the use of electric shock collars (p105)
- The pandemic has highlighted concerns over the illegal importation of puppies, and we need to raise public awareness and ban imports of very young puppies, and other illegal pets not on the positive list of species that are suitable to keep as pets (p105)
- There also needs to be more effective monitoring of raptor conservation and stronger penalties (p105)
- Labour supports a ban on live animal exports for fattening and slaughter (p105)
- Parliament should pay full regard to animal welfare requirements when formulating and implementing policies (p105)

Rural areas and food

- Support modernising deer legislation and the implementation of the Deer Working Group recommendations (p107)
- Ensure that future agricultural payments best support sustainable land use and strengthen rural communities (p107)
- Maintain current levels of funding until 2024 and from then we will put in place a new scheme that gives farmers and crofters certainty. The new financial support must recognise farmers' knowledge, recognising their experience in reducing emissions and protecting Scotland's landscape and work towards sustainable farming practices (p107)
- Support the fishing sector to thrive as we leave the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), improving sustainability, and introducing a national landing requirement to create jobs in coastal communities (p107)
- Scottish Labour supports creating a National Plan for the islands, and we will devolve more powers to island authorities and engage communities in line with our subsidiarity framework (p108)
- Support a community-led local development programme, which echoes the LEADER rural development ethos, to be included within the future Shared Prosperity Fund (p108)
- Scottish Labour believes that our food system in Scotland should contribute to everyone's health and wellbeing; value the work to put food on our plate; support high animal welfare standards; protect workers' pay, terms and conditions; and sustain our wildlife, natural resources and environment for generations to come (p108)
- Deliver a comprehensive Good Food Nation Act based on proposals by the Scottish Food Coalition (p109)
- Work towards a transparent supply chain and food system which supports Scottish producers and recognises the public benefits that agriculture provides (p109)

Environmental action

- Develop a Biodiversity Action Plan for land, air and sea, with adequate funding, which the whole country can coalesce around before it is too late (p83)

- Scottish Labour supports an ambitious Environment Act that includes legally binding targets for nature's recovery, together with proper funding and a Nature Network for Scotland through the National Planning Framework (p84)
- Support a plan for ocean recovery with at least one tenth of Scotland's Seas fully protected, and a further 20% highly protected, from destructive and extractive activities by 2030 (p84)
- We will develop Regional Land Use Frameworks by 2023, with input from a wide range of stakeholders to set out regional land use priorities and funding requirements (p84)

A joined-up approach to tackling climate change

- Recognise the link between the reform of food production and sustainability, including energy use, water, biodiversity, soil, food waste and land use. Scottish agriculture is responsible for nearly a quarter of Scottish greenhouse gas emissions, and it will not be possible to achieve our legal targets for reduction unless we reduce these emissions from agriculture (p85)
- **Support the principle of public money for public goods**, such as clean water and air, beautiful scenery, and biodiversity provision (p85)
- Consider further incentive schemes to ensure all major landowners play their part (p85)

Scottish Liberal Democrats

Full manifesto

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Tackling the climate emergency

- Implement the recommendations of the Deer Management Review to control numbers and restore biodiverse landscapes (p34)

Support the police – animal welfare

- Guarantee sufficient resources for the police's Wildlife Crime Investigation Unit (p31)
- **Clamp down on illegal pet imports and maintain the protection of standards for all animals (p31)**
- Take forward reform of the wild mammals legislation following Lord Bonomy's report. The changes will sufficiently protect animals, meet the needs of our rural communities, work effectively and give all those involved in its operation the clarity that makes it fit for purpose (p31)

Helping Scottish farming meet new challenges

- Work with the farming and crofting communities to develop a new system of farm support to replace closing EU schemes (p23)
- **Provide new incentives to help farmers transition to a more sustainable agriculture, provide support for high quality food production**, ensure fairness in the supply chain and help young people into the industry. We will match the scale of resources from the old schemes (p23)
- Use the recent conclusions of the expert working groups on agriculture support as a starting point in driving the transition to a more sustainable food production system. We will 'croft proof' future agricultural support to make sure active family farmers and crofters are properly supported (p23)
- Have a focus to reduce carbon in the livestock sector through more efficient production. We will support Scottish farming to match the sector in England and Wales which has committed to carbon neutrality by 2040 (p23)
- Brexit has brought considerable problems, red tape and border controls for exporters. We will work with the UK Government to resolve as many of these as possible in time for autumn lamb exports (p23)
- Ensure that high UK food standards are not undermined in new trade deals (p24) *[Aligns with BVA policy]*
- Work for a level playing field in the UK single market which takes nearly 70 percent of Scottish food exports (p24)

- Develop simpler governance of crofting with the Crofting Commission enabled to be the leader in the active management of crofting (p24)
- Continue to press the UK Government to take action to repair the damage that Brexit has caused to the attractiveness of Scotland for seasonal workers from Europe (p24)
- Expand and diversify the Farm Advisory Service to provide new jobs, training and skills, that support sustainable land use (p24)
- Continue Scottish Government support for the National Rural Mental Health Forum (p24)

Fishing and aquaculture

- Work with the fishing industry, scientists and conservationists to manage inshore waters sustainably, and as locally as possible (p24)
- Seek to end unsustainable fishing practices such as gill net trawling, and work to eliminate plastic pollution from our seas (p24)
- As other industries compete for the use of marine space, seek to balance the competing demands of different users including aquaculture, marine renewables and marine protected areas so that all interests can be accommodated (p24)
- Work in partnership with the UK Government to ensure that our UK immigration system allows the fishing industry access to the labour that they need to crew their boats while investing in the necessary training and education to provide the crews of the future (p24)
- While continuing to seek the best scientific advice from bodies such as ICES, learn from the experience of countries like Norway and Iceland which have their own domestic bodies gathering data and which can be used more quickly (p24)
- Support the Scottish aquaculture industry and the high value it adds to its Scottish produce. [Support the industry to make continual improvements to production standards](#), and do all we can to smooth its route to international markets (p24)

UKIP Scotland

[Full manifesto](#)

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

- Replace the current system of farming subsidies with a modified Single Farm Payment system allowing farmers to work the land free from bureaucracy. We believe in a genuine rural economy that is both sustainable and viable (p14)
- UKIP favours a complete ban on non-stun slaughter which we believe is inhumane and unconscionable in a civilised society that should not be tolerated (p14)
- Remove unnecessary restrictions on small local and mobile abattoirs which would improve animal welfare, meat quality and shorten the supply chain increasing the profitability of the high quality grass-to-meat industry (p14)
- UKIP supports genetically modified food which we believe to have great potential and benefits. We would support a free vote in parliament on their commercial usage (p14)

Alba

[Full manifesto](#)

Environment, animal welfare and agriculture

Climate crisis

- Establishment of a National Land Agency to create a roadmap for better land use management in Scotland, including reforestation, rewilding and helping communities make better use of their surrounding land.

- Tying this all together into a coherent plan which maximises social and economic benefit by creating a Green New Deal Unit in the Scottish Government.

Education and training

- Scotland's college and university sector is outstanding in international terms, but still more must be done to ensure access to all those with talent and ability, and at all stages in their career and lives.
- The rocks will melt with the sun before ALBA will allow tuition fees to be reimposed on Scotland's students, but access depends on support, hence ALBA proposals on educational maintenance.

Scotland's Many People: Rural Scotland

- ALBA's industrial policy is not about the heavy industry of the past, but future, sustainable industries. With policy support for business areas like food production, forestry and timber processing there is the potential for many new high-quality rural jobs.
- Scotland's farming and food industry will similarly benefit from ALBA's proposals to secure an early and rapid return to the European single marketplace. In addition, the ALBA proposal for high quality, nutritious Scottish sourced school meals will provide a huge stimulus to Scotland's food industry.
- The rapid expansion of Scotland's food and drink economy, exporting worldwide some of the highest quality food in the world, will be sustained by ALBA reclaiming early access to key markets, while protecting quality for producers and consumers from the race to the bottom on standards which is clearly being engaged in by Westminster Government.