



rooted in our communities

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COURSE SYNOPSIS

SESSION 1. Times past - times present. How did crofting evolve? What is crofting? Where is it today? How to acquire a croft. An introduction to crofting law and regulations. The purpose and work of both Crofting Commission and HIE (strengthening communities). SGRPID and Forestry authority (FCS).

SESSION 2. Support mechanisms and EU dimension. The effect of EU membership on crofting agriculture. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Grants schemes – SRDP, CHGS; CCAGS; FWPS / SFGS, LFASS, etc; Mutual support including Machinery Rings, Machinery Groups, Training Groups, etc.

SESSION 3. Land & environment. From seashore to a high place – soils, wet, wind and weather. The benefits of shelter & drainage. Forage area - use of inbye/common grazings. The Grazings Committee, Clerk/Constable. Grazings Regulations, Duties of grazing shareholders. Waste management & SEPA. Use of artificial inputs. Going organic.

SESSION 4. Crofting Livestock. Entitlement to premia; Single Farm Payments (SFPS), Land Management Options (LMO's). Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS). Livestock records – sales and movements records. Livestock identification (EID)

SESSION 5. Wildlife, habitats & landscape. Relevance of crofting to the protection of habitats and the natural environment. Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. Natura 2000. Designations - SSSI's, SAC's, etc. Consequences of human activity. Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Relationship of the environment to tourism and the wider economy of the Highlands & Islands.

SESSION 6. Croft business - Finance & marketing. Business Gateway, Highland Opportunities. Highlands & Islands Enterprise (HIE), Banks & Credit Unions. Alternative economy. Business plans; cash flow; P & L forecasting. Health & Safety. Practical Training. Diversification and some alternative / beneficial uses of land and resources.

SESSION 7. Animal health & welfare. Buying, selling and transporting of animals. H&I Veterinary Services Scheme (HIVSS). Breeding regimes of sheep & cattle. Common ailments in sheep, cattle and other crofting livestock. Notifiable diseases. Disease prevention and vaccinations. Whole Farm Health Plans. Livestock quality schemes (QMS, etc).

SESSION 8. Horticulture/Forestry/Renewables/Tourism at local course director's discretion. See next page for further details.

SESSION 9. Community. What is a community? Individual responsibility and your place within that community. Township / Grazings committees. Community Council. Empowerment and capacity building and how communities can achieve goals. Community buy-outs of land - Why? When? How?

SESSION 10. And finally... Presentation of course certificates. Crofters and Small Landholders Skills training programme. The format for this session is largely left to the discretion of the Local Course Director and can be tailored to meet the needs of course participants. Finally, an evaluation of the course.

Session 8 options:

Horticulture

Rationale for modern crofting horticulture. Varied patterns of crofting horticulture. Growing conditions and how to manage them. Protected cropping. Guidance on specific crops. Marketing and producer groups. Sources of grant funding and technical support

Forestry

The *Crofter Forestry (Scotland) Act 1991*; Define shelter-belt, woodland and agro forestry; Forestry grants; Why woodland? Design and impact of woodland on surrounding area; Native trees; Conifer, broadleaf or mixed? Woodland project for croft and/or common grazings; contractor or DIY; a harvestable forestry crop (including access to/from extraction site) or an amenity? Protection against predation (deer fencing); Planting and aftercare.

Renewables

Overview of technologies (Wind, Hydro, Solar PV and Thermal, Biomass and Anaerobic Digestion), Large scale or micro generation?, Environmental Surveying and Feasibility Studies, Planning Considerations, Grid Connection, FiT, RHi and MCS, Installers and Maintenance, ROCs, Further Advice Streams

Tourism

Why tourism, fit with traditional crofting. Options available: accommodation, retail, activities. Infrastructure, investment required and estimates of running costs and income generated. Personal skills and aptitude required. Support available (Business Gateway, grants, Crofting Mark, VisitScotland). Marketing.

Every effort will be made to keep to the published programme and all sessions will be covered. However, last minute session changes may occur from time to time.

Acronyms used in Entry Level Crofting Course / Synopsis

CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CC	Crofting Commission
CCAGS	Crofting Counties Agricultural Grants Scheme
CHGS	Croft House Grant Scheme
EID	Electronic Identification
EU	European Union
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland
FiT	Feed-in Tariff
FWPS	Farm Woodland Premium Scheme
HIVSS	Highlands & Islands Veterinary Services Scheme
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
LMO	Land Management options
LFASS	Less Favoured Area Support Scheme
MCS	Microgeneration Certification Scheme
P&L	Profit & Loss
QMS	Quality Meat Scotland
RDC	Rural Development Contracts
RHI	Renewable Heat Incentive
ROC	Renewables Obligation Certificate
SAC	Scottish Agricultural College
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCF	Scottish Crofting Federation [2009] (formerly Foundation [2001] / formerly Union [1985])
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SFGS/FP	Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme / Farmland Premium
SFPS	Single Farm Payment Scheme
SGRPID	Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate
SRDP	Scottish Rural Development Programme
SSSI	Special Site of Scientific Interest