

# My story



Emily Armstrong



- My family moved to Tiree when I was 1. We moved onto the croft that has been inherited down my mum's family for generations and started to take it on again.
- The highland cows were mainly me and my dad's 'niche' together and after him passing 5 years ago I was passionate about carrying on the fold, this was the thing that really motivates me to carry it on for the rest of my life and become well known throughout the industry.
- The biggest challenge for me was to carry on the fold without him guiding me on what to do. From 2016 to now I have learnt so much in how to do things and how not to do things within the highland cattle business.
- Along with running the croft I am at school full time and my mum owns a café which is opening soon for the season ahead, which I also work at.



## Balemartine Fold

- Balemartine fold was established in 2008 when my mum bought my dad 2 highland cows for his 40<sup>th</sup>. From the start the fold has improved hugely with the quality of stock being produced and since I have taken it all on it has become more and more successful.
- At the moment we have 21 cattle all together with 8 breeding cows who start calving in the middle of March.

# The showing side

- Over the 5 years I have been doing it myself I have started to finally get a good reputation for the cattle I breed. This was always my main goal with the breed.
- Being a 12 year old girl at the start no one believed that I could halter train and do all show preparations myself, it was tough at times but I saw past it and carried on because of how much I loved working with the cattle and just loved the social aspect of the shows as well.
- I've won multiple young handler awards but the best award I've won is Reserve Overall Female Champion with Bonnie Ruadh 1<sup>st</sup> of Balematine.
- We only started showing and selling 10 years ago and from then I feel the reputation and quality of stock has improved, which is what I'm most proud of.
- I have successfully sold cattle all around Scotland and parts of England. I have also sold cattle to Italy, Germany, France and Canada



## Along side the busy summer...

- Within the next few weeks I am trying to get a 'Cow Grooming' set up. Where tourists would have the chance to be up close with a highland cow, with little risks of them kicking or acting out towards strangers.
- I've always made sure to have calm and quiet cows and mine are perfect for this because they love the attention from anyone with a comb.
- This should hopefully be all up and running by summer, if the plans to improve the handling system goes smoothly.



- Calmac Ferries are the lifeline to locals across all islands. To get to Tiree it takes 3 and a half hours whilst also stopping at coll there and back to Oban.
- It is one of 2 ways to get to and from the island, plane being the other form of transport which takes just under an hour to get to Glasgow.

