# PETA challenges Royal Highland Show’s livestock parade, sparking cultural clash



Animal rights activists, notably the group PETA, have intensified their campaign against traditional practices at the Royal Highland Show, calling for the cancellation of the Grand Parade featuring livestock and horses. This event, recognised as Scotland’s premier agricultural exhibition, attracts around 200,000 visitors annually and celebrates over two centuries of rural heritage. Yet, PETA argues that showcasing animals in this manner is a remnant of an outdated and cruel practice that fails to reflect contemporary understandings of animal welfare.

In a letter to James Logan, chairman of the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, PETA urged for a shift towards more progressive themes, proposing alternatives such as a plant-focused festival that includes a turnip beauty pageant and a potato-sculpting competition. Dawn Carr, vice president of PETA, posited that animals should be commemorated through art rather than being displayed in potentially distressing environments. She emphasised that livestock should not be viewed merely as "stock" but as beings with complex social behaviours and preferences. Citing the psychological needs and characteristics of animals, Carr argued that modern farming should embrace a compassionate ethos, celebrating plant-based agriculture instead.

The Royal Highland Show has long been heralded for its role in showcasing Scotland’s agricultural prowess and cultural heritage. Mr Logan defended the show, asserting its commitment to animal welfare. He stated that the event prioritises the humane treatment of animals and that claims of cruelty are “inaccurate and misleading.” This assertion reflects the commitment of the society towards ensuring high standards of care, as affirmed through collaborations with veterinary professionals and welfare organisations. Mr Logan reiterated the intent to honour Scotland’s agricultural traditions while adapting to evolving societal values.

In response to PETA's demands, the Countryside Alliance has stepped in to defend the exhibition, highlighting the importance of animal husbandry to Scotland's economy and cultural identity. They argue that eliminating these displays would undermine the agricultural sector and threaten the livelihoods of farmers dedicated to providing diverse food options, spanning from meat and dairy to fruits and vegetables. Their rebuttal underscores the balancing act required in modern discussions about agriculture, where respect for animal rights and the necessity of farming must coexist.

As the Royal Highland Show approaches, the dialogue surrounding it remains charged with contrasting views. While PETA’s vision seeks to cultivate a new era of agricultural celebration focused on sustainable practices, proponents of the current model advocate for a recognition of the historical significance and ongoing contribution of livestock farming to Scotland’s identity and economy. This tension captures a broader societal debate that is increasingly relevant as awareness of animal welfare and environmental sustainability continues to grow.

The juxtaposition of tradition against progressive ideals illuminates not only the future of agricultural shows like the Royal Highland Show but also the evolving relationship humans have with animals and nature. As stakeholders contemplate these changes, the outcomes will likely reflect a deeper shift in societal values regarding farming, ethics, and environmental responsibility.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14766227/Scrap-cruel-archaic-Highland-livestock-parade-say-animal-rights-activists.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/national/uk-today/23423088.peta-calls-royal-highland-show-ditch-animal-displays/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14766227/Scrap-cruel-archaic-Highland-livestock-parade-say-animal-rights-activists.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://news.sky.com/story/peta-demands-royal-highland-show-ditch-animal-displays-for-turnip-beauty-pageant-12845417), [[4]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/peta-demands-royal-highland-show-29578241)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/peta-demands-royal-highland-show-29578241), [[7]](https://www.countryside-alliance.org/resources/news/countryside-alliance-step-in-to-defend-royal-highl)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/peta-urges-royal-highland-show-26589568), [[6]](https://www.peta.org.uk/blog/royal-highland-show/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14766227/Scrap-cruel-archaic-Highland-livestock-parade-say-animal-rights-activists.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.sky.com/story/peta-demands-royal-highland-show-ditch-animal-displays-for-turnip-beauty-pageant-12845417> - PETA has urged the Royal Highland Show to replace its traditional animal displays with vegan alternatives, including a turnip beauty pageant and potato-sculpting competition. The organisation criticises events like sheep shearing and cow parades as outdated and cruel, advocating for a plant-based celebration of Scotland's agriculture. The Royal Highland Show, scheduled for June 22 to 25, attracts around 200,000 visitors annually and showcases Scotland's farming and rural life. PETA's proposal aims to promote environmentally sustainable farming practices and support plant-based farmers.
3. <https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/peta-urges-royal-highland-show-26589568> - PETA has called the Royal Highland Show 'outdated' and is urging it to swap its animal displays and events for vegan alternatives, such as a vegetarian haggis-eating contest. The organisation proposes replacing livestock shows with a 'turnip beauty pageant' to encourage more environmentally friendly farming practices. The Royal Highland Show, set to take place from June 22 to 25, sees around 200,000 people flock to Ingliston to see contests including show-jumping and sheep shearing, which PETA brands as 'cruel'.
4. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/peta-demands-royal-highland-show-29578241> - PETA has proposed replacing animal displays at the Royal Highland Show with vegan alternatives, including a veggie haggis-eating contest, a turnip beauty pageant, and a potato sculpting competition. The organisation criticises traditional events like cow parades and sheep shearing as outdated and cruel, advocating for a plant-based celebration of Scotland's agriculture. The Royal Highland Show, which has been going for over 180 years, showcases animals and over 1,000 trade exhibitors, from Scottish food and drink to agricultural equipment.
5. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/national/uk-today/23423088.peta-calls-royal-highland-show-ditch-animal-displays/> - PETA is urging the Royal Highland Show to replace its animal displays with vegan alternatives, such as a turnip beauty pageant and potato-sculpting competitions. The organisation criticises events like sheep shearing and cow parades as outdated and cruel, advocating for a plant-based celebration of Scotland's agriculture. The Royal Highland Show, scheduled for June 22 to 25, attracts around 200,000 visitors annually and showcases Scotland's farming and rural life. PETA's proposal aims to promote environmentally sustainable farming practices and support plant-based farmers.
6. <https://www.peta.org.uk/blog/royal-highland-show/> - PETA has called for the Royal Highland Show to transition to a vegan event, proposing the 'Royal Highland Grow' to showcase Scotland's diverse crop farming. The organisation criticises the current show for involving over 6,500 non-consenting animals who are tied up, pulled around, roughly handled, and forced to compete in dangerous show jumping. PETA suggests replacing these events with family-friendly activities like a vegan haggis-eating contest, a turnip beauty pageant, and a potato-sculpting competition.
7. <https://www.countryside-alliance.org/resources/news/countryside-alliance-step-in-to-defend-royal-highl> - The Countryside Alliance has defended the Royal Highland Show against PETA's demands to go vegan. PETA has called for the event to replace its animal displays with plant-based alternatives, including a turnip beauty pageant and potato-sculpting competitions. The Countryside Alliance argues that such a move would undermine Scotland's agricultural sector and the livelihoods of farmers who work to feed the nation with a wide choice of fruit, vegetables, dairy, and meat.