

**NEWS RELEASE**

**Immediate release**

**A TASTE OF THINGS TO COME**

**First funded events for Aberdeen City and Shire revealed for Year of Food and Drink 2015**

An annual festival which showcases the world-class research being undertaken at the University of Aberdeen, is just one of the mouthwatering special events to be held as part of the Year of Food and Drink, it has been announced.

**The University of Aberdeen May Festival** (29-31 May), which will receive £7,750 in funding, will offers diverse events for all ages with themes including food and drink, music, literature and science.

The annual festival was among those to receive a share of a £265,000 fund managed by VisitScotland’s event directorate, EventScotland. The Year of Food and Drink event fund, which includes £150,000 contributed by the Community Food Fund, is dedicated to special events staged during the 12 month celebration of Scotland’s natural larder.

Funded events will be spread across the country and include existing or established events such as **Borders Book Festival** (11-14 June), the **Orkney Folk Festival** (21-24 May) and the **Glasgow Science Festival** (4-14 June) - with a greater food focus.

There will also be a number of events designed to inspire and engage diverse audiences with Scottish produce, including **Children’s Food Festival** (5-6 June) in the Highlands, **Cakefest Edinburgh** (21 June) at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh and **Food Town Day** (6 June) in Dumfries and Galloway.

Whisky Month will also return in May, with events like **Mhor Whisky Festival** (23-24 May) and **Whisky Stramash** (23-25 May) inviting visitors and locals to sample Scotland’s national drink as well as explore both the traditional and contemporary blend of stories, circumstances, provenance and science behind our vast array of marvelous malts.

Led by VisitScotland, in partnership with Scotland Food & Drink, on behalf of the Scottish Government, the Year of Food and Drink aims to increase and promote Scottish produce across the tourism sector and enhance Scotland’s global reputation as a land of food and drink.

With eating traditional dishes and local produce listed as one of the top activities undertaken by visitors to Scotland, promoting food and drink has the potential to provide significant growth for tourism. Recent figures revealed that Scotland’s food and drink tourism industry is worth an estimated £2.5 million *per day* to the economy

**Scotland’s Cabinet Secretary for Food, Richard Lochhead said**:

*“The Year of Food and Drink is a brilliant opportunity to build on Homecoming 2014, and inspire the people of Scotland and our visitors to celebrate the exceptional food and drink we produce the length and breadth of our country.*

*“The programme will offer a unique taste of Scotland, and I am delighted that all funded events are being encouraged to increase their use of locally sourced produce by signing up to the Food Charter. This will help to enhance our reputation as a land of food and drink and achieve my vision of Scotland becoming a Good Food Nation.”*

**Philip Smith, VisitScotland Regional Director, said:**

*“I am delighted that the increasingly popular University of Aberdeen May Festival has received this funding, allowing them to bring a regional food aspect to the event.*

*“Scotland’s outstanding natural larder will be showcased over the next 12 months at events the length and breadth of the country, including the special events supported through the Year of Food and Drink event fund. This is a chance, not just for visitors to sample the best of our natural larder, but for people in Scotland to learn more about what is on our doorstep.*

*“2014 was all about welcoming the world, 2015 is an opportunity to build on that momentum and use strengths, like our world-famous food and drink, to take Scotland to the world.”*

**Laura Young of the University of Aberdeen, added**: *“This funding will allow us to bring a fantastic and innovative programme of food and drink events to our visitors as part of the annual May Festival, showcasing the best produce Scotland has to offer alongside the expertise in nutrition science we have here at the University.”*

All funded events will now go through a workshop organised by EventScotland to help develop their Scottish and local food and drink offering and enhance the visitor experience. A further series of special events for July to December 2015 supported through the dedicated £265,000 events fund will be revealed in the coming months.

For a full list of events visit [www.visitscotland.com/tastescotland](http://www.visitscotland.com/tastescotland)

**Year of Food and Drink 2015 funded events-+\***

**First Funding Announcement (events held from January-June 2015)**

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| **Event** | **Date** | **Amount awarded (£)** |
| Springfest Scotland | **4-5 April** | **4,000** |
| Edinburgh International Science Festival: Gastrofest | **4-19 April** | **10,000** |
| Paisley Beer & Food Festival | **23-26 April** | **10,000** |
| William Hill Scottish Cup Competition (Semi-Final & Final Ties) | **18 -19 April & 30 May** | **10,000** |
| Create:Eat:Whisky 2015 | **May tbc** | **10,000** |
| The Still and The Hive | **15 May** | **2,000** |
| Mhor Whisky Fest | **23-24 May** | **5,000** |
| Ayr County Show | **9 May** | **6,000** |
| Loch Fyne Food Fair | **16-17 May** | **6,000** |
| Orkney Folk Festival | **21-24 May** | **3,000** |
| Montrose Music Festival | **22-24 May** | **5,000** |
| Scotland’s Big Nature Festival | **23-24 May** | **2,700** |
| Whisky Stramash | **23-25 May** | **4,000** |
| Gardening Scotland | **29-31 May** | **3,000** |
| University of Aberdeen May Festival | **29-31 May** | **7,750** |
| Glasgow Science Festival: From Creel to Meal | **4-14 June** | **10,000** |
| Children's Food Festival | **5-6 June** | **10,000** |
| Food Town Day | **6 June** | **4,000** |
| Borders Book Festival | **11-14 June** | **10,000** |
| Glasgow Mela | **13-14 June** | **5,000** |
| Cake Fest Edinburgh | **21 June** | **8,000** |

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| \*The table above indicates only those events which have received a share of a dedicated £265,000 fund for the Year of Food and Drink 2015 (Jan-Dec). A full programme of Year of Food and Drink events will be available on [www.visitscotland.com/tastescotland](http://www.visitscotland.com/tastescotland) .An announcement on the second round of funded events will be made later in the year. |  |  |  | 4,000 |
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**For further information contact:**

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**Notes to Editors**

* The Community Food Fund, which is managed by Think Local on behalf of the Scottish Government, has contributed £150K towards the overall £265,000 fund for 2015.
* 2015 is the Year of Food and Drink, a celebration of Scotland’s natural larder and the role that food and drink plays in shaping our economic success.
* Events have been asked to sign up to Scotland’s Food Charter which aims is to raise the standard and provenance of food and drink at events to ensure a better visitor experience and, in turn, better word of mouth advertising and repeat business. <http://www.eventscotland.org/assets/show/4076.pdf>
* Scotland generates over £2.5m per day through food and drink tourism.
* A series of themed months will create an appetite for key areas of Scotland’s food and drink industries – from seafood and whisky to berries and high-quality meat
* For more information, visit [www.visitscotland.com/foodanddrink](http://www.visitscotland.com/foodanddrink)
* The Year of Food and Drink funded events programme is managed by EventScotland, part of VisitScotland. EventScotland is working to make Scotland the perfect stage for events. By developing an exciting portfolio of sporting and cultural events EventScotland is helping to raise Scotland’s international profile and boost the economy by attracting more visitors.
* For further information about EventScotland, its funding programmes and latest event news visit [www.EventScotland.org](http://www.EventScotland.org)
* Follow us on twitter: [@visitscotnews](https://twitter.com/#!/VisitScotNews)
* VisitScotland is Scotland’s national tourism organisation. Its core purpose is to maximise the economic benefit of tourism to Scotland.
* The organisation has three key roles:
	1. To market Scotland to all parts of the world to attract visitors
	2. To provide information – and inspiration – to visitors and potential visitors so they get the best out of a visit to Scotland
	3. To provide quality assurance to visitors and quality advice to the industry and partners to help the industry meet and strive to exceed customer expectations
* VisitScotland works together with tourism businesses to make tourism a success for everyone and ensure the industry continues to grow.
* The organisation employs 700 people and has offices and VisitScotland Information Centres across Scotland.
* According to a recent Deloitte study, the tourism economy supports 270,000 jobs in Scotland in 20,000 diverse businesses. The same study calculates that the tourism economy contributes £11 billion annually (direct and indirect impact, including day visits) and supports around 10 per cent of employment in Scotland. Almost 16 million tourists take overnight trips to Scotland.
* For VisitScotland’s press releases go to <http://www.visitscotland.org/media_centre.aspx>, tourism statistics and frequently asked questions go to [http://www.visitscotland.org/](http://www.visitscotland.org/media_centre.htm)
* Where possible, a Gaelic speaker will be made available for broadcast interviews on request (Far an tèid iarraidh, agus far am bheil sin nar comas, bruidhinnidh neach le Gàidhlig aig agallamh)
* For holiday information on Scotland go to [www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com/)
* For information about business tourism in Scotland go to [www.conventionscotland.com](http://www.conventionscotland.com/)