

Food & Footprint

Research-backed end-to-end sustainability solutions.

Feasibility study on establishing alternative crops in the South of Scotland

Project summary

South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) wanted to understand better the opportunities and barriers for producing, processing, and marketing alternative crops in the region.



southofscotlandenterprise.com

To fulfil this requirement, a study developed by SAC Consulting shortlisted a group of crops deemed of most interest for the region, and analysed agronomic, processing, supply chain and market needs to enable their establishment. This was summarised in a final report with next steps for crop and supply chain trials, as well as a series of farmer-oriented factsheets presenting practical considerations and potential gross margins.

The study was conducted in response to a call from Scottish Enterprise in partnership with the South of Scotland Economic Partnership (SOSEP) for an analysis of a range of alternative crops, including energy, protein, pharmaceutical, forestry, industrial crops, field scale vegetables and salad crops, to determine their opportunities for production, processing, and market development in the South of Scotland (SoS). The work was funded by SOSEP for the new South of Scotland Enterprise agency.

The South of Scotland is a large geographical area with a wide range of topography, weather conditions and soil types. While typical land uses have long been beef, sheep, arable and forestry, changing markets and subsidy systems, environmental change and technological advancement in production and processing show increasing potential for assessing the viability of growing alternative crops in the South of Scotland.

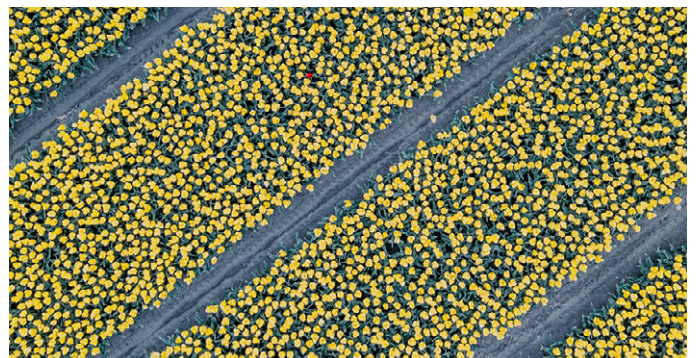


The full range of alternative crops is massive, for example there are over 300 species of clover (Trifolium) alone, and new methods of agronomy and processing are enabling more crops to reach market viability (e.g., extracted plant proteins, first UK lentil harvest in 2018 etc.). From consultation with stakeholders, the project selected a small number of alternative crops considered to be of most interest and potential for the South of Scotland, and the final report provides an appraisal of overall opportunities, steps for further development, and appraisals for each of the crops in turn has been produced.

Further to this, the study provides several other main sources of information, included in the appendices:

- A set of factsheets reviewing agronomic, supply chain and market opportunities of these crops to provide advice for producers on novel crops with the most potential for successful growing and marketing
- Decision support tools to help growers evaluate the potential market for alternative crops and the potential yield given their growing conditions
- Links to existing technical and market information on production of these crops

The project opened conversations with the newly formed South of Scotland Enterprise and showcased the breadth of advice and services that SAC Consulting can offer, from farm to fork.



Links

[SRUC Final Report](#)

[Ancient Cereals Factsheet](#)

[Cut Flowers Factsheet](#)

[Fibre and Energy Crops Factsheet](#)

[Mushroom Factsheet](#)

[Nutraceutical Crops Factsheet](#)

[Pharma Crops Factsheet](#)

[Soft Fruit Factsheet](#)

[SRF Factsheet](#)

[Sugarbeet Factsheet](#)