

Your update

from RSPCA Assured



Phased Return to On-Farm Assessments

By Neil Scott, Head of Certification

In case you missed our first announcement, RSPCA Assured has planned a three-phased approach to getting back to on-farm assessments.

You can find all the latest information on our approach [here](#).

In line with the latest government guidelines, strict social distancing measures will be observed by RSPCA Assured assessors. To further safeguard the welfare of both our members and our assessors, we have also developed our own ['contactless' guidelines](#).

Supply Chain Audit Update

By Amanda Cunningham, Licensing Manager

Covid-19 pandemic has made many of our members face unprecedented challenges and for many, it continues to do so. At the start of the lockdown, RSPCA Assured followed Government advice and suspended all onsite manufacturing assurance audits and we reverted to our remote audit process for essential audits only.

As the Government restrictions ease, we will be widening this and will be contacting all our manufacturing members who are due an audit. We will, however, be completing these in phases and at the moment manufacturing audits remain remote and contactless.

From a remote audit, you can expect video meetings, live streaming of the manufacturing process, review of procedures and paperwork (i.e label checking, intake and sales dockets), traceability and mass balancing. This is to ensure adequate controls are in place for us for the compliance & integrity of our scheme. We will also send you a checklist form to complete prior to the audit.

Contact us

As always, if you have any concerns regarding your audit, please [email us](#) or call 01403 286170.

You can also contact our third-party auditor, Lloyd's Register directly on 0131 335 6651 (for technical enquiries) or 0131 335 6621 (for scheduling enquiries).



Marketing Activity Update

By Xenia Kingsley, Marketing Manager

At the start of the Coronavirus outbreak, when supply chains were disrupted and panic-buying was at its peak, we decided to put a pause on our advertising. But as shopping patterns start to return to normal, we look to do the same.

We are currently working on some TV advertising to promote RSPCA Assured chicken, which is now available in [Tesco](#). The ad was filmed on an RSPCA Assured farm in Devon in February this year and will take a slightly longer 20-second format than the usual 10-second ads that we run. This will enable us to really sell the benefits of the product and we're excited to see these new ads go live this summer.

In addition to this, we are planning a campaign around [The Great British Bake Off](#) to encourage consumers to opt for higher welfare eggs and milk when baking-fever hits the nation. Our *GBBO* campaign was really successful last year so we're looking forward to being able to work on it again. We are currently in discussion with Channel 4 to understand how the lockdown might impact the show this year in terms of scheduling, so watch this space.



Carry On Camping at RSPCA Assured Farm

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive

Stuck for ideas for a staycation this summer? Then look no further than The Mac's farm in Ditchling, East Sussex, which reopens its barn-doors for camping in July.

Nestled in the South Downs National Park, their peaceful, family campsite is located on a working RSPCA Assured laying hen farm.

The farm, which has been a scheme member for 26 years, boasts lots of luscious meadows thriving with wildlife, where you can choose to pitch your own tent or, better yet, hire a brand-new bell tent.

The farm offers lots to do, including picking your own eggs from their fabulous flock of RSPCA Assured hens and other local produce from the 'Mac Shack'.

As well as being open at weekends, they are offering midweek stays. All camping is available to [book online via their website](#).

Photos courtesy of The Mac's Farm.

Interview with Neil Scott

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive



RSPCA Assured is, of course, all about animal welfare. But, we also care about people, whether that is employees, customers, members, or consumers. Without them, we couldn't help to improve the lives of farm animals.

To introduce you to the people who work for RSPCA Assured, here is the next instalment of our 'Get to Know' interviews with Head of Certification, Neil Scott:

Why did you join the charity?

My journey to joining RSPCA Assured was not conventional. After working with Tesco for 22 years and then running shops for B&Q and Wickes, I was approached to be interviewed for the role of Operations Manager. The role was perfect for my skills set as I have experience working with supply chains. I also liked the idea of improving the welfare of animals and having a more stable work-life balance. After a year and a half, the role of Head of Certification arose. Here I am today, absolutely loving it.

Could you give a description of your current role? What are you responsible for?

I am responsible for the processes behind our certificates, ensuring they protect and strengthen the RSPCA Assured brand. As part of my role, I oversee the operations and assessment side of the business via the field assessment and operations managers.

What do you think will change in animal welfare standards over the next five years?

Hopefully, the agriculture bill will ensure the UK's high food safety and animal welfare standards are protected. I would like to see our farming industry recognised for using production methods that ensure animals have a good life, whilst minimising the impact on the environment.

How do you see RSPCA's Assured approach to farm assurance developing in the future?

The scheme has developed since its conception over 25 years ago, and we will continue to work with our members and their supply chains to improve on how we deliver assurance.

There are many projects we are currently undertaking and have planned for the future, aimed at building and maintaining trust in the logo while minimising the impact at the point of delivery.

Our retail and supply chain customers are telling us loud and clear that their customers want us to be even more rigorous in our approach to assessing farms. As just one example, they would like to see us carry out more farm visits, with a mix of planned and unplanned checks - something we are working very hard to move forward.

The assessment journey itself is being improved, with electronic tablets and a new checklist app being made available for our team of Assessors. This project is well underway and is exciting for all of those involved. We can't wait to share it with our members in the not-too-distant future!

What has been the biggest challenge to RSPCA Assured as a business during Covid-19?

Continuing to support our members in their certification, whilst ensuring the safety of all those involved. I am delighted by how our Field Team sprang into action to design, test and

implement our remote desktop assessment process. It was well-received by our members who have adapted admirably, using video streaming and other methods, in order for us to verify conformance to the standards.

As the gradual return to 'normal' begins (through our [phased return plan](#)), it is encouraging to hear how keen our members are for us to visit in person.

If you were a farm animal, what would you be and why?

It has to be a laying hen! They are naturally inquisitive, love a bit of comfort and enjoy having a good old mooch around. I can really relate to that. I'd want to live on an RSPCA Assured farm though, not a battery cage unit.

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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