

# Your update

from RSPCA Assured



## Marketing update: 'People buy brands they trust'

By Liam Kurzeja, Head of Marketing

**From 2021, our main goal in the marketing team is to make RSPCA Assured the most trusted assurance provider in the UK. Awareness creates trust. So, awareness will remain one of our objectives, but it will no longer be our primary objective.**

With RSPCA Assured carrying the RSPCA name, the public has big expectations and they completely put their trust in us. This means we have to work that much harder than other assurance providers. But, we're up for the challenge!

If I had to summarise our marketing strategy in one line it's 'to give our target market of [reducetarians](#) (and ethical omnivores) the assurances they expect' when buying RSPCA Assured labelled products. This market has grown significantly since it became our focus in 2018. And given this segment has a higher than average propensity to make purchase decisions based on concerns about animal welfare, there is huge potential for RSPCA Assured, it's members and partners.

What this market expects most of our assurance, for it to be considered – in their own words – 'meaningful', is for RSPCA Assured to address the issues they care about most.

We are going to do this by showing this market that we are living our values and having a positive impact on animals and the planet, by creating great content that tells our story. So, in 2021 our advertising and digital communications channels will focus on the issues reducetarians care about most. To help us achieve this, in Q1 next year we will be launching a new website and employing a video production executive to help us tell those stories in a more engaging and meaningful way, that will help us to become the most trusted assurance scheme

It's going to be an exciting year – and I can't wait to update you further!

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## RSPCA victory as Government promises to ban live export of farm animals

By the RSPCA press team

**Charities have campaigned for years, protestors have died and millions of horses, sheep and calves have suffered journeys abroad to be kept in veal crates and slaughtered.**

But now the RSPCA has welcomed a Government consultation to ban the live export of farm animals after campaigning on the issue for 50 years.

Every year thousands of farm animals are exported from the Port of Ramsgate in Kent to be driven across Europe to be slaughtered, or fattened for later slaughter. Most commonly sheep and dairy calves have been exported from the UK overseas on gruelling journeys that can last tens of hours, exhausting the animals and causing suffering and even death.

These long journeys can cause animals to suffer from fear, exhaustion and dehydration, temperature extremes and lack of food, water or rest. Their welfare is also no longer protected by the UK's standards once they have left the ports, and they may be fattened or slaughtered in systems that would be illegal here in the UK.

RSPCA Chief Executive Chris Sherwood said: "We welcome and share the Government's goal to ban live exports. There is absolutely no reasonable justification to subject an animal to an unnecessarily stressful journey abroad simply for them to be fattened for slaughter.

"Banning live exports for slaughter and further fattening would be a landmark achievement for animal welfare. We're also encouraged to see that the Government will also consult on reduced maximum journey times for all transported animals as well as tighter rules in extreme heat or cold."

For more information, please click [here](#).

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## Wetherspoons is launching a new breakfast using RSPCA Assured eggs

**JD Wetherspoon has introduced a new breakfast range to its pubs.**

Wetherspoons says all options are served with a free range, RSPCA Assured, freshly cooked fried egg and American-style cheese, in a toasted English breakfast muffin, and are all under 500 calories each.

The new breakfast menu is served until 11:30am every day. Find out [more](#).

	Smoked salmon	Other fish product	Sausages/ pigs in blankets	Sausage meat/ stuffing	Bacon	Other pork product	Turkey whole	Turkey crown	Other turkey product	Chicken product
										
Aldi	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Asda							✓	✓		
Coop	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Lidl	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Morrisons							✓			
Sainsburys	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tesco	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		✓

## Where to buy RSPCA Assured special festive products this year

By Xenia Kingsley, Marketing Manager

**Now that we have greater clarity over the new government rules for festive gatherings, many of us are starting to think about what to dish up on the big day. It's another great year for festive products carrying the RSPCA Assured label, with a huge array of tasty things to try.**

Almost thirty RSPCA Assured labelled products picked up awards and accolades in Christmas taste tests, too!

The most award-winning products to look out for include; Co-op's Irresistible beech and oak-smoked salmon, which was recognised by BBC Good Food, Olive and Good Housekeeping as one of the tastiest supermarket smoked salmon products on sale this year.

In terms of turkey, there wasn't a clear front runner, but Lidl's Silver Slate received recognition for the third year in a row, and products from Sainsbury's, Aldi, Morrisons and ASDA also picked up gongs from Good Housekeeping and the Quality Food Awards, respectively.

For ham and gammon, Olive and BBC Good Food were in agreement that Tesco's bourbon and maple glazed crackling joint is cream of the crop.

Co-op's Irresistible British pork & truffle pigs in blankets were listed by both BBC Good Food and Olive. At the same time, Good Housekeeping and Olive picked out Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Pig in Blanket Christmas Tree as a top choice for this year. In the Quality Food Awards, Lidl's Deluxe Spiced Apple Pigs in Blankets were commended.

It's also important to note that a lot of the Christmas taste tests took place as early as September, so many of the festive products weren't yet available for consideration. There are tons of exciting things hitting shelves over the coming weeks - to see which shops are stocking own-brand festive products, check out the table above! Or visit our [website](#).

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## **My visit to a turkey farm**

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive

**As a new member of the marketing team, Covid-19 restrictions have meant starting my role from home. Six months on, I never expected to step foot on a farm before entering the office. But, when the chance came to visit an RSPCA Assured turkey farm, I jumped at it.**

Accompanying one of our assessors, I arrived at the farm in the morning. Located in picturesque woodlands across a set of rolling hills, the farm was large, with two sheds and a polytunnel to home its turkeys.



Health and safety are at the forefront of RSPCA Assured practice so, on arrival at the farm, we changed into biosecurity suits and personal protective equipment (PPE). The outfit wasn't particularly flattering. But, it made sure we didn't bring any contamination into the turkeys' living areas and safeguarded each other from any potential viruses.

Every time we entered and exited the barns or polytunnel, we had to wash our boots in a bucket of disinfectant to stop the spread of any diseases between different living areas. Renowned for my lack of balance, especially in wellington boots, I nervously placed one foot in after the other. As part and parcel of life on a turkey farm, this simple action was a whole new experience to me.

I'd imagined the turkeys to be much noisier, but what surprised me most was their personalities. They were eager to meet us as we walked through their home. You could learn a lesson from them in self-confidence. When I mentioned this to the RSPCA Assured assessor, he smiled and said: "Turkeys are curious creatures. They like to investigate, question and inspect."

It was fascinating to watch the assessor check that more than 350 different RSPCA welfare standards were being met at the farm. These standards cover every stage of the birds' lives, with the aim of ensuring they are healthy, thriving and able to express their natural behaviour no matter whether that's on a small or large commercial farm.

Visiting an RSPCA Assured turkey farm was a reassuring experience. The birds, the people, and the whole place was calm, clean and comfortable. Although I may not have been into the office yet, it was great shadowing the work of an RSPCA Assured Assessor.

As we think about what food to serve up this Christmas, I feel confident choosing [RSPCA Assured festive products](#) as they come from animals that are treated with compassion and respect.

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## **'Get to Know' Welfare Improvement Manager, Sophie Collins**

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive

**Behind every animal leading a good life on the RSPCA Assured scheme, there is a dedicated group of people working towards it. Without our members, consumers, customers or employees, it would not be possible to improve the lives of farmed animals.**



**To help you get to know the people that make RSPCA Assured a success, I interviewed our Welfare Improvement Manager, Sophie Collins:**

**What is your first memory of a farm?**

Many of my childhood memories seem to centre around farms. I'm not sure there is one in particular, but I remember visiting farm parks and open days at the local agricultural college. I can certainly recall one farm-based incident, where a goat stole my brother's hat. Thankfully we managed to retrieve it, but it did look good on the goat.

**Why did you join RSPCA Assured?**

I've always wanted to work in the animal welfare sector! Back in my university days, I had a specific interest in farm animal welfare. I joined RSPCA Assured in 2019, having first worked in the RSPCA's Farm Animals Department as the Scientific Officer for ruminants and welfare outcome assessment. This role introduced me to RSPCA Assured's welfare outcome work and opened the door to me becoming a fully-fledged member of the RSPCA Assured team.

**What are you responsible for?**

I manage the scheme's welfare outcome workstream, which aims to continuously monitor and ultimately improve key welfare outcomes - such as feather cover in hens and lameness in dairy cattle - on our member's farms.

As part of the workstream, we analyse the welfare outcome data collected by the assessors and RSPCA farm livestock officers during their visits. This information is used to judge the scheme's welfare outcome performance. We can then set ourselves welfare outcome targets to work towards, in collaboration with our members, to keep improving animal welfare on RSPCA Assured farms.

**What do you enjoy most about your role?**

To be honest, lots of things! I'm lucky to be part of a team who are supportive, fun and share my passion for animal welfare. I also get an awful lot of satisfaction from working in a sector, and for an organisation, that's so impactful. The positive difference the RSPCA Assured scheme has had on animal welfare to date, and continues to have, is enormous.

I'm also a big fan of the office dogs. Having them around whilst doing work makes the day a little sweeter, even if they can be a nice distraction. I couldn't name you a favourite, as they're all so adorable!

**What is your proudest achievement at RSPCA Assured?**



Working with colleagues to help set up the welfare outcome workstream as it is today. Building on both RSPCA Assured and the RSPCA's farm animal department earlier work on the AssureWel Project, we now have our continuous improvement goal and general framework firmly in place. All of this work should help to further cement our position as the leading higher welfare scheme.

### **How has COVID-19 affected the way you work?**

The main change for me has been working from home. Although I've not missed the commute, I'm definitely looking forward to when everyone can return to the office. Although I may be guilty of not following these tips sometimes, I've tried to keep up with my 'adapted' routine and get outside once a day!

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

Now, this is a tough one! My favourite farm animal is probably a dairy cow. I like their slow, steady nature and I'm very jealous of their big beautiful eyes!

### **What would be on your perfect food table this Christmas?**

Other than lots and lots of chocolate, biscuits and fizzy wine, a fairly traditional Christmas dinner would be great! A roast chicken, pigs in blankets and all the trimmings, RSPCA Assured of course.

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Best wishes,

**RSPCA Assured**

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