

# Your update

from RSPCA Assured



## Welcome

We will now be sending out monthly emails, instead of our quarterly emails, to keep you updated on all things RSPCA Assured. As this is the first of our new e-newsletters, we would love to hear any feedback you may have - please [contact us](#). If you do not wish to receive these updates, let us know. We hope you enjoy reading...

## Increased advertising investment

By Xenia Kingsley, marketing manager

**In 2019 so far, we have spent £125k on TV advertising and video on demand, spread across three seasonal peaks (New Year, Pancake Day and May Bank Holiday), as well as advertising during relevant programming (Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast on Channel 4).**

We've invested an additional £55k in social media and, for the first time, an influencer campaign. Our pancake day campaign resulted in increased follower numbers, a spike in web traffic and 91% positive sentiment in comments, all of which are very encouraging.

There are a number of exciting projects on the horizon this Summer. We will be promoting the benefits of choosing higher welfare meats for barbeque season. We are also launching student friendly recipes in September to engage with young adults, and will be advertising during relevant podcasts to further increase our reach with this audience.

One of our biggest advertising pushes of the year will come at the end of the summer with a focus on higher welfare eggs to tie in with the heightened interest in baking that The Great British Bake Off brings. More on this to come in the next update!



## Awareness

By Xenia Kingsley, marketing manager

We're pleased to report that awareness of RSPCA Assured (targeted and general) have more than doubled since the rebrand in 2015 with the help of our advertising and social media efforts, alongside your support and increasing product availability. General awareness for Q1 2019 currently sits at 44% (up four percentage points year on year) while targeted awareness (amongst our key demographic) is now 52% (up two percentage points year on year).

## How we segment the consumer market

By Liam Kurzeja, head of marketing

**A colleague recently asked me why the number of vegans in our research was so low (less than 1%) when the vegan society claim that as many as 5% of people in the UK are now vegan?**

Every quarter we poll a panel of 2,000 UK adults. The panels are exclusive - which means we don't poll the same people twice and risk swaying the results - and are demographically representative. Sorry to get technical but this is important to note.

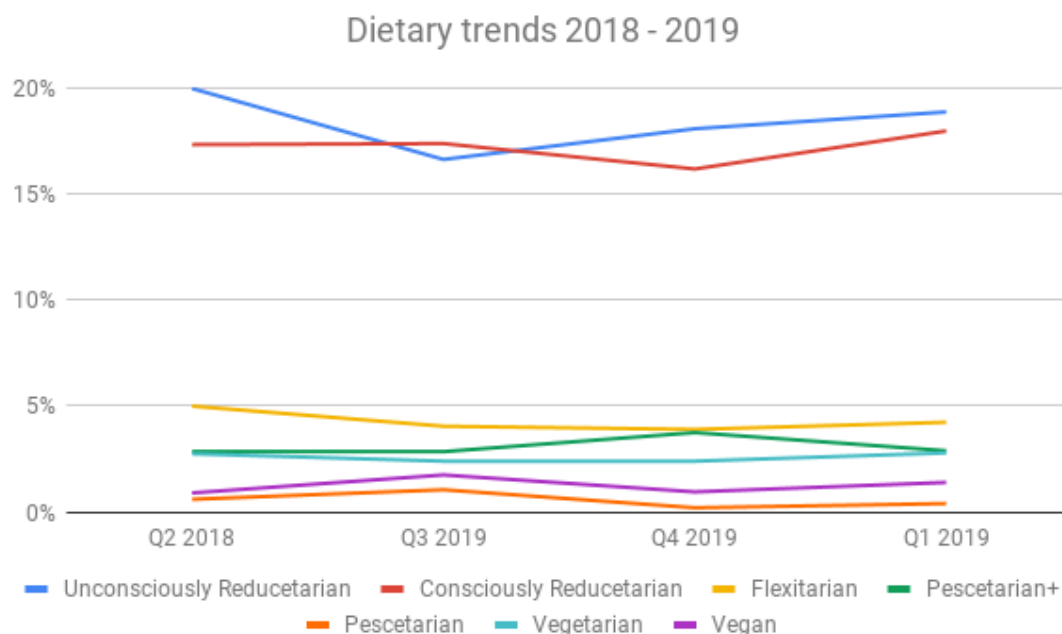
At the beginning of each poll we ask two questions in order to segment the market by eating habits and shopper attitudes. Now, this is where it gets interesting. We don't ask people if they are vegan, vegetarian, pescetarian and so on. Instead, we ask them what they do and don't eat and then we define them accordingly.

So, the simple answer to my colleague's question is this: there are lots of people claiming

to be vegan but in reality, they're probably not.

We've all seen the media headlines about a growing interest in plant-based food, and retailers and brands expanding their vegan ranges. But just because people are eating more vegan food, it doesn't necessarily mean they have become vegan.

\*Omnivores account for over 50% across the same time period



## Welfare outcome assessments

By Joe Bailey, head of farming

**This month we are excited to introduce a new addition to the RSPCA Assured farming team, Sophie Collins, who will be responsible for managing and further developing our welfare outcomes work.**

As you may be aware, RSPCA Assured undertakes 'welfare outcome assessments' on our laying hen, dairy, pig, chicken, beef and sheep members' farms. This means that, alongside ensuring members are complying with the RSPCA's higher welfare standards, our assessors also collect information about the health and behaviour of the animals they see on their visits. For example, key welfare issues such as feather cover in hens and lameness in dairy cattle. The welfare outcome assessment protocols used by our assessors were developed and trialled as part of the [AssureWel project](#), and the information generated allows us to better understand the level of animal welfare on our members' farms.

Sophie and the rest of the welfare outcomes team will be working to further advance our efforts in this area, with a particular focus on developing and embedding internal procedures to support the continued review and, in time, improvement of our welfare outcome data. We look forward to providing you with updates on this work area in future editions.

## Chain of custody requirements

By Lydia Stratton, head of commercial development

**We are pleased to announce that the RSPCA Assured chain of custody audit standard went live on 1st February 2019. We have been working closely with industry stakeholders to establish a comprehensive set of guidelines to achieve the following:**

- Ensure product authenticity through submitting traceability proformas, product lists and implementing transparent and fully traceable supply chains from farm to fork
- Protect everyone in the supply chain from the producers and processors through to the end user
- Maintain brand integrity, and
- Safeguard consumer confidence.

In essence, everyone in the supply chain must be a member, have an audit, and source products from certified RSPCA Assured suppliers. Members are required to keep accurate records and submit them via a traceability proforma when requested.

Consumer-facing artwork such as labels, retail packaging, menus etc must adhere to our brand guidelines and be submitted for approval before publication using our [artwork proforma](#). Members are required to fill in a levy return form and pay a levy on the products sold using our registered name and certification mark.

If you have any questions, [please contact us](#).

## Membership fees are changing

By Neil Scott, head of certification

**We have charged the same membership fees for several years now. And whilst the costs to us of delivering our service have increased in that time, we have avoided passing those costs on to our members.**

Unfortunately, we are no longer able to sustain this in the long-term, and therefore members will notice a small increase in membership fees this year. If they haven't already done so, members will receive a letter shortly providing more information about these changes.

Whilst we are increasing our fees now, we will also be looking at the way they are calculated later this year.

We know these are not always easy to calculate. So we are looking at making this simpler, as the current model can result in unnecessary administration for both ourselves and our members. If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

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## **RSPCA welfare standards for laying hens: barn systems - current view**

By RSPCA farm animals department

**As the industry begins its transition away from caged systems, and in order to help producers plan for the future, the RSPCA wishes to provide clarity on its current position in relation to barn systems.**

The RSPCA's welfare standards for laying hens already include a number of important requirements to help safeguard the welfare of birds in barn systems. The current set of standards (August 2017) will continue to be used by RSPCA Assured for approving any new members using such systems.

However, as part of our ongoing review of our welfare standards, there are a number of key issues relating to barn systems that we are seeking to examine in the near future, these include:

- The provision of natural light
- Enhanced environmental enrichment
- Space availability
- The use of multiple-deck housing for colony conversions.

Should our review of these issues result in any potential standards changes then we will, as usual, consult with producers, industry bodies, welfare academics and poultry veterinarians following our established procedures prior to implementation.

For clarity, the RSPCA welfare standards will continue to prohibit the use of 'combi-systems'.

We would encourage producers looking to build new systems, or convert old ones, to [contact the RSPCA Farm Animals Department](#) to discuss their plans with us.

Best wishes,  
**RSPCA Assured**

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