

Latest News from RSPCA Assured

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# Your update

from RSPCA Assured



## Q3 polling results

By Liam Kurzeja, Head of Marketing

**Our latest quarterly consumer poll results are in, and while there have not been any statistically significant changes on the previous quarter, it is encouraging to see that overall trust and awareness of the RSPCA Assured brand has remained steady, despite a challenging period.**

Trust in the brand rose very slightly from 67% to 68% between Q2 and Q3, while general awareness increased from 57% to 58%. After such a positive result last quarter, we thought we might see a small dip. So, it is very encouraging to see continued progress.

Awareness amongst our target market (those following a reducetarian diet) rose from 66% to 69%. Interestingly, this correlates with fewer respondents following a traditional “omnivorous” diet (down from 53% to 50%), and more now falling into the reducetarian category (rising from 36% to 40% between Q2 and Q3).

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## Consumer feedback

By Liam Kurzeja, Head of Marketing

**As awareness of the scheme grows, we've been getting a fair bit of feedback from supporters via our website and social media channels.**

We've had a few supporters get in touch to say they find it difficult to find RSPCA Assured products on supermarket's online grocery websites. They've expressed frustration that when they use RSPCA Assured as a search term, they don't get any results and have asked us to feed this back to our retail partners. However, we're not alone as they've said they'd also like to be able to search by [Fairtrade](#) and 'palm oil-free' for example. We may add a question to our next quarterly poll to look into this a little more.

Additionally, we still have a [handy tool](#) on our website that allows supporters to tell us what products they are looking for. And chicken, eggs and milk remain the most popular amongst our followers, closely followed by cheese, beef and bacon. We can break down this feedback by each retailer, so if you'd like to know more, do [get in touch](#).



## Our Christmas advertising plans

By Xenia Kingsley, Marketing Manager

**For the past couple of years, our Christmas TV adverts have focused on promoting higher welfare turkey. However, given that we had to cancel a number of campaigns this year due to COVID, and that there will be a huge range of festive products featuring the RSPCA Assured logo in stores this year, we've decided to update the voiceover to focus on a number of products.**

We'll be using the same footage that was aired last year, which features turkeys in a fairy-light lit wooded area on a farm in East Anglia. We are currently booking the media for the campaign, which is set to run in early December, as consumers begin to think about their Christmas food shop.

## McDonald's launches online tool for consumers to find out where their ingredients come from

**Following a YouGov study which shows that Brits care more about local farmers and locally sourced food following lockdown, the fast-food restaurant launched [Map My McDonald's](#).**

The online interactive tool allows consumers to see which ingredients used in their favourite menu items are grown in their region, and they have the opportunity to meet some of the 23,000 British and Irish farmers that supply them. We are pleased to see that RSPCA Assured farmers and information about the scheme feature heavily on the site too!

Find out more [here](#).

## 'Get to know' our Aquaculture Manager, Malcolm Johnstone

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive



**People are at the heart of RSPCA Assured. Without the dedicated work of each individual, we couldn't keep improving the lives of farm animals.**

**To introduce you to the people that make RSPCA Assured a success, here is the next instalment of our 'Get to Know' interviews with Aquaculture Manager, Malcolm Johnstone:**

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

I've always loved aquaculture. Near Invergarry where I grew up, there was a fish hatchery. Where I live now, there's a fish farm just down the road, which is the first place I worked when I joined the aquaculture Industry.

**Why did you join the charity? (your journey into RSPCA Assured)**

Over the years, I've had a few jobs. I was in the Royal Navy for six years, spent time driving lorries and even had my own business in forestry. Before applying to be an Assessor at RSPCA Assured, I worked in aquaculture for twenty years with MOWI. Aquaculture is a relatively young industry, and I've seen it develop. The role at RSPCA Assured was an opportunity for me to improve fish welfare with my experience of working at a practical level.

**What are you responsible for?**

As Aquaculture Manager, I have an overview of the whole industry. My role is responsible for expanding aquaculture by focusing on new species, international work and looking at new schemes. I often speak at events and deliver training on fish welfare. Day-to-day, I get to liaise with the wider industry and act as a point of contact for aquaculture on the RSPCA Assured scheme.

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

The productive relationships I've formed across the industry! It's great to work with like-minded people who are passionate about the welfare of fish. Over the years, I've worked with some fantastic people who continue to inspire me to this day.

**What is your proudest achievement?**

Seeing the difference RSPCA Assured makes to fish welfare. We've gotten to the point where, in the UK, our standards have become recognised as best industry practice. At a personal level, I started here 14 years ago as the only member of staff conducting aquaculture assessments. The hours were long, and I had to travel a lot. It's rewarding to see how far the scheme has come. We now have four assessors specialising in aquaculture that assure the majority of salmon and trout farms in the U.K. I'm proud to be part of this journey.

**Congratulations on recently winning the Aquaculture Award for Animal Welfare jointly with the RSPCA's fish specialist, John Avizienius. Could you talk me through what this was for?**

The Aquaculture Awards mark the achievements of the aquaculture industry worldwide. Over the years, I've worked closely with John Avizienius. We've made a difference to the lives of millions of fish, and I'm proud to say we won the Animal Welfare Award together.

To get recognition from our peers in the industry was a humbling moment for me. Typically, there would have been a conference in Aviemore, Scotland, with a dinner, dance and speeches. Due to Covid-restrictions, I thankfully didn't have to get up in front of a crowd. But, it was nice to raise a virtual glass of something special on behalf of our efforts.

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

As most of my work is home-based, my living room was already an office. I haven't had to adjust too much. But, it's meant I haven't been able to get out and visit sites. Not being able to meet people and see the fish is a real miss. However, we're doing a tremendous job with our remote fish farm assessments.

Aquaculture is a specialist industry, so it's a challenge to replace people working on-sites. On top of this, fish farms are often in isolated areas, such as the West Coast of Scotland, where the local infrastructure can't cope with significant health issues like Covid-19. So to safeguard our members, and maintain a high standard of welfare for the fish, we're conducting aquaculture assessments via video link. Hopefully, it won't be too long before they can be face-to-face again.

Best wishes,

**RSPCA Assured**

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