



Your ruminants update

From RSPCA Assured

A message to you

By Joe Bailey, Head of Farming



Spring is finally upon us, a season of new life, new hope. With every one of us affected by Covid-19, it has never seemed more pertinent or more promising.

Thankfully, conversations are moving on from those who had it, tragically lost their life or livelihood to it, to those who are vaccinated or eagerly waiting to be!

Here at RSPCA Assured, we continue to have regular DEFRA meetings on Earned Recognition, E.L.M.S (Environment Land Management scheme) and Positive Welfare. These discussions take place so that we can keep you informed of best practice and create a wider appreciation for those who farm to higher welfare standards.

People are valuing farmers, just as we value you, for your resilience against the challenges you've faced. In such a difficult time, I'm proud of your continued commitment to RSPCA Assured and for improving the lives of the animals you're responsible for.

Let's hope for a dry Spring, with just enough rain to nourish but not too much to damage. I'm looking forward to 'in person' meetings - with no more weak Wi-Fi connections or people on mute - and I bet you are too! Fingers crossed for a swift return to hugs and handshakes, removal of masks, and seeing smiling faces once again.

Take care,
Joe



Nearly two-thirds of shoppers now recognise RSPCA Assured label, as we gain a 52% increase in volume of products

By Rebecca Lenik, Public Relations Manager

RSPCA Assured is now recognised by 64% of young professionals and families (our target market) less than six years after we rebranded from Freedom Food.

This is more than three times the awareness level (of 19%) measured when the new logo first launched in 2015, vastly exceeding our own expectations. General consumer awareness has also continued to increase from 15% in 2015 to 58% today, as reported in The Grocer this week.

We now also have more than 1,100 different labelled product lines. On top of this, there has been a significant 52% increase in the amount of food carrying the RSPCA Assured label between 2016 and 2020.

This upsurge is further mirrored by a 63% increase in the number of animals being farmed under the scheme over the last five years - from about 15.9 million terrestrial animals in 2015 to 25.9 million in 2020. This equates to nearly 12% of the UK terrestrial farming market for the species covered by RSPCA Assured. The majority of all Scottish salmon farms are also now under the scheme. Commenting on this success Clive Brazier, CEO of RSPCA Assured, says:

“Despite an incredibly turbulent 12 months, fraught with the challenges of Covid-19, Avian Influenza and Brexit, these results show that the trend for ethical food is unwavering. Consumers are standing firm by farm animal welfare even during the toughest of times, which means the future is looking very promising for higher welfare farming.”

Read more [here](#).



Are you worried about straw?

By Joe Bailey, Head of Farming

We know that across all terrestrial livestock sectors you're concerned about straw - whether it's the availability, quality or price of it - but don't worry.

The AHDB enrichment guide is a great source of advice, it can be found [here](#). Under the section 'Substrates used as bedding' (page 7), it lists materials that are suitable for use under RSPCA standards.

Please be mindful that shredded paper is not recommended, as it tends to absorb liquid, does not dry out very well and has a tendency to clump, which can make it difficult to work with when mucking out or cleaning. It can also reduce pen hygiene.

If you are worried about straw on your farm, please [contact us](#).

Helpful wellbeing links

If you need help or have queries regarding desktop assessments or anything else related to RSPCA Assured, please do [contact us](#). We have also shared some helpful links on wellbeing during the Covid-19 crisis below:

[That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief](#)

[Caring for employee mental health: a coronavirus guide](#)

[The Adaptive Challenge of COVID-19](#)

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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