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from RSPCA Assured



We're thrilled to announce that M&S has committed to stocking 100% RSPCA Assured fresh chicken

By Rebecca Lenik, PR Manager

M&S already stocks the widest range of RSPCA Assured products of any UK supermarket. Now the bar has been raised even higher by a commitment to move to 100% slower-growing RSPCA Assured fresh chicken by Autumn 2022.

The move is part of M&S's commitment to the [Better Chicken Commitment](#), with them demonstrating their leadership in farm animal welfare by being the first supermarket to move all of their fresh chicken to slower-growing breeds, four years ahead of schedule. These slower-growing birds are fed on a multigrain diet, specifically designed to support their slower natural growth and muscle development, helping to provide them with a better quality of life.

This is great news and will provide many more higher welfare product options to customers. The RSPCA is now calling on other retailers and foodservice companies to follow M&S' lead and its 'landmark' commitment to welfare standards.

If you would like to discuss your sourcing, please [contact our Head of Corporate Partnerships, Cliona Duffy](#).

The National Food Strategy: An independent review for Government

By Clive Brazier, Chief Executive

I'm sure you will have all seen [The National Food Strategy](#) was published a couple of weeks ago. This mammoth 288-page review for the government makes numerous recommendations to address the major issues facing the food system: climate change, biodiversity loss, land use, diet-related disease, health inequality, food security and trade.

"The food we eat – and the way we produce it – is doing terrible damage to our planet and to our health. The global food system is the single biggest contributor to biodiversity loss, deforestation, drought, freshwater pollution and the collapse of aquatic wildlife. It is the second-biggest contributor to climate change, after the energy industry."

It is impossible to ignore the findings of this report, which make for a sobering – yet, at the same time, hopeful – read. And like yourselves, we will be digesting the findings of this report and considering how we can play our part in supporting sustainable food production for future generations.

'Get to Know' Dr Kate Norman, RSPCA Senior Scientific Officer for poultry

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive



Without our colleagues in the RSPCA's Farm Animals Department, RSPCA Assured simply couldn't improve the lives of farmed animals.

The knowledge, expertise and support they provide is pivotal. This includes writing the RSPCA welfare standards for each species in consultation with external experts, developing practical guidance for producers and conducting unannounced farm visits.

Recently, a new face joined them, albeit remotely. With a strong academic background in animal behaviour and welfare, we're excited to welcome Dr Kate Norman, Senior Scientific Officer for poultry - hens, turkeys and ducks.

Here is the next instalment of our 'Get to Know' interview series to introduce you to the latest addition to the RSPCA's Farm Animals Department:

What is your new role? What are you responsible for?

I'm Senior Scientific Officer in the Farm Animals Department of the RSPCA and have responsibility for leading on poultry (laying hens, turkeys and ducks). My role involves a wide variety of activities, including reviewing the latest scientific evidence that can be used to further improve the welfare of poultry.

I'll work closely with RSPCA Assured, its members and a wide variety of other external stakeholders, as well as the rest of the RSPCA, to provide scientific and technical information, advice and support concerning the poultry species I cover.

Why did you want to join the Farm Animals Department at RSPCA?

It's a fantastic opportunity to work within the RSPCA Farm Animals Department. The RSPCA is continuously contributing to the welfare of farmed animals using both scientific evidence and practical experience to challenge and push for higher welfare standards and practices.

What are you most looking forward to in your role?

I've always admired the RSPCA! So having the opportunity to make a difference to the welfare of farmed animals, by working with and developing practical solutions and guidance for producers and others is amazing. I'm also excited to get to know my team and to work with like-minded people.

Where have you worked previously? What roles were these?

Before coming to the RSPCA, I worked as a Research Associate at The University of Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College London. My research was focused specifically on laying hens, investigating practical changes that could be made on-farm to improve behavioural opportunities and welfare. I'm looking forward to bringing this expertise to my new role.

What expertise do you bring to the team?

My research background in animal behaviour and welfare has equipped me with both scientific and practical skills, meaning I'm familiar with the research surrounding poultry species but I've also spent many a day inside poultry sheds working directly with animals and collecting research data.

What is your first memory of a farm?

I feel I've been surrounded by farming my whole life. We always kept chickens and reared the occasional lamb and calf. Growing up, I lived next door to a large free-range chicken unit - so I opened my curtains in the morning to chickens, chickens, chickens!

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

I would have to be a cow in summer, they seem so peaceful laying down chewing the cud in the sun. I've got a Dexter cow called Bell, it's lovely sitting in the field with her, so I can see myself fitting in the herd too.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

I enjoy going for walks and getting my friends lost in the wild (I have no sense of direction). Thanks to Covid-19, I have become an avid sourdough baker; I ordered 50kg of flour over lockdown, so I don't think I'll be giving it up anytime soon.

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Homemade sourdough pizza! It's my only option to help get through the 50kg of flour, and they are so tasty. You might call me boring, but I go for a classic margherita. Add some homemade chips on the side with loads of ketchup and I'll be happy for life!

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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