

Your update

from RSPCA Assured



Welcome

We hope you enjoyed our first, new-look e-newsletter. If you missed it, check it out [here](#). As always, we would love to hear any feedback you may have - please [contact us](#). In the meantime, we hope you enjoy reading our July update...

Proposed plastics policy

By Liam Kurzeja, head of marketing

We are considering introducing a policy regarding the use of plastics for product packaging as part of our logo use guidelines and would welcome your view.

Plastics have obviously become a major consumer concern given the huge impact they are having on the environment and wildlife. And as an animal welfare charity, the public rightly expects us to have a policy regarding this issue.

We are also mindful of the challenges this presents to our retail partners. So, we have sought further advice from the Environment Agency and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).

We are considering introducing a policy in line with WRAP's UK Plastics Pact. We understand most of you are already signed up to the Pact. So, we hope this is a favourable position to take.

However, we would still very much welcome your views before we proceed with implementing this policy. You will find a copy of the proposed draft policy [here](#) and would ask you to [contact us in writing](#) by Friday 23 August 2019 should you wish to contribute.

We would like to reiterate that this is purely a draft proposal at this stage and that nothing will be progressed any further until we have completed this consultation.



VR project

By Emily Strachan, marketing executive

Would you like the chance to engage with the younger generation and drive reach? We are seeking a sponsor for RSPCA Assured's VR chicken farm project to provide support to cover the cost of cardboard VR viewers and/or viewing devices.

RSPCA Assured Chicken Farms is a virtual reality programme which shows people what life is like for a chicken on a higher welfare RSPCA Assured farm, both indoor and outdoor. Our aim is to offer this programme in primary schools to year 4 children (aged 8-9).

Here is a [short video](#) which demonstrates how the programme integrates into the classroom environment.

Farm visits are by far the best way of educating people about farm animal welfare. However, many children across the UK don't have the opportunity to visit a farm due to their location or circumstance.

Virtual reality could offer a solution to this problem by enabling school children to 'virtually' visit a farm, all without leaving the comfort of their classroom.

In return for your invaluable support we would be able to offer you branding and/or promotional opportunities. If you are interested and would like to know more, please [contact us](#).



Promotional material packs

By Emily Strachan, marketing executive

We are thinking of creating a set of free materials to help you communicate RSPCA Assured to your staff and customers and would welcome your thoughts.

Some of you have told us that you struggle to communicate the RSPCA Assured scheme and its benefits to your staff and customers. So, we're thinking of writing and designing a set of free resources, such as leaflets, shelf signage, on-pack stickers and so on, for you to amend with your own brand voice, colours and fonts.

However, rather than create materials you don't want, we'd like you to tell us what you do want. If you have any suggestions for materials that you'd find useful, please [contact us](#).

25 years helping farm animals

By Rebecca Lenik, PR manager

RSPCA Assured was established by the RSPCA in 1994 as a higher welfare farm assurance and food labelling scheme - originally called Freedom Food. And this year we're celebrating 25 years of helping improve the lives of farm animals.

In this time RSPCA Assured, together with the RSPCA, has had a huge impact on improving farm animal welfare. Some of our greatest achievements include:

- RSPCA Assured is recognised by the EU Funded "Welfare Quality Project" as the first assurance scheme dedicated to farm animal welfare in Europe
- The majority of cage-free laying hens and Scottish farmed salmon are now farmed under the RSPCA Assured scheme
- RSPCA standards were the first to introduce farm-specific veterinary health planning which was then adopted by all major UK assurance schemes
- RSPCA introduced mandatory requirements for CCTV in abattoirs to monitor activity during slaughter process for all RSPCA Assured members in 2011

- RSPCA Assured and the RSPCA were involved in the pioneering of on-farm welfare outcome assessments
- Farrowing crates for pigs were banned under RSPCA Assured in 2014
- Today there are about 2,000 different RSPCA Assured labelled products available across nearly all the UK's supermarkets.

And following our example similar farm assurance schemes have been set up in other countries, including RSPCA Approved Farming in Australia and SPCA's Blue Tick in New Zealand.

Thanks to RSPCA Assured, our scheme members, and of course yourselves, we have been able to help millions of farm animals have better lives. We can't wait to see what new achievements the next 25 years have in store.

Thank you for your continued support.



Consumer trust research

By Rebecca Lenik, PR manager

Last year we commissioned B2B International to help us better understand the needs of the food industry when it comes to farm assurance and, particularly, RSPCA Assured.

It revealed that the most important thing - to the majority of those we interviewed - was the need for more holistic assurance, whilst still ensuring a clear consumer proposition.

Having established what it is that the food industry wants, this year we have turned our attention to the consumer.

With the help of implicit testing specialists - Mindlab International - we are carrying out research to better understand what people really feel about specific issues relating to farming and assurance, not just what they say they think about them.

We will be testing both the initial reactions and innermost feelings of 3,000 adults towards 40 different farming issues including: plastic pollution, low paid workers, announced versus unannounced inspections, and indoor versus outdoor farming.

The results are due later this year. Together with the results of the food industry research they will be used to help us devise and deliver, not only a more holistic but, also the most trusted farm assurance scheme. All this whilst maintaining our clear focus on animal welfare - which is after all what makes us different.

Recent and upcoming STAGs

By Marc Cooper, RSPCA head of farm animals

Earlier this year, Standards Technical Advisory Group (STAG) meetings were held for pigs, beef, turkeys, pullets (laying hens) and dairy cattle. The meeting notes for the beef STAG meeting are currently available on the [RSPCA website](#). The pig, turkey, pullet and dairy cattle STAG meeting notes will be published soon.

In addition, we will hold our next sheep STAG meeting at the end of September 2019.

Due to a number of changes within the RSPCA Farm Animals Department, our next chicken STAG meeting has been postponed. We are currently looking at dates and it is likely to be held at the end of the year or early 2020.

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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