

# Aquaculture newsletter

Summer 2022



## Welcome to the summer aquaculture newsletter

Joe Bailey, Head of Farming (Welfare and Wellbeing)



**I hope this issue finds you well, happy and cooler after the recent heatwave.**

It's hard to believe that we are well into the second half of 2022. It's gone by in such a flurry and I am sure some of you are extremely grateful to put some things behind you. Here is hoping the next four months bring more certainty, fewer challenges, more triumphs, and less trauma.

In this edition, we will be talking about the Aquaculture Awards, salmon standards, and more.

Sadly, this will be my last newsletter as I am leaving RSPCA Assured at the end of October to take up a new post with an animal welfare trust.

I have had an incredible seven years with RSPCA Assured working with, and meeting, wonderful people who are so dedicated to improving animal welfare and therefore wellbeing - as the two are inextricably linked.

Professionally, I would like to acknowledge and thank all of you for your continued support and membership - you are helping to make an important difference to the future of farm animal welfare. On a personal level, I am so grateful to those I have met when visiting your farms, offices, and homes, and especially thankful for the time I have spent with you and the gorgeous animals you are responsible for. This has helped to make my time as Head of Farming so rewarding.

Please don't hesitate to [get in touch](#) with me before I leave, and please be reassured that we are planning a smooth transition and a new head of farming will be in place as soon as possible.

Enjoy the rest of the summer, take care, stay safe, and be happy.

## Aquaculture awards

**Congratulations to all winners, and those shortlisted, at the [Aquaculture Awards 2022](#), which were held in Aviemore all the way back in May. The awards mark the achievements of the aquaculture industry worldwide.**

Malcolm Johnstone, Aquaculture Manager at RSPCA Assured, praised our members who were acknowledged at the event, commenting:

"I'm so pleased for the RSPCA Assured members who won their awards. It's great to see higher welfare farming receive recognition, and the event was a great way to celebrate a variety of achievements. It is an exciting time for the aquaculture industry."

### **Aquaculture Awards 2022 - Winning RSPCA Assured Members:**

- Rising Star - Andre Van, Kames Fish Farming
- Collaboration - Mowi Scotland
- Economic Sustainability - Scottish Sea Farms
- Community Initiative - Scottish Salmon Company (now Bakkafrost Scotland)
- Finfish Farmer of the year - Stephen Woods, Scottish Sea Farms
- Best Aquaculture Company - Kames Fish Farming
- Unsung Hero - Ian Keen-Smith, Cooke Aquaculture Scotland

Additional congratulations go to the University of Stirling and Ace Aquatec on winning the Animal Welfare award. They have significant input into our standards and we are pleased to be working with them to improve welfare across the industry.

[View the winners](#)



## Update from the RSPCA farm animals department

Sean Black, Senior Scientific Officer (Aquaculture)

**Much has happened since the last newsletter. Just after it came out, the industry was able to come together in Aviemore for Aquaculture UK and the Aquaculture Awards. I was on the RSPCA Assured stand, which was buzzing throughout the conference, and it was fantastic to see so many people popping by to hear about the work the RSPCA is doing for fish welfare, both in terms of the standards and the scheme. It also gave us the chance to engage with many other stakeholders to see and hear about all their fantastic innovations, particularly regarding developments in fish welfare.**

In terms of the Awards, it gives the industry the chance to celebrate the good work of a huge number of people, organisations, and companies. A big well done to all the winners and in particular, those who work closely with the RSPCA or who are RSPCA Assured members.

Elsewhere, I was lucky enough to attend the Summershoal conference in Portugal in late June. This conference is organised by the FishEthoGroup, an organisation whose focus is on improving the welfare of farmed fish across Europe. There were a number of speakers from around the world, all with different focuses and areas of interest. I presented about the work the RSPCA have been doing with the industry to set the higher welfare standards for salmon and trout and discussed how other countries and organisations could look to improve fish welfare in their own countries.

We all know the late summer and early autumn can bring some of the most

challenging times in fish farming so I wish you all the best for the upcoming months, and as always, please [reach out](#) if you want to discuss anything or have any ideas for how fish welfare can be improved. We're always keen to hear of new innovations that can help drive fish welfare and develop our standards.

## We want to hear from you!

**We love championing our members, but we need your help.**

We want to do more to show consumers, fellow members, and partners the amazing work that you do for fish welfare! And in order to do this, we want to feature good news stories in our e-newsletter updates, on the RSPCA Assured website, and on our social media channels.

So, do you have any new innovations on your site? Are you going that extra mile for salmon or trout enrichment? Or are you partnering with universities or other organisations in research to improve fish farming and welfare practices?

If you have anything you would like us to share, please let us know!

[Contact us](#)

## Get to know Giada Desperati, Field Assessor

Jeremy Costello, Marketing Executive

**From the Italian Alps, to the northern most point of mainland Scotland, RSPCA Assured assessor, Giada Desperati has come a long way to improve the welfare of fish. Joining us at the beginning of 2022, this interview is a chance for you to get to know Giada one of our aquaculture assessors who audit RSPCA Assured certified fish farms.**

**Tell us a little bit about yourself. What's your career background?**

I grew up in a town not too far away from the Alps, but I always had a passion for the sea and its creatures, even though I only had the chance to see it during the summer holidays.



To follow this passion I decided to study Marine Biology at the Università Politecnica delle Marche - Ancona (Italy) and like any good marine biologist I always wanted to work with dolphins and whales, and I didn't want to get stuck in a lab so I decided to travel after I got my Master Degree.

I had the chance to work in a diving centre in Sardegna (Italy) where they were also monitoring wildlife in the area including dolphins. I then moved to South Africa to participate in a research project on Great White sharks, after this I worked in Egypt for 6 months as a snorkeling guide and assisting with lessons on marine biology of the Red Sea.

Then I decided that it was time to go to the other side of the world and I lived in New Zealand for 5 months working in the Kaikoura Marine Centre and Aquarium. When I came back to Europe in 2015, I got a job as fish vaccinator with Salmovac (now Aqualife) and that started my new life in Scotland. In 2016 I started working with Loch Duart, first as a cleanerfish husbandryman, then as a lumpfish hatchery supervisor, followed by a research and development coordinator, and then as a technical coordinator before joining RSPCA Assured.

### **So what does your role at RSPCA Assured entail?**

I'm an Aquaculture Assessor, which means I visit all the fish farm members and ensure that they are compliant with the welfare standards.

### **What attracted you to RSPCA Assured?**

I have always been passionate about animal welfare and I always wanted to work for RSCPA Assured, so when the job opportunity came up I didn't hesitate to apply.

### **What unique expertise do you bring to the team?**

I believe that my experience in different positions in fish farming including cleanerfish and hatchery is a good addition to the team. I'm also an easy going person and I relate well with people, which it's very important in my day to day activities.

### **What have you enjoyed most about your role so far, and is there anything you are particularly looking forward to?**

I really enjoy visiting different farms and seeing how they work and how much they care about their fish.

**As we work in the world of farming, something we ask everyone we interview is, 'What is your first memory of a farm'?**

Even though I grew up not too far from big cities like Milan, there are still some small farms around my town and I remember visiting them with school. It was always an interesting experience and I loved to see different animals up close.

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

For some reason I always had an interest in cows, so I think I would like to be one of them, probably a highland cow!

**What do you enjoy doing outside of work?**

I'm an avid reader of thrillers and fantasy books, but I also enjoy walks down at the beach with my two dogs Silas and Jasper.

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

I know it will sound typical for an Italian, but I think a good Italian pizza would be my choice. Not an easy choice though!

---

Want the latest news from **RSPCA Assured**? [Sign up](#) to our newsletters.

To stop receiving these emails please [unsubscribe here](#).

---

[News](#) | [Media](#) | [Consumers](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Sitemap](#)

Registered Office: Freedom Food Limited, Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 9RS

[business.rspcaassured.org.uk](mailto:business.rspcaassured.org.uk) t. 01403 286170 e. [help@rspcaassured.org.uk](mailto:help@rspcaassured.org.uk)

Company No. 2723670 Charity Registered in England & Wales 1059879 and Scotland SC038199

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

