

Your update

from RSPCA Assured



Guernsey achieves first RSPCA Assured dairy farm

By Jodie Adam, Digital Communications Manager

We're thrilled to announce that Meadow Court Farm is the first dairy farm on Guernsey to become RSPCA Assured. The farm's dedication and commitment to farm animal welfare will now not only be felt by the animals but also assured to the public as their products carry our mark of assurance.

James Watts from Meadow Court Farm who has spent years focusing on animal welfare said: "It is important for consumers to know that our cows are well looked after, and the RSPCA Assured scheme provides that reassurance. It's the highest standard a dairy farm can attain, so we are extremely proud of this achievement. My whole career has been focused on looking after our herd better. As a result, we have fewer health issues year on year, which has reduced our annual vet and medicine bills."

While Meadow Court Farm is the first to carry our logo on its milk, all Guernsey dairy farms are in the process of becoming RSPCA Assured. After this, Guernsey Dairy will then be able to use our eye-catching logo on its milk cartons.

Our own, Joe Bailey, Head of Farming said: "It has been a pleasure to have worked with such a progressive team at Guernsey Dairy and States of Guernsey. Everyone has come

together so cooperatively to bring this project to fruition, not just for improved welfare for the cows but also for a better working environment for those who look after them. A win for all involved."

Read more [here](#).

Our benchmark of integrity

By Dorian Cross, Field Assessment Manager

Anyone subject to an assessment of their compliance with a predefined set of expectations, in our case the RSPCA welfare standards for farmed animals, will appreciate this is an exacting process.

Assessments need to be fair, consistent and accurate. They should always be carried out by a competent authority and follow a defined and disciplined approach, in which impartiality and confidentiality are integral.

RSPCA Assured certainly sets itself a high bar to benchmark the scheme's operation against. As defined by the internationally recognised ISO/IEC 17065 standard, the scheme has to be aligned to the principles of the standards for certification bodies.

With scheme accreditation to the ISO administered by our certification body NSF, each year sees UKAS (the United Kingdom Accreditation Service) carry out two forms of assessment of RSPCA Assured. One to measure our assessment competency and the other, our administration of certification. The outcome from both determine our continued accreditation to the ISO standard we are proud of, and in this respect are fundamental to the integrity of the scheme.

So when in receipt of an RSPCA Assured assessment, please be assured that we are delivering this to you with as much expectation of ourselves as we are of you.

RSPCA Assured Board changes

We are pleased to announce two new changes to the RSPCA Assured Board; David Smith takes the position as Chair, and Ruth Layton joins the Board as a Non-Executive Director.

David is a former executive at Debenhams and The Body Shop and is currently the CEO of Hamleys. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees for the RSPCA.

Ruth is co-founder of Benchmark Holdings, an organisation which aims to enable food producers to improve their sustainability and profitability. During her career, Ruth has worked with a number of organisations including the Farm Animal Welfare Council and the Farm Animal Welfare Forum. She is also a trustee of the Food Ethics Council.

The Board meets with our CEO, Clive Brazier, four times a year to review our company performance and delivering our strategic aims. Between them, they have a wealth of experience that enables them to support us and ensure we are moving in the right direction.



What's new on the website?

By Jodie Adam, Digital Communications Manager

We have a great set of content on our consumer and industry websites, ranging from specific [farm animal welfare pages](#) and [news about the scheme](#), to [recipes using higher welfare ingredients](#) and a [where to buy map](#).

Occasionally, this content needs updating to reflect changes, additions, or announcements and to keep our web content fresh. Here is the latest:

What are farrowing crates?

This [page](#) provides clarity for consumers on what farrowing crates are, what they are used for, and information on why they are not allowed under the RSPCA Assured scheme.

What is veal?

The word 'veal' can have negative associations for the average consumer since campaigns around, and the subsequent banning of, veal crates hit the news in the nineties and early 2000s. So, we have launched a new [What is veal?](#) article on our website which clarifies what veal means for consumers and how veal can be higher welfare.

RSPCA Assured egg-laying hen welfare

This [page](#) details welfare implications for many egg-laying hens which aren't under the RSPCA Assured scheme, the natural behaviour of hens and what the farm animal welfare standards require from RSPCA Assured members. The page isn't new but has been updated to reflect the latest standards requirements or developments.

If you spot anything that needs updating on our website or you come across any broken links, please [let us know](#) and we'll get it sorted.

'Get to know' interview with our Head of Farming, Joe Bailey

By Jeremy Costello, Junior PR Executive



Behind every farm animal leading a good life, there is a dedicated group of people working towards it. Without our members, customers, or employees, it would not be possible to fulfil our vision for all animals to be treated with respect and compassion.

To introduce you to the individuals who work for RSPCA Assured, here is the next instalment of our 'Get to Know' interviews with Head of Farming, Joe Bailey:

Why did you join the charity?

Twenty-five years ago, I joined the RSPCA as an Inspector. I then went on to work as a Trading Standards Animal Health and Welfare Inspector. In 2012, I was awarded a Nuffield farming scholarship. This role allowed me to travel the world and study the links between welfare and wellbeing. After that, I became Livestock Technical Manager for NSF, an International Certification body, where I was Scheme Manager for Red Tractor Beef and Lamb and Freedom Food (now RSPCA Assured). The opportunity arose to interview for the role of Head of Farming on the leadership team at RSPCA Assured. It was a no brainer for me, I felt like I was coming home.

Could you give a description of your current role? What are you responsible for?

My role is slightly different from other members of the leadership team. I provide input and informational support across multiple departments. As a point of contact for the National Farmers Union (NFU), Defra, and other Non-Government Organisations, I consult various stakeholders about the benefits of higher welfare for farmed animals and the wellbeing of those responsible for them. I liaise with industry to facilitate the RSPCA's development of standards for new species and during improvement to existing standards. On top of that, I assess domestic and overseas opportunities, and regularly present at international industry conferences.

What do you think will change in animal welfare standards over the next five years?

On our scheme, there will be more emphasis placed on welfare outcomes and how to make continuous improvement. People are starting to talk about a return to a more natural way of farming, giving animals the choice of indoor or outdoor, whilst protecting the environment and aiding biodiversity, all of which I think is really positive.

What has been the biggest challenge to the work of RSPCA Assured during Covid-19?

Not being able to go out and visit people! Nothing beats a face to face meeting, they are much more personal. However, I do feel there have been some valuable lessons learnt during this period. Our whole team has shown they can adapt to challenging and uncertain

circumstances. It's also great that the public wants to know more about where their food comes from and how it's reared.

Will Covid-19 change public opinion on farm animal welfare?

The public is already becoming increasingly aware of the health, environment and welfare conditions of what they eat. Going forward, we need to start educating people on how other animals are reared in the UK, such as goat and duck. It would be of value to improve the welfare standards of these animals and create a sustained market for them.

What is your first memory of a farm?

I grew up on one! It was a small dairy farm, nestled in the hills of South Wales. It was a hard way of life, but being in such a unique environment made for a perfect place to grow up. I have very fond memories of my time spent on the farm as a child.

What do you take inspiration from in life?

Seeing beauty in the most unexpected places. I'm not talking about aesthetics, it is something much deeper than that. I once lifted a carelessly tossed carrier bag while wombling, and to my surprise, a bumblebee flew away. Life has a funny way of making you think.

Best wishes,

RSPCA Assured

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