

Annual review 2020



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02

Tim Lock

An introduction from the Chief Executive

Clive Brazier, Chief Executive, RSPCA Assured

At times, it feels difficult to imagine the world as it was before March 2020. So much changed, and so quickly. We found ourselves having to rapidly adapt to the unknown, and I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the incredible flexibility and ongoing dedication of the RSPCA Assured head office and assessment teams. From working entirely remotely, to getting to grips with new processes and technologies, the team readily took on these challenges and supported one another with sensitivity and professionalism.

I'd also like to thank the retailers, food service members and supply partners, processors and packers, RSPCA Assured producers, our certification body NSF, and, of course, our colleagues in the RSPCA's farm animal department. Together, we ensured that despite the pandemic, animals continued to be farmed to higher welfare standards, that farms were assessed without significant disruption, and ultimately that RSPCA Assured products continued to be available to the public.

We faced many challenges in 2020. If a global pandemic weren't enough to compete with, we also felt the impact of Brexit and the recurrence of Avian-Influenza, but there were positive opportunities, too. We were incredibly proud to work closely with Tesco this year to not only develop a new higher

welfare indoor chicken range (Room to Roam), but also to introduce the mark to all of Tesco's own-brand eggs, along with a significant number of Tesco Finest chicken and pork products.

Indeed, the number of products carrying the RSPCA Assured mark rose in 2020, as did the number of animals covered by the scheme, and levels of consumer awareness in the brand. So, despite many obstacles, we worked together to deliver a successful year for RSPCA Assured.

Lastly, I'd just like to mention that as our marketing team was not able to visit any farms in 2020, we turned to our members to crowdsource the photography for this year's review and were overwhelmed by their support.

And so, my deepest gratitude to our wonderful members, partners, assessors and RSPCA colleagues, who shared their photos this year:

Scottish Sea Farms
MOWI
Green Label Poultry
Jenny Simpson
Mark Robertson
Sue McCabe
Andrea Stanley

Cat Green
Allan Pearson
Tim Lock
Rob McGregor
Justin Willoughby
Susie Macmillan



About us: who we are and what we do

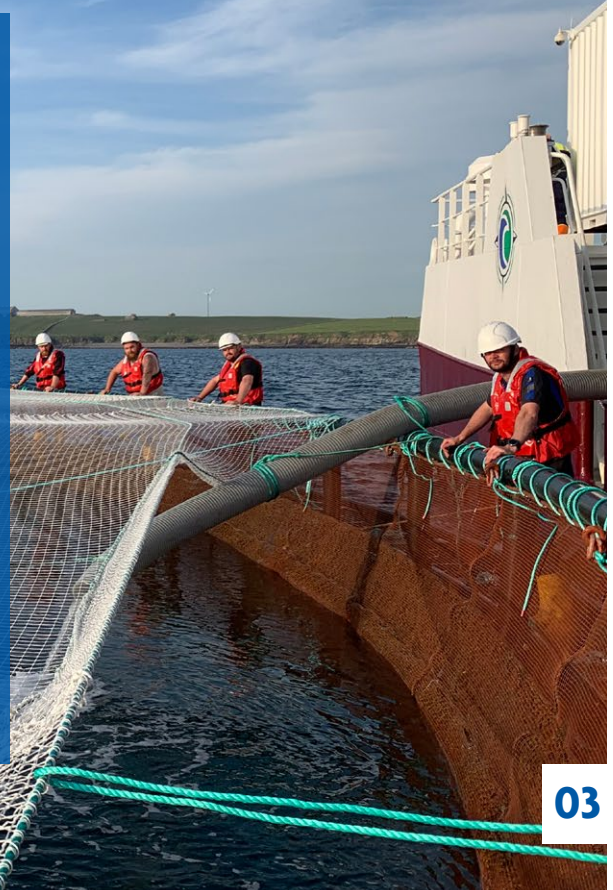
We are the RSPCA's farm animal welfare assurance scheme and the RSPCA Assured ethical food label.

Our assessors inspect hatcheries, farms, hauliers and abattoirs to RSPCA welfare standards to ensure that farm animals have been well cared for throughout their lives; from birth to slaughter. We also work with Lloyd's Register assessors to inspect processors and packers and to ensure a full chain of custody for products that carry the RSPCA Assured logo.

The RSPCA's welfare standards cover the whole of an animal's life, from their health and diet to environment and care; from birth to slaughter.

Our experienced team of RSPCA Assured assessors carry out annual assessments while our members also receive independent monitoring visits, many of which are unannounced, from RSPCA farm livestock officers.

The RSPCA Assured mark makes it easy for people to recognise products from animals that had a better life, so they can feel confident and good about their choice.



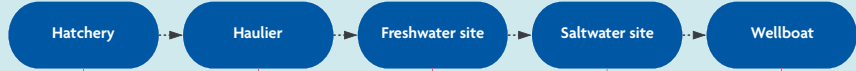
How we do it: certifying the supply chain



Green Label Poultry

04

AQUACULTURE



LIVESTOCK – MEAT PRODUCTS



Justin Willoughby

LIVESTOCK – EGGS / MILK

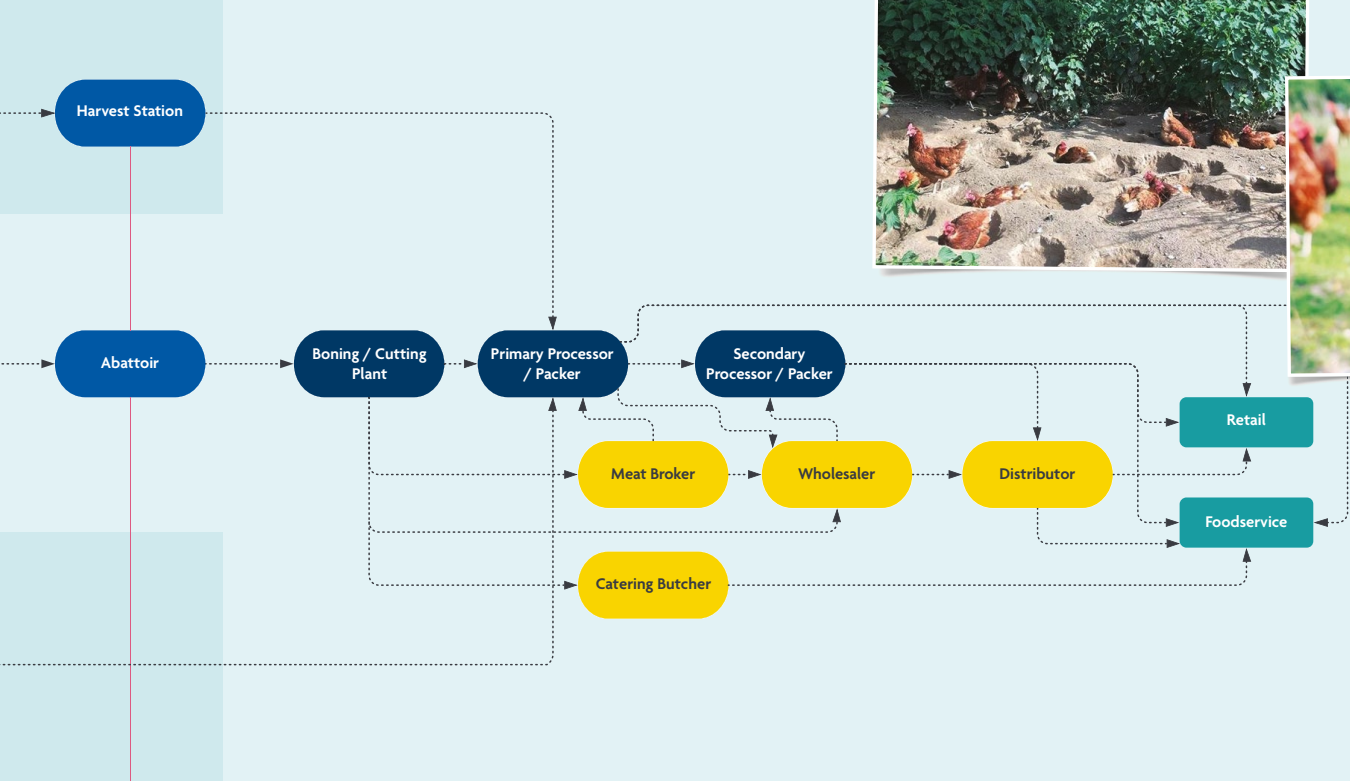


WHAT WE DO

RSPCA Assured certifies hatcheries and breeding farms against RSPCA standards

RSPCA Assured certifies individual catching teams and hauliers

RSPCA Assured certifies farms against strict RSPCA animal welfare standards



RSPCA Assured certifies abattoirs that adhere to strict RSPCA animal welfare standards, and requires 24hr CCTV

Lloyd's Register – a third party company – audits the processing stages of the supply chain (as above) on behalf of RSPCA Assured, against strict standards.

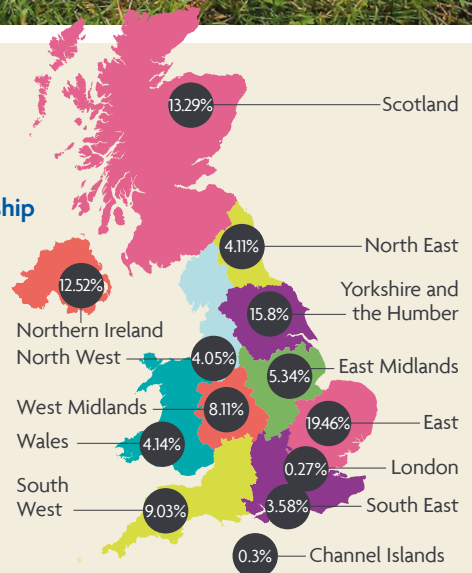
Key stats

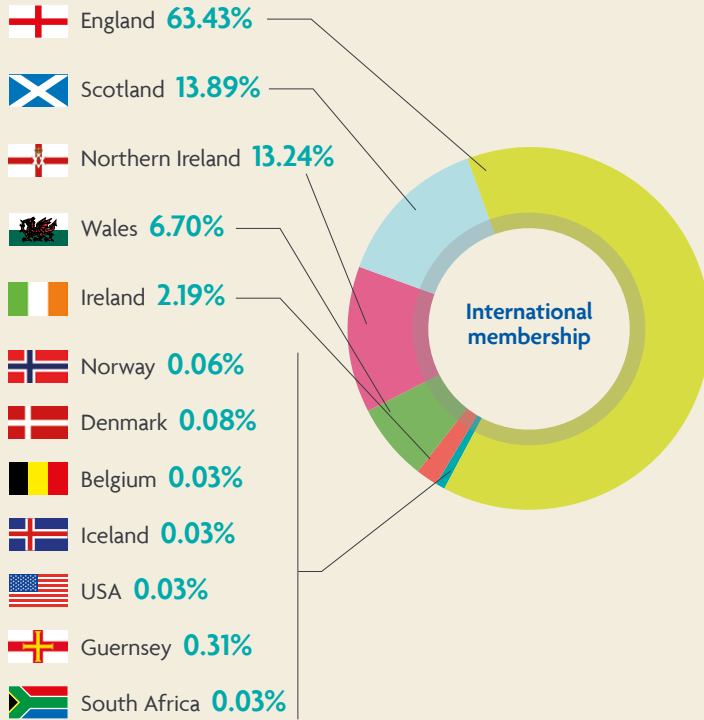


Membership Services:

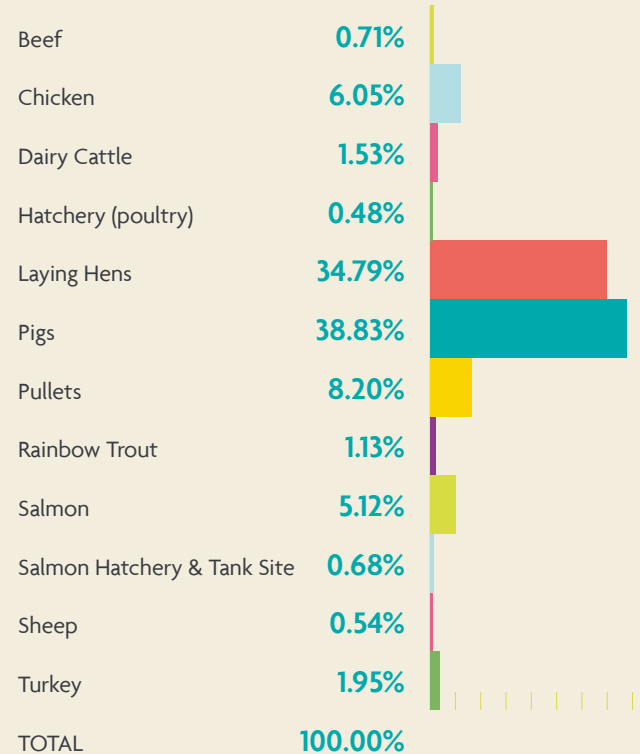
Our membership services team looks after our members; from application through to renewal.

UK membership by region





Members by species:



Note this list only includes farm members and excludes the following:

Catching, egg packing, processor packers, wholesalers, intermediaries, hauliers, wellboats, retailers, butchers and abattoirs.

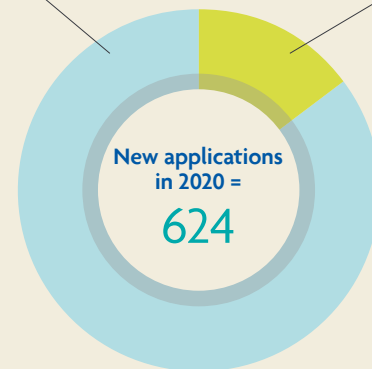
This includes salmon and trout hatcheries in other countries, which provide eggs to the British aquaculture industry, and members who process and package RSPCA Assured products for foreign markets.

Members certificates by type:

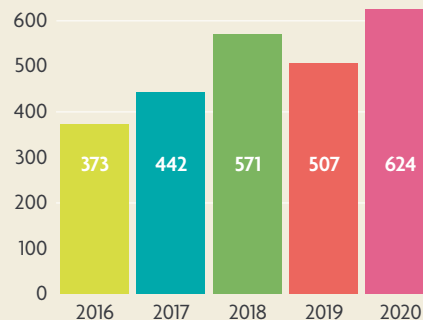
Certificate type

Certificate type	2020
Abattoir (livestock)	0.44%
Abattoir (poultry)	0.32%
Abattoir (salmon)	0.20%
Barn system laying hen unit	0.17%
Beef cattle unit	0.59%
Chicken unit	0.84%
Chicken unit (free-range)	4.43%
Dairy cattle unit	1.36%
Egg packing station	1.11%
Laying hen unit (free-range)	30.16%
Laying hen unit (mobile free-range)	0.10%
Hatchery unit	0.42%
Livestock haulier	2.14%
Own vehicle	1.16%
Pig breeding to finishing unit	0.94%
Pig breeding to rearing unit	0.27%
Pig breeding unit	4.34%
Pig finishing unit	14.63%
Pig rearing to finishing unit	7.02%
Pig rearing unit	6.60%
Poultry catching unit	1.38%
Poultry haulier	1.16%
Processor / packer unit	4.11%
Pullet rearing unit	7.14%
Rainbow trout unit	0.99%
Salmon freshwater site	0.27%
Salmon hatchery & tank unit	0.59%
Salmon helicopter transfer unit	0.05%
Salmon unit	4.14%
Salmon wellboat	0.67%
Sheep unit	0.47%
Turkey unit	1.70%
Wholesaler unit	0.10%

Group applications = 531
Independent applications = 93



Applications by year:



Case study: Neil Scott, Head of Certification



Our Head of Certification explains what led him to RSPCA Assured and his hopes for the scheme's future.

What has your career path looked like so far, and how did you come to work at RSPCA Assured?

I began my career with Tesco, where I worked my way to senior trading management over several years. I had developed a real passion for retail management and took my skills and experience to another retail sector; home improvement. I spent the next decade managing branches for big brands like B&Q and Wickes; meeting customers' needs, motivating and managing staff, negotiating and managing supply chains, ensuring strict compliance and improving processes.

It may not seem like the most obvious move, but when the role of Operations Manager arose at RSPCA Assured, I immediately recognised the opportunity to take my commercial experience and offer a unique approach to the position.

I don't come from a non-profit or animal welfare background, as many of my colleagues do, but improving animal welfare felt, and still feels, like a very worthy cause to me. So I feel privileged to be in a role where improving operational efficiency, allowing us to conduct more assessments, for example, ultimately benefits the welfare of farm animals.

What does your role involve?

After working as the Operations Manager at RSPCA Assured for a couple of years, the role of Head of Certification was created to oversee both our operations team and our assessment team. One of the key purposes of this role was to bring

these two parts of the business together and to ensure a more consistent and efficient approach between them, something I'm very passionate about. So, I applied for the position and am now responsible for the processes behind our certificates, from both frontline and back-office perspective, ensuring we protect and strengthen the RSPCA Assured brand.

RSPCA Assured is a growing business, and it's inspiring and exciting to be a part of it.

As Head of Certification, I'm constantly looking ahead and anticipating how the business might change, how farm certification might change, changes in the market, technology and more, and most importantly, how we can seize these opportunities.

What's the best part of your job?

My primary driver is improving the integrity of our label. So for me, leading a dedicated and passionate team that works together to solve problems, overcome challenges and achieve great things is wonderful. In the words of Hannibal from the A-Team; I love it when a plan comes together and it's really rewarding to see the results of our work, making life easier for our members and ultimately improving the lives of animals.

I also love the fact that I never stop learning. Whether it is discovering new ways of working, new technologies and processes or just developing a greater understanding of farm animal welfare issues. I may have joined RSPCA Assured as a relative novice to food certification, but now I enjoy being able to confidently talk to my friends and family about where their food comes from.

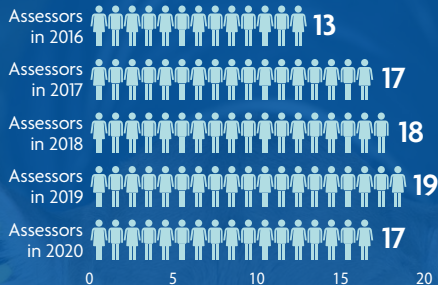
How do you think the work your team does will change over the next few years?

Our retail and supply chain contacts have been clear that they want assessments to be a mix of both planned and unplanned to ensure an even more meticulous approach. We are looking at ways to make that happen. Enhanced virtual audits, which we introduced as an emergency measure during the 2020 lockdown, may have a place in that. However, we believe that face to face assessments cannot be matched in terms of rigour, so these will never take over from the wellies on the ground approach.

We're looking at all stages of the assessment journey to identify areas where we can use technology to make improvements, with apps and devices being deployed to make the whole process smoother. Ultimately, I hope that we can continuously fine-tune the service we offer to our members and improve the integrity of our brand for everyone; our members, the supply chain, the public and most importantly farm animals.

Assessors

Jenny Simpson



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Our highly qualified team of assessors works across the UK and beyond to carry out annual assessments of our members' farms, hatcheries, hauliers and abattoirs, ensuring full compliance with RSPCA welfare standards.

Routine inspections were suspended at the end of March due to the pandemic, so RSPCA Assured worked closely with its certification body, NSF, to develop a new temporary remote assessment protocol. This was finalised and approved in April 2020, allowing us to introduce desktop audits via live streaming platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Meet and Zoom, ensuring that scheduled assessments were able to continue without interruption.

We were also able to work closely with our members to safely get back out onto farms and were able to ultimately complete almost three-quarters of assessments face-to-face. These were all contactless and carried out in accordance with the Government's strict social-distancing measures, as well as RSPCA Assured's own biosecurity protocols.

Members have, on average, 368 standards per species that they must comply with. Assessors record a "non-compliance" when **any** standard isn't met; from very minor issues such as paperwork being filled out incorrectly, to severe issues related to animal welfare.

Of the 3,521 assessments completed in 2020, 1,755 had one or more non-compliances recorded. The vast majority of those were very minor, however 19 had severe animal welfare related non-compliances which resulted in immediate suspension. Of these, 13 were reinstated following investigations and six are no longer members of the scheme.

Number of assessments completed in 2020 – 3,521*

Assessments that were fully compliant – 1,766

Assessments where one or more non-compliance was raised – 1,755

Total number of non-compliances raised in 2020 – 4,040

* Why is this not the same as the number of scheme members (3,879)? Not all our members' farms were active in 2020 (so would not have been assessed) as many undergo fallow periods between cycles. Members that applied at the end of 2019 and had their initial assessment to determine whether they could join the scheme in 2019, but whose membership did not start until 2020, will not have had their first assessment within that calendar year.

Welfare outcome assessments

We carry out 'welfare outcome assessments' on our members' farms. This means that as well as checking members are following the RSPCA's higher welfare standards, our assessors also collect information about the health and behaviour of the animals on their visits. Our welfare outcome team reviews this information on a regular basis. Our welfare outcome team reviews this information on a regular basis; giving us a more accurate picture of the animals' welfare and helping us ensure the scheme is delivering the enhanced welfare standards and assurances that both we and our customers expect.

In 2020 we made improvements to our welfare outcome assessment procedures and resources for laying hens, chicken, pigs and dairy cattle, and undertook reviews of the Scheme's welfare outcome data for a number of species.

Moving forward we will be working to further advance our welfare outcome work and, in particular, striving towards a new 'continuous improvement' approach. This will see us setting ourselves welfare outcome-focused targets to aim for, and working even more closely with our members to achieve them; all for the benefit of enhanced animal welfare and even stronger welfare assurances for our customers.

"Animal welfare is incredibly important to our customers and to us. In the last year we have seen our customers take even more of an interest in the food they choose to have at home and the welfare and ethical standards these products were sourced to. We're committed to sourcing with integrity and are proud to be the largest retailer of RSPCA Assured products."

Barney Kay, Head of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Horticulture, Sainsbury's

"There's no denying the challenge that 2020 presented, however it did reaffirm the importance of the food and farming industry. Our customers expect quality, so we're proud of our long-standing partnership with RSPCA-assured, who only work with suppliers that adhere to high welfare standards. We've been serving 100% RSPCA Assured pork across our menu since 2013 and have cracked free-range eggs for our breakfasts for over 20 years."

Harriet Wilson, Agriculture and Sustainable Sourcing Manager, McDonald's UK & Ireland



Allan Pearson

Animal numbers

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	DEFRA 2019	2020 market penetration %
 Laying Hens	12,465,080	12,445,296	15,093,845	16,371,253	18,126,223	20,725,758	21,365,500	41,535,000	51.44%
 Chickens	1,413,054	1,269,576	1,552,956	1,456,240	2,024,915	1,564,562	1,685,167	121,500,000	1.39%
 Turkeys	541,726	908,975	59,469	99,139	209,400	1,246,150	1,603,500	10,750,000	14.92%
 Beef Cattle	8,619	7,257	6,342	6,246	3,966	4,278	1,000	2,694,000	0.04%
 Dairy Cattle	7,750	7,616	6,226	5,817	19,845	15,134	16,000	2,685,000	0.60%
 Pigs	1,321,890	1,269,980	1,157,130	1,035,080	1,052,100	988,560	1,229,565	4,741,000	25.93%
 Sheep	10,076	6,905	6,824	6,808	5,029	7,129	6,500	33,580,000	0.02%
 Veal							1,000	1,574,000	0.06%
TOTAL	15,768,195	15,915,605	17,882,792	18,980,583	21,441,478	24,551,571	25,908,232	219,059,000	11.83%

* Notes on our market penetration calculations

- Laying hens do not include DEFRA's breeding stock figures; just layers and pullets
- DEFRA turkey figure includes ducks, geese and other poultry (single species data not available)
- Cattle figures (dairy and beef) are based on cattle tracing system figures on DEFRA's Livestock Population report
- Veal figure is based on Cattle 12 months or younger
- No market figures are available for salmon or trout

Animal numbers adjusted by removing cycle multipliers to provide a point in time calculation that is most comparable to DEFRA's census figures

Case study: Cat Green, Farm Livestock Officer, RSPCA



Jenny Simpson

RSPCA Farm Livestock Officer, Cat Green, explains what her role entails and how RSPCA monitor visits differ from RSPCA Assured annual assessments.

What has your career path looked like so far, and how did you come to work at the RSPCA?

I studied Agriculture with Animal Science at Harper Adams University from 2008 to 2012. As part of my course, I spent a placement year at a broiler chicken hatchery and on breeding, rearing and broiler farms. When I graduated, I was offered a full-time position with the company, which I enthusiastically accepted.

An opportunity to fill in as maternity cover came up, so I tried teaching for a year. It was a role lecturing Animal Management at Askham Bryan College in York. Lecturing was a fun challenge that pushed me outside of my comfort zone, especially the module on animal welfare legislation, which required lots of homework on my part!

After teaching, I went back to a more practical role, working at a dairy farm. I enjoyed the job but unfortunately was made redundant after a couple of years due to falling milk prices. Though I was sad to lose this job, it allowed me to think about what I wanted to do with my career.

Having worked at the college, I'd realised that a desk job was not hands-on enough for me. Equally, although I'd loved farm work, after years of physically demanding 12-hour shifts, I needed a better work-life balance. So, when I saw the job advert for Farm Livestock Officer at The RSPCA, I knew it was the perfect fit for me.

What's the difference between RSPCA Assured assessors and RSPCA Farm Livestock Officers?

The RSPCA's farm animal department employs Farm Livestock Officers (or FLOs, as we're also known).

We're separate from RSPCA Assured, and our role is to independently monitor the farms on the scheme in between assessments.

One of the main differences between RSPCA Assured assessments and RSPCA monitor visits is that ours are mostly unannounced or scheduled with as little notice as possible. Not giving the farms time to prepare for our visits adds credibility to the scheme because it gives us an accurate view of how they're doing. We're also allowed to offer advice and guidance to ensure the farm is doing its best for animals, which the RSPCA Assured assessors can't do during assessments.

What does your role involve?

The Farm Livestock Officer team is divided up geographically across the UK, and I cover the North East. I'm responsible for somewhere between seven and eight hundred farms, mostly pig farms, laying hen units, pullet rearing units and dairy farms. There are also a few turkey farms in my area.

There are many things to consider when planning your week and to prioritise which farms to visit. We do this through a combination of time sensitivity (when they were last assessed or visited), the risk level (if they had non-compliances at their previous assessment or a history of issues), geography, and species. For biosecurity reasons, I have to make sure that I have biosecure days between visits to certain species to stop the spread of disease, so I have to plan and rotate carefully. I also have to make sure my equipment and vehicle are cleaned between visits.

For the sake of time and petrol, I'll select a group of farms that are relatively close to one another and spend my day visiting each in turn. As our visits are mostly unannounced, we can't always access the farm, so our typical success rate is around two visits

per day. We prioritise the high-risk farms (those that have had issues in the past), which we see three to four times a year, whereas the lowest risk and best performing farms don't need to be monitored so frequently.

What happens on a monitor visit?

When I arrive on a farm, the first step is to get into full PPE and disinfect my boots. My role is all about the animals, so I walk through the sheds or pens, specifically looking out for each species' main welfare concerns and requirements. These include things like dry and suitable litter for poultry or straw bedding for pigs. I also complete welfare outcome assessments, which means that I look at a random selection of animals and score their condition to measure the overall health of the group.

At the end of the visit, I'll write a report and if there are any problems, I'll flag it to RSPCA Assured straight away. Report made, I say my goodbyes and head off on my way to the next farm. It's a busy job but I love it!

What's the best part of your job?

There's a lot of great things about the job, so it's hard to choose just one. I enjoy how varied it is and every day is truly different; working with a variety of species, visiting different places and meeting the producers. I love driving, taking in the scenery, listening to the radio and having a little sing-along.

Having a role in agriculture that offers a good work-life balance is important to me and being a FLO means I can plan my schedule. Of course, making a difference for farm animals and helping farms improve is the most satisfying part of my job.

Commercial

MOWI

“Whilst it has been a challenging year with travel restrictions due to the pandemic, it was great to work with RSPCA Assured to find solutions to continue farm audits, helping us with continual improvement for farmed fish welfare.”

Dr Ralph Bickerdike, Head of Fish Health, Scottish Sea Farms

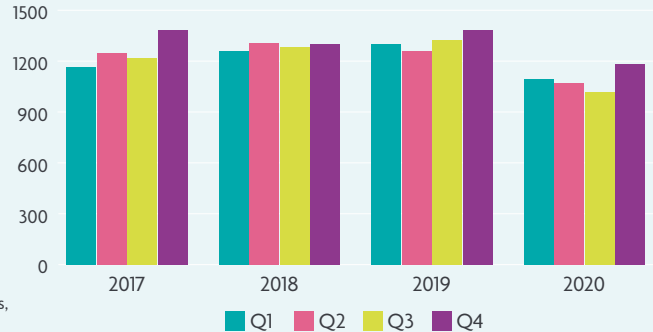


Our commercial team supports food businesses looking to find RSPCA Assured producers, and to take advantage of the growing consumer demand for higher welfare products. It also manages licensing, traceability and supply chain auditing.

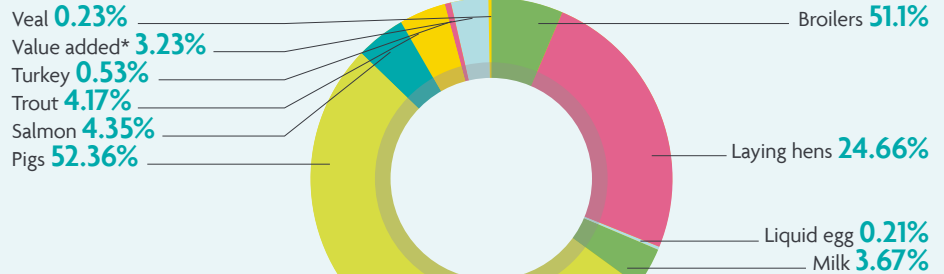
Product lines per quarter & products by species

Number of product lines

Quarterly fluctuations in product line numbers occur due to the introduction of limited seasonal products. Although the total number of product lines was lower in 2020 than in 2019, the volume of total products sold was higher (see P.12 - Animal numbers, and P.21 - Accounts).



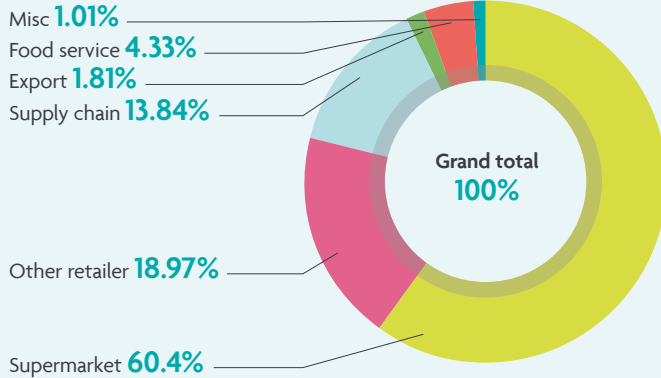
Products by species



*Value added products are those that contain multiple ingredients and have undergone additional processing, such as pies, quiches, sandwiches and ready meals.

Products customer type

Total product lines by customer type



Food Service includes; catering businesses such as cafes, pubs and restaurants

Export includes; all product shipped for overseas sales

Supply Chain includes; product that is sold on for further processing (i.e. value-added products such as pies, sandwiches etc)

Retailer includes; independent retailers (village shops, butchers etc)

Supermarket includes; national retail brands such as Sainsbury's, Tesco, Lidl and online retailer Ocado

Tim Lock



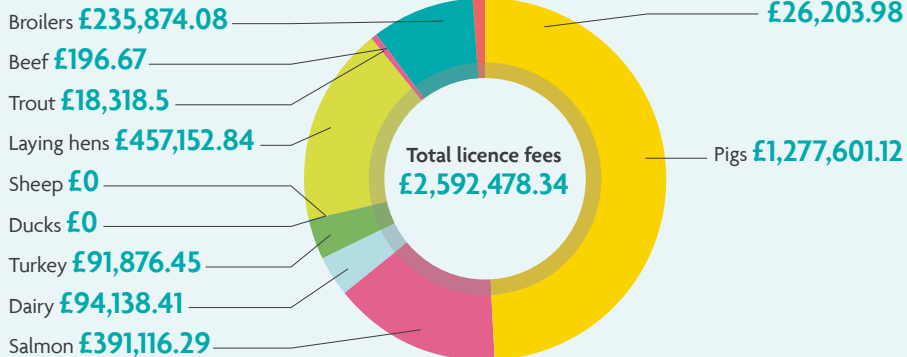
Commercial

Mark Robertson

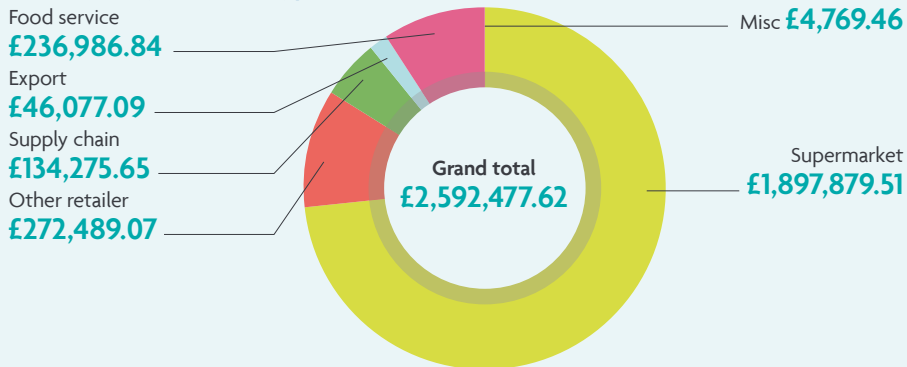


Licence fee revenues by species & customer type

Licence fee by species



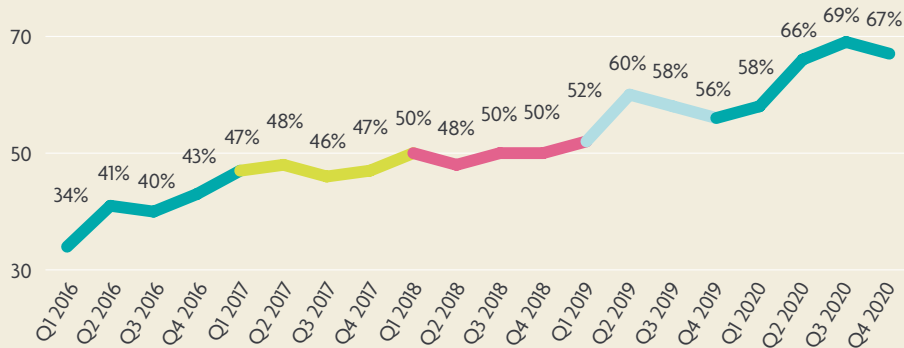
Licence fee by customer type



Marketing

Our marketing team aims to increase awareness of the RSPCA Assured brand through advertising, web, press, social media activities and events.

Targeted awareness over time



Our target market typically consists of consumers in the UK aged 25 - 44 who are actively or subconsciously reducing their consumption of animal protein.

We had more than **482 media items** – including broadcast, national, regional, trade and online press – with a potential reach of more than **221.5 million people** (more than double the number in 2019).

We had **20k mentions** on social media.

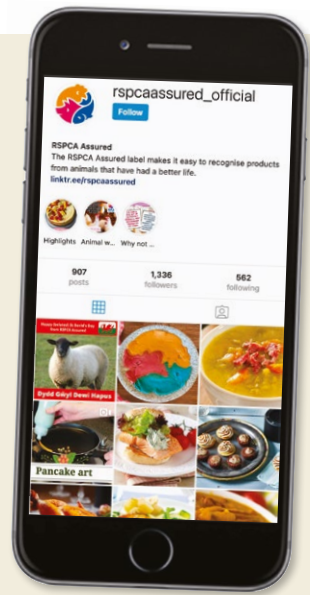


Marketing

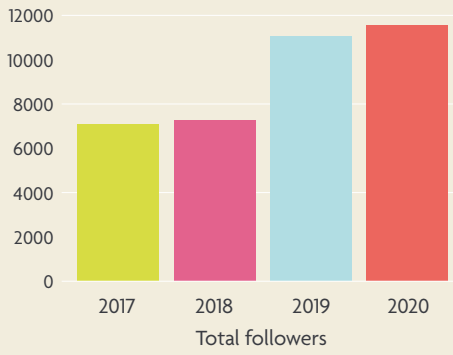
MOWI

“While operating as an essential food provider throughout the Covid pandemic, we have continued to provide the same high level of care to our fish as before. RSPCA Assured has been right there beside us during this journey, providing critical oversight and support during these challenging times.”

Meritzell Padrisa,
Production Director, Mowi

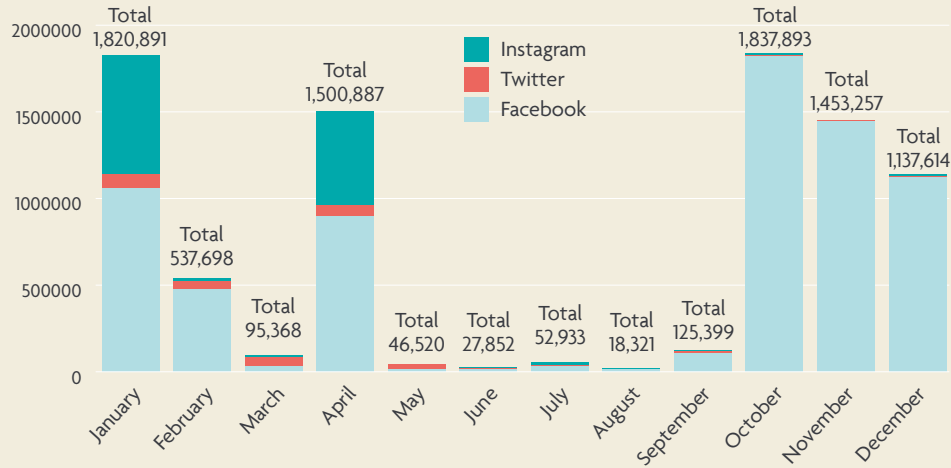


Total social followers
(includes Twitter, Instagram and Facebook)

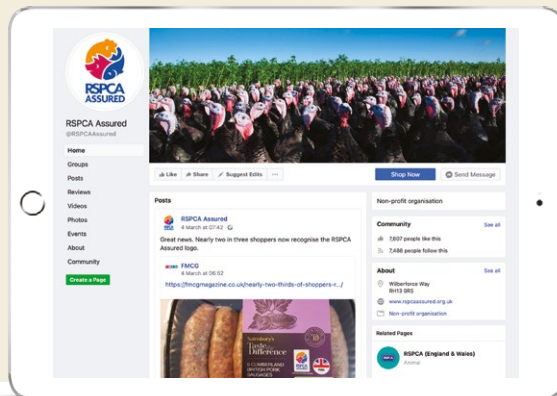


Social impressions: The number of times our content appears on screen (as opposed to 'reach' which is the number of people who see it)

Twitter, Facebook and Instagram impressions



Jenny Simpson



Marketing

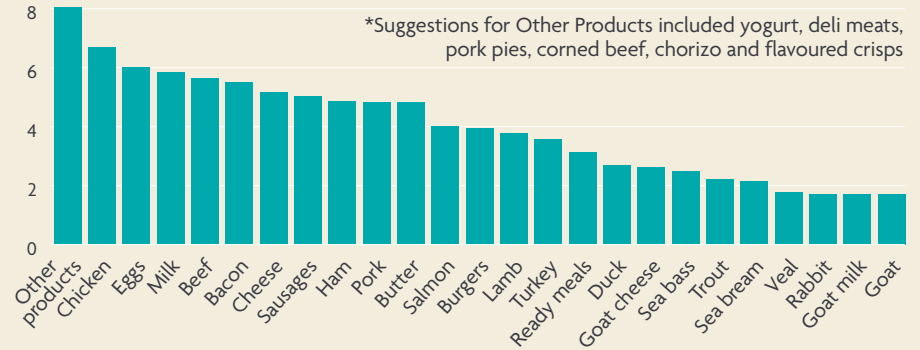
Green Label Poultry



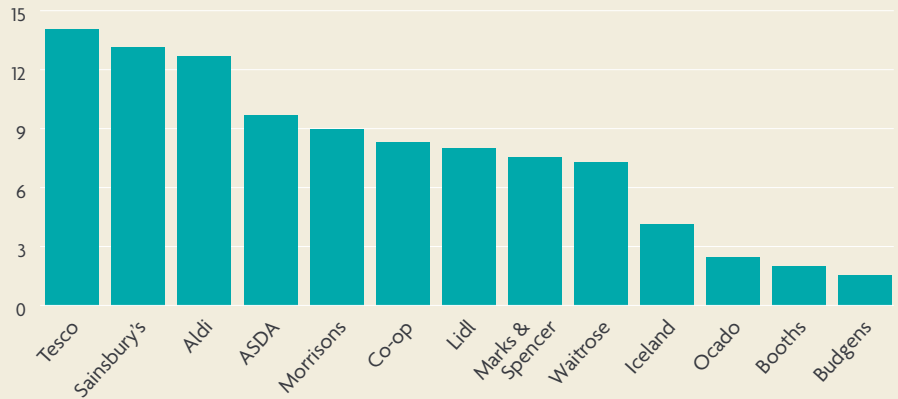
20

Lobby your supermarket data: The products the public would like to see more of and the shops where they would like to buy them

Product demand

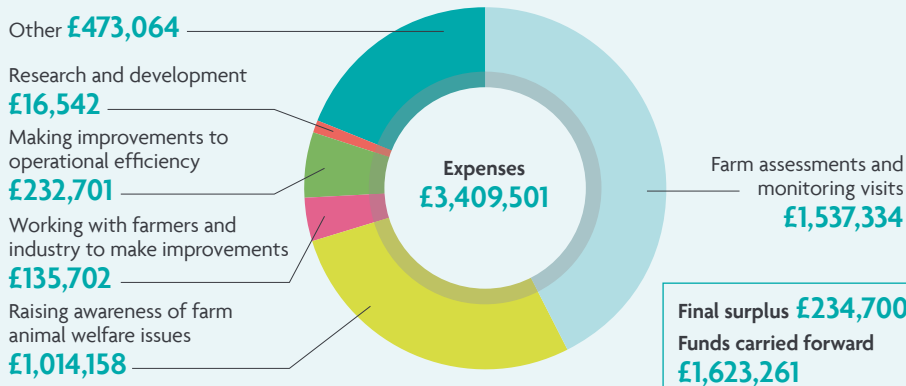
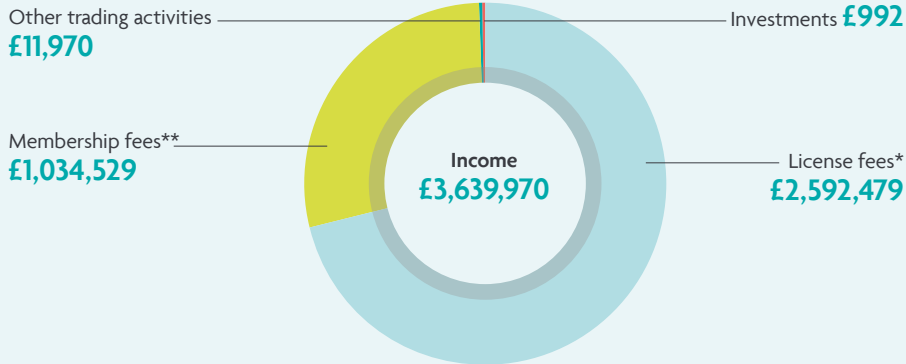


Retail demand



Accounts

We are a charity and not-for-profit so the licence fee (or 'levy') and other membership fees help cover the cost of inspections. These fees are our only source of income and every penny is reinvested back into the scheme to promote higher animal welfare, conduct research and improve the lives of farm animals.



Final surplus £234,700
Funds carried forward £1,623,261

* License fees are paid by members that wish to use the logo on their products. This fee covers the cost of marketing and raising awareness of the brand, as well as product traceability costs

** Membership fees are paid annually by members to cover the administrative cost of assessments and certification

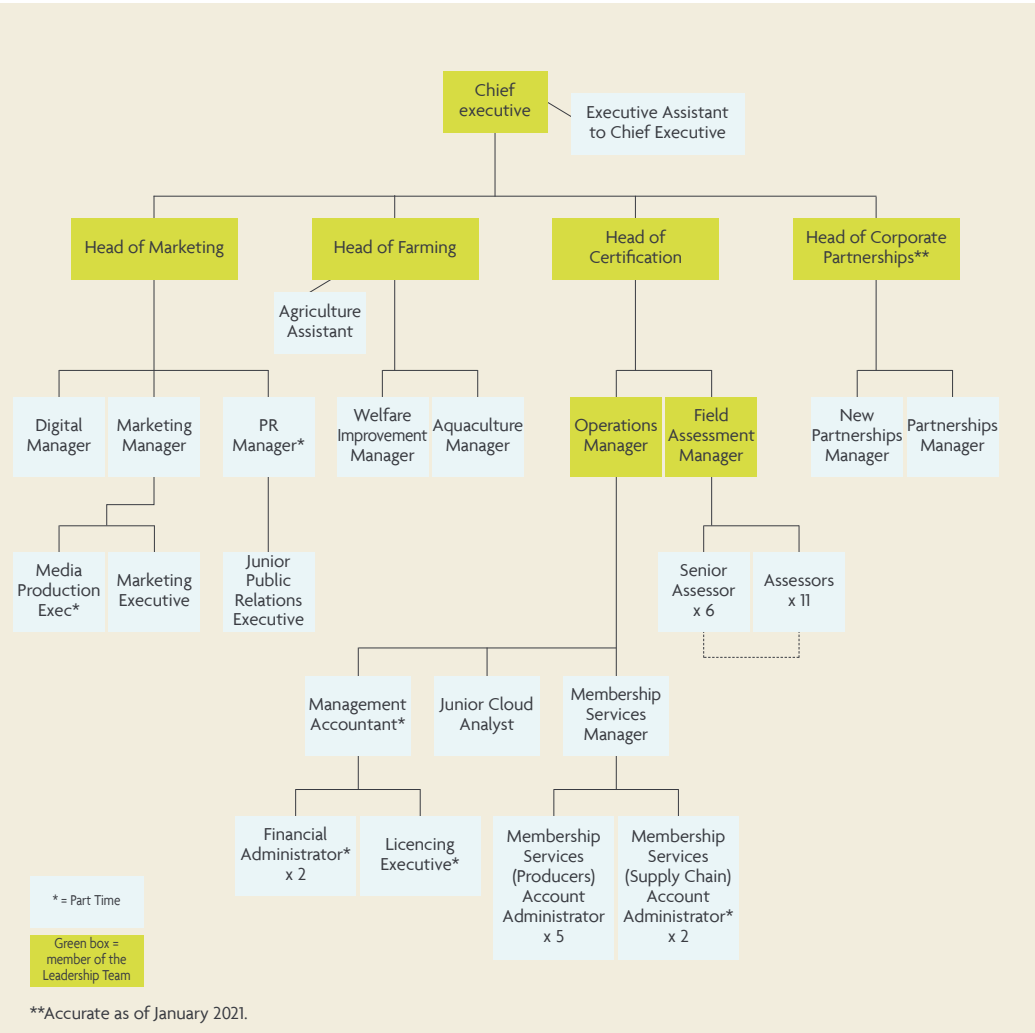


Organogram

Rob McGregor



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Board of directors

Our board of directors typically consists of four non-executives and four RSPCA members. It is chaired by David Smith and vice-chaired by Rene Olivieri. Our term limit for board members is three terms, each consisting of three years.

Name	Role	Date of initial appointment
David Smith	Chairperson	21 November 2019
Rene Olivieri	Vice-Chairperson	21 November 2019
Madeleine Crawley	Non-executive	5 June 2018
Ruth Layton	Non-executive	3 July 2020
Bob Baylis	RSPCA Member	7 July 2016
Paul Baxter	RSPCA Member	5 July 2012





Freedom Food is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RSPCA, set up to administer the Society's farm animal welfare labelling scheme, RSPCA Assured.

Freedom Food Ltd is a registered charitable trading company operating in the commercial field of food production from farmed animals. Its role is to promote and apply welfare standards drawn up by the RSPCA through marketing the RSPCA Assured labelling scheme. RSPCA Assured encourages farmers, hauliers, abattoirs and other businesses in the food supply chain to participate, educate and promote awareness with end-users and consumers of food products bearing the RSPCA Assured certification mark.

Registered Office: RSPCA Assured, Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, RH139RS
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Company No. 2723670 Charity Registered in England & Wales 1059879 and Scotland SC038199