



Co-op Animal Welfare Standards & Performance

&

Co-op Antibiotics Policy



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Why Animal Welfare is Important to us

By working closely with our farmers and suppliers, we put a lot of thought and care into the food that goes into our members' and customers' baskets. We know that animal welfare is important to our customers and members, so we are committed to creating products that have been produced to good animal welfare standards, regardless of their budget.

We have, for many years, been pioneering in our approach to improving the welfare of animals. In the 1990s, we even broke the law to be the first retailer to label the living conditions of laying hens. We were then the first retailer to only use free-range eggs across all our products in 2010.

From this starting point, we have our own animal welfare standards that reflect our 100% British pledge for chicken, eggs, pork, turkey, beef, lamb and dairy.

In developing our standards and policies, we have consulted many [experts](#) in this area and used the [Farm Animal Welfare Committee's](#) Five Freedoms as a reference document for guidance.

Farmers care for their animals by following the Five Freedoms welfare code:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst, by ready access to water and a diet to maintain health and vigour.
- Freedom from discomfort by providing an appropriate environment.
- Freedom from pain, injury and disease, by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- Freedom to express normal behaviour, by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and appropriate company of the animal's own kind.
- Freedom from fear and distress, by ensuring conditions and treatment, which avoid mental suffering.

How are we committed to animal welfare?

The scope of our animal welfare policy is universal to all products produced under own brand label irrespective of tier, geography or species. Branded goods represent approximately 45% of Co-op sales by volume, and as such, our influence over the policies of branded goods is more limited. However, specific policies such as pre-stunning before slaughter and cage-free eggs are applicable across all **branded** and **own label** products.

We support animal welfare through schemes such as [Red Tractor](#), [RSPCA Assured](#) and our own-brand animal welfare standards. In fact, all our own-brand meat, poultry and British dairy products sold under The Co-op brand are produced from farms that are accredited to a national farm assurance scheme, such as Red Tractor, which ensures high standards of animal welfare. In addition, all our farmed fish and continental meats are certified to a third-party standard. These schemes cover aspects such as the housing of animals and stocking densities, feed and water, health and veterinary controls, breeding, traceability and transportation.

To give our customers the choice of higher animal welfare products, our Irresistible and standard bacon, ham, and sausage, pork, Irresistible salmon, and chicken is RSPCA Assured. Depending on the animal, the benefits of the RSPCA welfare standards include more space, natural lighting and environmental enrichment, e.g. objects for birds to peck at. All our fresh eggs and organic eggs are RSPCA Assured free-range and carry the [British Lion Quality Mark](#). Our organic milk is RSPCA Assured.

In addition to these accreditation schemes, we have a set of Co-op animal welfare standards that cover beef, lamb, game, pork, chicken, turkey, duck, eggs, fish, liquid milk and fresh cream. Suppliers and producers are contractually obliged to meet these standards which allows them to supply The Co-op. Please see Terms and Conditions by clicking [here](#).

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



The Co-op has invested in a dedicated Farming & Fisheries team of people who are agricultural and seafood specialists with a passion for British farming, responsible sourcing and the food industry, which allows us to support more than 3,000 UK farms and suppliers as well as working with our global supply base.

Our Farming Groups, which were set up from 2011, including on average 400 producers of meat, poultry, eggs, salmon and dairy. These groups were set up to make it easier for farmers to collaborate, with other farms and ourselves to promote best practice in terms of animal welfare and responsible sourcing, and to build better relationships throughout our supply chains.

We encourage our farms to incorporate our [‘Five Farming Pillars’](#) into their farming practices, which are assessed every year by an independent auditing body, with farmers being awarded Bronze, Silver or Gold.

These pillars cover:

- 1. Animal Health, Welfare & Quality**
- 2. Community**
- 3. Responsible Resources**
- 4. Environmental**
- 5. People and Skills**

All Farming Groups hold regular meetings to discuss issues affecting them, to share ideas and best practice, and to drive improvements in animal welfare. The Co-op’s dedicated Farming & Fisheries team visits these farms when possible throughout the year, as well as taking part in broader team visits to abattoirs.

Click [here](#) to find out more about our Co-op Farming Groups and farmer case studies.

We are committed to working with our farming partners to monitor and improve the health and welfare of farmed animals and fish and to address environmental and ethical issues in our supply chain. We also aim to develop our standards further through external advice and benchmarking with independent consultants and through close relationships with welfare groups such as [RSPCA Assured](#) and [Compassion in World Farming](#).

We report our animal welfare performance across key species. You can see examples of our key animal welfare policies – general as well as by species – and measures below, along with key performance indicator data that is monitored by our farmers and processors.

Furthermore, we have stringent non-animal testing policies for our own label brand product range. In response to customer opinion, we developed the most stringent of non-animal testing policies. In the case of toiletries and household goods, our systems are reviewed by [Cruelty Free International](#), and their endorsement is used to communicate to our customers that this claim is credible and independently verified.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Animal Welfare Policy - General Policies

Animal Cloning

Animal Cloning is an assisted reproductive technology that allows farmers to replicate their best animals. This means many animals can be produced from the best stock for either meat production, milk production or egg production, without traditional breeding techniques. Meat and dairy from cloned animals have been found to be safe for human consumption, however, there are still serious concerns about the welfare of cloned animals and their offspring. In the EU foods produced from cloned animals are controlled under regulation. However, there are significant issues regarding traceability of animals that are offspring of cloned animals. Therefore, no animal can be supplied to The Co-op from cloned or genetically modified animals or any progeny of cloned animals.

Animal Testing

Our non-animal testing stance is very much taken from a customer product point of view. As a consumer-owned democratic business, we have a duty to respond to our customers, and use of animal testing for toiletries and household goods remain a concern for the overwhelming majority. In response to customer opinion, we developed the most stringent of non-animal testing policies on our own brand product range. In the case of toiletries and household goods, our systems are reviewed by [Cruelty Free International](#) and their endorsement issued to communicate to our customers that this claim is credible and independently verified.

Assurance/Audits/Compliance

All our own label brand UK meat and poultry products are produced, as a minimum, to [Red Tractor Farm Assurance Scheme](#) standards (or equivalent). All own label brand non-UK meat, dairy and poultry products are produced, as a minimum, to standards equivalent to Red Tractor. Compliance with our standards is verified through annual Red Tractor Farm Assurance audit or equivalent. We also work with [RSPCA Assured](#) on certain species in our supply chain providing a higher welfare option. All farms supplying us with meat, poultry or dairy products may be subject to announced and unannounced audits by either The Co-op or an appointed audit body at any time. All suppliers must notify us of any audit failures, compliance problems, and proven or investigated breaches in legislation or welfare standards, as detailed within our Agricultural Escalation Policy available on our supplier portal.

CCTV at Slaughter

All abattoirs slaughtering livestock for supply to The Co-op shall have in place a CCTV system for the monitoring and recording of livestock up to the point of kill (including offloading, handling, stunning and sticking) for managing animal welfare. The CCTV equipment should be capable of recording legible time, and date stamped images and storing these images for three months in line with the Government legislation. Footage from this CCTV system is to be checked by senior management on a routine basis and be available for audit by a representative from The Co-op or an appointed agent/audit body at any time.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Confinement

All meat and poultry sold under The Co-op brand are produced from livestock reared to strict standards of animal welfare and must be accredited to one of the national Farm Assurance Schemes which allows meat to display the Red Tractor Logo (or equivalent) as a minimum. We also work with RSPCA Assured on certain species in our supply chain providing a higher welfare option. The detail behind these livestock standards is detailed on Page 4 and 5. We do not permit specific production and confinement systems as these do not meet our livestock standards; these include sow stall and tether systems, battery hens, force-feeding of geese and ducks for foie-gras and rearing of calves for white veal.

Percentage free from confinement:

- 100% of our Laying Hens are cage-free. (Including **branded** Eggs)
- 100% of Dairy cows free from tethering (Scope: Own brand fresh milk, fresh cream, cheddar cheese, butter, yoghurt. Excluding continental dairy products)
- 100% Farrowing Pigs free from confinement (fresh/frozen).
- 100% of our Chickens are cage-free,
- 100% of our Turkeys are cage-free,
- 100% of our cattle for Beef are free from confinement,
- 100% of our Lambs are free from confinement

Genetic Engineering

We do not permit the use of genetically modified (GM) crops, animals, ingredients or additives within Co-op brand products.

Grazing

Dairy cows and followers should have access to pasture during the grazing season. During this period, a proportion of the milking herd should have access to adequately sized paddocks, accommodating the required stocking density for that part of the herd at grazing. What proportion of the herd this is should be subject to the advice of the vet or nutritionist and should take into account grazing and weather conditions. The number of days and percentage of herd grazed is measured quarterly for our Co-op Dairy Farming Group and validated through an annual independent farm assessment.

The majority of the Co-op Dairy Group (CDG) will fall into the category of seasonal pasture, as defined by [Compassion in World Farming](#) (CIWF), which means that they are housed in sheds or yards with access to pasture throughout the grazing season. Due to animal welfare reasons, a small number of herds are included in the CIWF restricted pasture category (i.e. housed in sheds with limited access to pasture, e.g. at restricted periods during the grass growing season or at certain stages of production).

If a Co-op Dairy Group member operates a restricted pasture system, then we require independent documented evidence of the reasons why this decision improves the animal welfare of the dairy herd. This is submitted annually and signed by the farm's vet or nutritionist. We pride ourselves on working with our dedicated farmers on a farm-by-farm basis to ensure that the decision of the duration of grazing is based on animal welfare with the considerations of weather conditions, infrastructure and the type of farming.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Growth Promoters

In all own-brand meat, fish and poultry products, the use of artificial substances specifically to promote abnormal muscle growth is not allowed.

Pre-stunning

All meat, fish and poultry sold by Co-op are produced to strict standards of animal welfare. All own-brand fresh and frozen meat, poultry and farmed finfish sold in Co-op stores have been humanely stunned prior to slaughter. All abattoirs and processing plants supplying our own-brand products are required to work to the standards laid down by our strict animal welfare requirements as well as the Humane Slaughter Association in their Codes of Practice. No own branded Co-op fresh and frozen British meat or poultry is Halal certified or slaughtered in a ritual method. All our animals are humanely stunned prior to slaughter, whilst the abattoirs and processing plants which supply our own-brand products are required to work to the standards laid down by Co-op's strict animal welfare requirements, as well as the Humane Slaughter Association's codes of practice.

We do sell some non-Co-op branded Halal certified meat in a small number of stores where there is sufficient demand, but again this is all stunned prior to slaughter.

- All our farmed livestock and finfish is 100% pre-stunned prior to slaughter.

Mutilation

All meat, fish and poultry sold under The Co-op brand are produced from livestock reared to strict standards of animal welfare and must be accredited to one of the national Farm Assurance Schemes controlled by Assured Food Standards, which allows meat to display the Red Tractor Logo (or equivalent) as a minimum. The rules set out by RSPCA Assured must also be adhered to, to allow the use of logo, the detail behind these livestock standards is detailed on Page 4. We do not permit the routine mutilations of farm animals or fin clipping in our finfish, it would only be allowed under derogation from relevant assurance body and with veterinary approval that there is an animal welfare issue that requires this action. We are committed to working with our supply base to reduce the incidence of tail docking for Pigs and beak trimming for Poultry, which is undertaken under veterinary advice to a minimum. In all cases, we will follow the direction of the vet where these challenges exist; however, our long-term aim is to reduce these practices further.

Percentage free from mutilation:

- 100% of Finfish are free from fin clipping.
- 100% Dairy cows free from tail docking (Scope: Own brand fresh milk, fresh cream, cheddar cheese, butter, yoghurt. Excluding continental dairy products)
- 100% of Turkeys are free from desnooding.
- 100% of Lambs are free from mulesing.
- 100% of our Pigs in our fresh/frozen supply of pork are free from castration.
- 100% of Pigs free from teeth reduction
- 100% of Pigs free from short tail docking
- 100% of meat Chickens are free from beak trimming
- 100% of our Organic Eggs are free from beak trimming

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Travelling/Transport

We ensure our supply base keep live animal transportation to a minimum and avoid unnecessary long-distance travel. We specify specific transportation limits with each livestock standard. Overall a maximum transport time of 8 hours is permitted across our supply chain with key targets in place for all species. This [data](#) shown below in the [Welfare Reporting and Targets](#) section is reviewed through monthly data collection from our supply chain, which is uploaded onto our animal welfare platform.

Animal Welfare Policy – Species Specific Welfare

Beef

All our fresh own-brand beef is British. For our Irresistible range, we work with 44 farmers who supply us with Hereford and Aberdeen Angus beef from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England. These groups were formed in 2013, they meet three times a year, and we place a sharp focus on animal welfare, environmental impact, and farm efficiency, which helps to create long-term relationships with our agricultural partners, as well as sustainable and transparent supply chains. All our farmers who rear beef for the Co-op from Standard to Irresistible do so to [Red Tractor](#) or equivalent schemes. The farmers in our farming group work to the Co-op Agricultural Pillar Model and submit welfare KPIs every quarter directly to our online KPI platform.

We also offer knowledge exchange workshops for farmers to enhance their learning of what is continuously required supply beef to our standards.

To further ensure quality, a continual animal welfare improvement plan is in place for beef and reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers. Through this plan, our team can monitor and upkeep the health of the animals, confirming that the farmers meet all standards. Our dedicated agricultural manager also completes on-farm audits throughout the year by working with an external auditing company.



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Chicken

We launched our chicken farming group in 2013 and working closely with 25 farmers. These farmers supply 100% fresh British chicken to our stores. Moreover, we meet with our farmers twice a year to share best practice and improve animal welfare.

All our own label brand chicken is reared to [Red Tractor](#) standards. Moreover, we have taken positive steps to ensure quality and upkeep by applying our own set of standards that provide environmental enrichment for the birds, enabling them to exhibit natural behaviour.



This includes:

- Providing objects such as straw bales that encourage natural behaviour
- Having windows in the sheds to allow natural daylight in
- Feeding the chickens a balanced diet that promotes good health
- Giving the birds periods of darkness to allow them to rest.
- 3% of our chickens have lower stocking densities (specifically, 27.5 kg/m² or less)

Our Free-Range Chicken is sourced from farms across the South West areas of England. Being reared to RSPCA Assured standards, they require slower-growing breeds, specific stocking densities, and ranging requirements. The ranges are actively managed with trees, shrubs, grassland, and cover to allow the birds to peck, scratch and rummage outside.

Since launching the group in 2013, we have continually worked with our producers to improve the health of birds in our supply chain. We have now finished our project on QBA ([Qualitative Behavioural Assessment](#).) We have now included this in our Co-op farming pillars so that our producers can use it to help them have a better understanding of the behaviour of their flocks and to allow for a more unified approach to flock management to be implemented. We have now gifted this training module to the Chicken industry, and we are pleased that [Poultec Training Limited](#) has decided to include this as part of their training package. A continual animal welfare improvement plan is in place for all farming groups and reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers.

Dairy

All our milk, fresh cream, and milk used for block butter, cheddar and UK yoghurts are 100% British.

Our dedicated Dairy Farming Group works with around 170 farmers and launched in 2011. It produces milk to [Red Tractor](#) standards and aims to improve animal welfare through the monitoring of herd health and proactive husbandry practices. We have additional policies that cover grazing and prohibit export and euthanasia



of dairy bull calves; our grazing policy requires dairy cows and followers to have access to pastures during the grazing season. The duration and proportion of the herd grazed should be subject to the advice of a vet or nutritionist and should consider the grazing and weather conditions.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



All farms are required to participate in an annual Farm Assessment carried out by an Independent Auditor to our Dairy Pillar Model. When all assessments have been completed, a benchmarking ranking analysis is carried out which will identify CDG farms Exceeding, Achieving and Partially Achieving into percentage bandings.

We require our dairy farmers to mobility score, and body condition score their whole herd four times per year. A validation process is undertaken during the annual Farm Assessment. Each farm must have an active Herd Health Plan in place to cover Tuberculosis (TB), Johnes and BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea). We also require dairy farmers to submit KPI data quarterly, which is also validated through the on-farm assessment.

Each regional farmer group within the Co-op Dairy Group meets on-farm three times per year to share best practice. Industry experts join them and identify areas where they can improve the welfare of their herds. Previous topics that have been of primary focus are calf health, reducing lameness, responsible use of antibiotics and cow comfort.

Integrated Calf Scheme

Co-op is committed to the integration of our dairy & beef supply chain. The Co-op Calf Scheme is a unique integrated beef production scheme that was launched in September 2015 and connects Co-op Dairy Group (CDG) farmers with beef producers to ensure that calves produced at the dairy farms are retained within the Co-op supply chain. The scheme provides an outlet for all calves from dairy farms within the CDG, including continental and native cross calves, as well as pure-bred dairy bull calves – pure-bred dairy bulls, have historically been considered a waste product of the dairy industry, as they are unable to produce milk and are unsuitable for commercial beef production due to the lack of meat yielded. As such, calves born on Co-op Dairy farms that are unfit for milk production are cared for on dedicated rearing farms. Here, along with other calves of a similar age, they are given special care to ensure that they reach peak condition within a protected environment.

We require all dairy products to be sourced from farms that are accredited to Red Tractor or equivalent, and in 2017 we introduced a standard to cover buffalo milk sourced from Italy for our Co-op Mozzarella. A continual animal welfare improvement plan is in place for dairy and is reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers. On-farm visits are also completed by our agriculture manager and team throughout the year.

Eggs

We are very proud that all our shell eggs have been 100% free range since 2008, we also moved our eggs as an ingredient to 100% free-range in 2010 whilst also being British and farmed to [RSPCA Assured](#) standards. All branded eggs must also be 100% free range to be stocked in the Co-op.

During 2016, we launched our Egg Farming Group to work more closely with our farmers; we currently work with 5 farms who supply us with free range eggs. Based in Scotland and the North of England, we meet with these farmers twice a year to cover a range of topics that encourage the sharing of best practice and ways to improve animal welfare on farm. Our farmers work to the Co-op Agricultural Pillar Model by submitting welfare KPIs.



Since the inception of the group we have been working with producers on various projects to improve bird health, this has been spearheaded by a project to assess keel bone damage across the flocks and look at ways of improving the environment to minimise this. We have also conducted a project on perching provision with our supply group to look at current perching provision on-farm and opportunities to improve availability.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



We continually work with our farmers to improve animal welfare across the supply chain and is reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers. On-farm visits are also completed by our agriculture manager and team throughout the year.

Lamb



We are the only major retailer to sell 100% fresh British lamb all year round. We work with 25 farmers across Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England to ensure the availability of high-quality British lamb 365 days of the year.

The lamb Farming Group places a sharp focus on animal welfare, environmental impact, and farm efficiency. This has helped to create long-term relationships with our agricultural partners, as well as sustainable and transparent supply chains. All our farmers rear the lamb to [Red Tractor](#)

standards or equivalent schemes, and work to the Co-op Agricultural Pillar Model, submitting welfare KPIs every quarter.

We have additional requirements that are in place to protect the welfare of the animals. For example, no lambs should be sourced directly from a livestock market. A continual animal welfare improvement plan is in place for the lamb industry and is reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers. On-farm visits are also completed by our agriculture manager throughout the year.

Pork



We are very proud to offer our customers Outdoor Bred, [RSPCA Assured Pork](#) across both of our tiers of fresh pork, bacon, sausage, gammon and ham sourced from our Co-op Pork Farming Group. We work closely with [Red Tractor](#) and RSPCA Assured to ensure our pigs are reared to the highest welfare standards. It also means that as our pigs are RSPCA Assured, both breeding and finishing pigs have access to full environmental manipulable enrichment such as straw, so they can express natural behaviours such as rooting. Moreover, we build upon these

welfare standards by requiring our farmers to work to our Farming Group pillar model.

The Co-op Pork Farming Group works with around 44 farmers and puts a firm focus on the development of the industry through KPIs and continuous improvements into animal welfare. Input, outcome, and quality measures are collated from farms every month, and are reviewed quarterly by our agricultural manager, along with the suppliers and farmers.

Each of our farmers has experienced the benefits to their business and animals from consistent reviews and monitoring of the data. The Co-op Pork Group offers the farmers opportunity to share ideas, knowledge and best practice.

The group focuses on the people who we are proud to say that 100% of our pork at the Co-op is British; this includes all our fresh pork, sausages, bacon, gammon, pork pies, scotch eggs and ready meals. The support for our British pork farmers is a fantastic position to be in, and our farmers feel that our commitment to them and their businesses has cemented the Co-op values that we all share throughout the supply chain.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Continental Meats

The use of authentic ingredients is very important to our customers and this is especially true with our authentic continental meats such as Spanish chorizo, German salami, Italian Parma ham and prosciutto and Belgian Pate. These authentic products are sourced from known and approved supply chains subjected to independent inspection by UK certification body and verification protocols.

We work closely with our continental meat supplier, [Winterbotham Darby](#) and their farmers to ensure that animal welfare is constantly monitored and improved.

Winterbotham Darby have developed and launched an [UKAS](#) accredited standard [EFP European Farm Partnership - Pig Module](#) which is the first pan-European accredited standard for welfare. The standard comprises of three tiers of bronze, silver and gold and addresses the main challenges of pig production (mutilations, confinement and environmental enrichment). What is unique with the pig module is that it covers the entire element of the supply chain; breeding (freedom farrowing, space etc.), rearing, finishing, transport and slaughter. It also takes into account health & welfare (space, light, no surgical procedures) antibiotic usage & medicine, feed, veterinary procedures, biosecurity and pest control. The Authenticate platform is used to manage the supply chain on all Co-op "ring fenced" welfare schemes. All finished products are mapped back to farms and a significant number KPIs are collated to ensure monitoring of animal welfare.

Current animal welfare research and development projects are underway including freedom farrowing trials with different designs and on different production systems. Trials are continuing to achieve the commitment of non-confinement.

Tri-Solfen (topical anaesthetic and antiseptic solution for pain relief) trials for tail docking have been completed and going through the approval process. Next stage trials are due to commence in France 2021.

Turkey

We launched the Co-op Turkey Farming Group in 2016 to help build relationships with farmers. There are 5 farms in the group, which are predominately supplied during the Christmas period. All our own-brand turkey is reared to [Red Tractor](#) Turkey standards. In addition, we require farmers to submit KPI data quarterly.



We work with our farmers and supplier to provide animal welfare improvements for our farming groups and is reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers, such as providing environmental enrichment for the birds, so they can exhibit natural behaviours.

The farmers in this group submit quarterly KPIs, which help to monitor animal welfare and highlight any issues that may have been noted by the farmers. This allows us to concentrate on the areas that we can help to improve. As part of our regular producer group meetings we will review the KPIs and discuss any areas for improvement.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Fish

We know that our customers and members value our in-depth approach to the responsible sourcing of seafood. All Co-op seafood is responsibly sourced, which includes fresh, frozen and ambient seafood products and where fish is used as an ingredient. This means fish used in Co-op brand products comes from sources that are risk assessed and reviewed by independent experts. These holistic reviews cover the health of the stock, as well as management and any potential environmental impacts of a fishery or farm. We publicly report all origin and environmental sustainability of wild-caught and farmed seafood sourced throughout our supply chain on with the [Ocean Disclosure Project](#).

In 2011 we became members of the [Sustainable Seafood Coalition](#) (SSC) which means we are working with the SSC to drive for more sustainable seafood. Our approach to sustainably sourcing seafood (fish and shellfish) draws on the expertise of a variety of external stakeholders, including:



- [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership](#)
- [Marine Stewardship Council](#)
- [Marine Conservation Society](#)
- [FAI Aquaculture](#)
- [RSPCA](#)

We are working to ensure all our wild-capture seafood sources are either Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified or working towards improving sustainability. In 2020, 75% of our wild-capture seafood products (including some pet food products) were labelled as MSC certified. In order to support developing fisheries on

their journey towards the MSC standard, we actively support a selection of [Fisheries Improvement Projects](#) such as [Project UK](#) which supports eight UK fisheries in working towards the MSC Standard.

All Co-op farmed fish is sourced in accordance with the Co-op Responsible Fish Sourcing Policy which ensures they meet the highest standards in terms of fish welfare, husbandry, marine environmental protection and responsible sourcing of ingredients for the marine components of farmed fish feed. We do not allow fin clipping of finfish and all finfish must be slaughtered in accordance with the [Humane Slaughter Association](#) code of practice which includes stunning prior to slaughter.

All our farmed fish sources must comply with national regulations and act in a socially responsible way. All our farmed fish sources are certified by one of four recognised external farm assurance schemes: [Aquaculture Stewardship Council](#) (ASC), [Global Aquaculture Alliance Best Aquaculture Practice](#) (GAA BAP 4*), [Global Gap](#) or [Marine Stewardship Council](#) (MSC). As part of the Co-op internal risk assessment process for seafood sources, we ensure marine sources in farmed fish feed are also reviewed. Our preferred status for farmed fish feed is [Marin Trust](#) (formally [IFFO RS](#)) or MSC certified. In addition to marine ingredients, we also risk assess all ingredients within the feed basket to ensure we have a holistic approach to fish feed. We are working with our supply base to actively encourage the use of sustainable novel and alternative ingredients within aquaculture diets.

In 2017, we launched the Co-op Irresistible Salmon farming group. This will allow us to work closely with some of our Scottish salmon suppliers and farmers in our supply chains to ensure we support them to produce high-quality salmon to strict welfare standards. We collect KPIs from our salmon suppliers incorporating welfare outcome measures and working with our entire aquaculture supply base to expand our range of KPIs collected.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



More details about our farmed finfish and shellfish can be found below:

Finfish

Species	Third party certification	Max stocking density	Transport times (harvest to slaughter)	Pre- slaughter stunning
Scottish and Norwegian Atlantic salmon (standard tier)	Global GAP, GAA BAP, ASC	22kg/ m ³	Max 48 hours	100% pre-slaughter stunned
Scottish Atlantic salmon (Irresistible tier)	RSPCA Assured, Global GAP	15kg/ m ³	Max 48 hours	100% pre-slaughter stunned
Seabass (Turkey)	Global GAP	13kg/ m ³	Slaughtered on site	100% pre-slaughter stunned
Trout	Global GAP	17kg/ m ³	Slaughtered on site	100% pre-slaughter stunned

Shellfish

Species	Third party certification	Transport times (harvest to slaughter)
Vietnam king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Thailand king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Honduras king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Nicaragua king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Indonesia king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Ecuador king prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site
Vietnam tiger prawns	ASC, GAA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site

Welfare Reporting and targets

What are our targets?

We record data from our supplying protein farms monthly, and dairy, beef & lamb farms quarterly. We then review progress against agreed key performance indicators (welfare inputs, outcome and quality measures). Action is taken when targets are not met where we work collaboratively with our supply base and farmers to improve performance every quarter through joint business plan meetings. An active action plan is driven by our Continuous Animal Welfare Improvement plans for each sector.

Within our published Co-op Way (CSR) [report](#), we report on the progress of our farm animal welfare commitments as well as publishing them within this document, which is available on our website.

Some of our targets include:

- Identify opportunities to deliver further benefits for animal welfare, on-farm efficiencies and product quality. Lead on the responsible use of antibiotics within our supply chain and help educate our supply chains in best practice.
- Maintain Tier 2 for Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare for the 6th year running.

How do we manage, monitor and implement animal welfare improvement?

We have a dedicated farming & fisheries team who work closely with all our suppliers and farmers. We collaborate with industry experts such as The Andersons Centre, ADAS and AB-Sustain to engage with our farming groups. They continue in their development through academies and attendance at industry events, workshops in animal welfare and engagement with welfare organisations such as RSPCA and Compassion in World Farming. We actively promote our supply base to follow similarly and ensure their team are adequately trained and have in place a professional team to meet the requirements of welfare regulations at the time of killing and associated standards. Follow the work of The Co-op Farming and Food team at [@coopagrimatters](#).

We have continuous animal welfare improvement plans for each species, which is owned by the dedicated agricultural manager and reviewed quarterly with the suppliers and industry experts. We work together to identify areas of improvement and create an action plan for each farming group, the following are included in our reviews:

- Review of animal welfare KPI data
- Review of welfare standards
- Welfare benchmarking (such as [CIWF](#) & [BBFAW](#))
- Customer research
- Competitor benchmarking
- Research and development project data
- Overall SWOT analysis

We have a detailed species-specific sourcing policy in place where all meat and fish must be sourced against our animal welfare standards.

All meat, poultry, eggs & milk sold under The Co-op own label brand are produced from livestock reared to strict standards of animal welfare and must be accredited to one of the national Farm Assurance Schemes controlled by Assured Food Standards, which allows meat to display the Red Tractor Logo (or equivalent) as a minimum. In addition, we source chicken, beef, pork, lamb and liquid milk and salmon through our Farming Group models as detailed [earlier](#).

All our farms within our Farming Groups are registered on our farming group platform. Data is collected monthly or quarterly for health & welfare KPIs for input, outcome and quality measures. The agricultural team analyses this data, taking any necessary actions and communicates performance to the business.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



All suppliers must notify us of any audit failures, compliance issues, and proven or investigated breaches in legislation or welfare standards. Once reported, we review on a case by case basis and put in place an appropriate management action plan where necessary.

The Co-op has created an internal management structure to assist the Farming & Fisheries team in improving animal welfare. The Farming & Fisheries team work closely with the Policy and Social Goals teams who are multi-disciplinary, we also draw from a broad base of internal and external stakeholders such as [ADAS](#) and [The Andersons Centre](#) and represent a holistic business approach to this vital issue. These teams fulfil the roles of analysing and interpreting scientific data as well as having policy and decision-making powers based on the outputs of these analyses.

At Co-op, we have developed an internal risk assessment process to ensure all our fish and aquaculture is responsibly sourced. This process incorporates third party certification as well as the latest scientific advice regarding the status of fish stocks and their management as well as the environmental impact of the fisheries and farms from which we source. We review new sources, and we hold monthly Fish Sourcing Decision Forum forums to discuss key seafood industry topics, these meetings will enable us to ensure we have considered the welfare and environmental risk elements of our seafood sourcing.

The Co-op operates a stage and gate process for all produces being launched into our business. At critical stages of this process adherence to the Co-op strict sourcing criteria in particular animal welfare, origin, adherence to codes of proactive and fish sustainability are checked before they continue through the product development process to launch in Co-op stores. This process ensures we meet our strict ethical standards for our supply chain.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



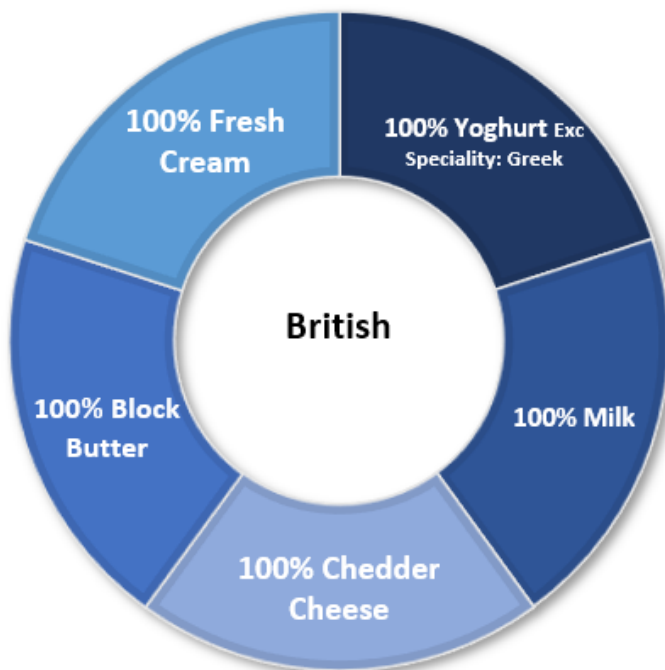
Welfare Performance

Welfare performance applies to all species within our key supply chains; Beef, Lamb, Chicken, Turkey, Laying Hens, Pork, Dairy.

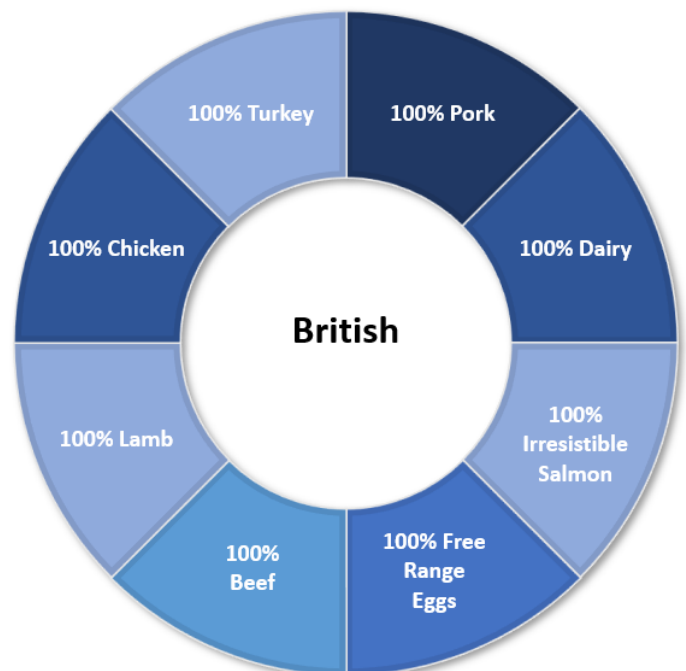
Livestock Origin

- This details the origin of produce within our supply chain. Co-op has speciality products made in the country of origin that are excluded.

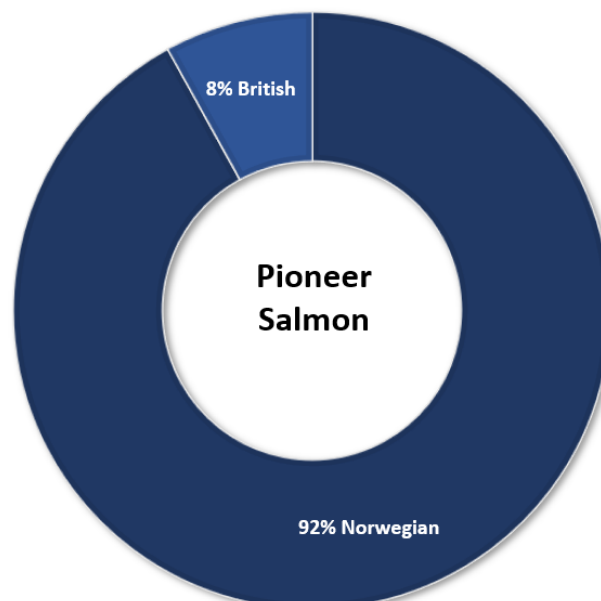
DAIRY ORIGIN %



PROTEIN ORIGIN %



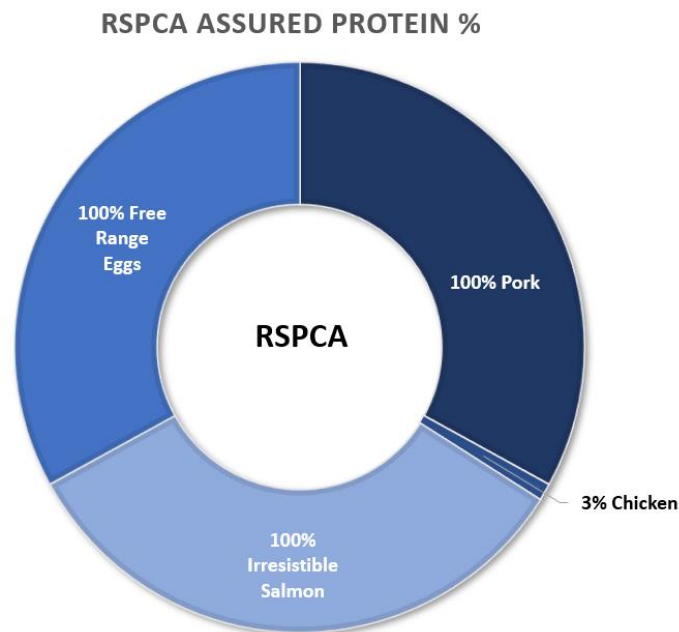
PROTEIN ORIGIN %



"Pioneer" is the name given to our standard core range of products.

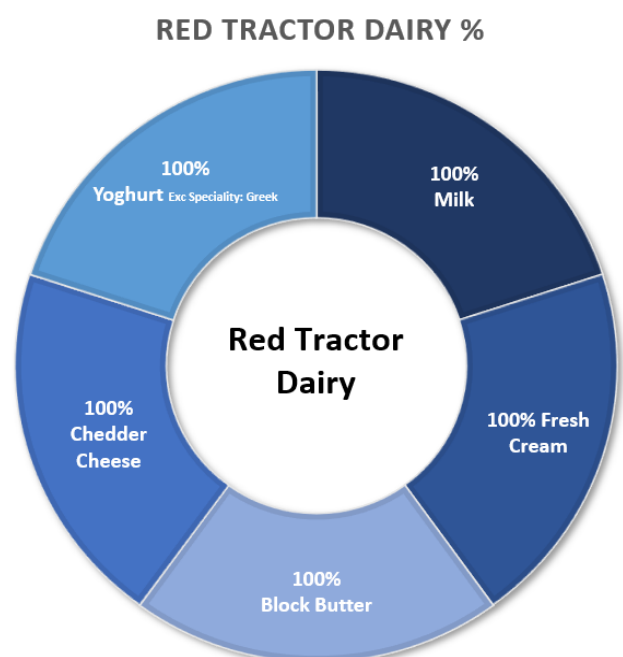
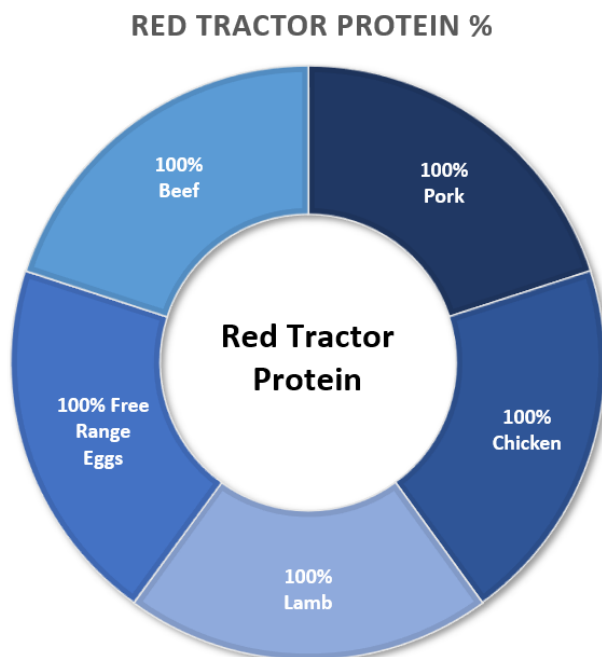
Percentage of Product RSPCA Assured

- This details our proteins assured by the RSPCA



Percentage of Livestock Red Tractor Assured (or equivalent)

- This details the livestock assurance standards within our supply chain, all livestock must be approved to Red Tractor as a minimum. Co-op also has speciality products made in the country of origin that are excluded.



Pre-stunning before slaughter

KPI	TARGET	2017 - 2018	2018 -2019	2019 -2020
All Broilers to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Beef to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Lamb to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Pork to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Turkey to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Laying Hens to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Fin Fish to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Dairy Cows to be stunned before slaughter	100%	100%	100%	100%

All protein from **Own Label** and **Branded** products must be pre-stunned before slaughter, the stunning process ensures the animal is unconscious and insensible to pain.

Confinement in UK Supply Chain

KPI	TARGET	2017 - 2018	2018 -2019	2019 -2020
All Broilers to be cage free	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Laying Hens to be cage free	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Pigs to be cage free	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Turkey to be cage free	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Beef are free from confinement	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Lamb are free from confinement	100%	100%	100%	100%
All Dairy Cows are free from tethering	100%	100%	100%	100%

All poultry and livestock in the Co-op supply chain must be provided with sufficient space such that they are free to express their normal behaviours and protected from discomfort.

Welfare policies

KPI	TARGET	2017 - 2018	2018 -2019	2019 -2020
Avoidance of genetically modified crops	100%	100%	100%	100%
Avoidance of growth promoters	100%	100%	100%	100%
Avoidance of animal testing	100%	100%	100%	100%
Avoidance of cloned animals	100%	100%	100%	100%

All protein supplied into the Co-op supply chain must adhere to the above policies as set out in our sourcing standards, when a supplier agrees to work with the Co-op they must sign up to these policies.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Stocking densities

KPI	TARGET	2017 - 2018	2018 -2019	2019 -2020
Stocking Density for Broilers	< 38kg/m2	36.25	35.78	36.6
Stocking Density for Laying Hens	< 9 laying hens per m2 of usable area	8.87	9	9
Stocking Density for Turkey	< 59.1kg/m2 for 20Kg	49.79	48.33	52.27
Stocking Density for Pigs	<0.80/m2 for 110kg	0.80	0.80	0.80

All Co-op farmers must comply with all farm assurance standards such as Red Tractor (or equivalent) or RSPCA Assured, the above stocking densities have been taken from our farming group using our online platform.

Mutilations

KPI	TARGET	2017 - 2018	2018 -2019	2019 -2020
Finfish are free from fin clipping	100%	100%	100%	100%
Lambs are free from mulesing	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pigs in our fresh/frozen supply of pork are free from castration	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pigs free from teeth reduction	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pigs free from short tail docking	100%	100%	100%	100%
Broilers are free from beak trimming	100%	100%	100%	100%
Organic Laying Hens are free from beak trimming	100%	100%	100%	100%
Laying Hens beak trimmed within 24hours of birth	100%	100%	100%	100%
Dairy Cows free from tail docking	100%	100%	100%	100%

Co-op aims to protect animals in its supply chain from avoidable pain, injury and disease through prompt diagnosis and treatment. Where routine mutilations are absolutely necessary, e.g. tail docking and castration in Pigs, then it would only be allowed under derogation from relevant assurance body and with veterinary approval that there is an animal welfare issue that requires this action along with anaesthetic and pain relief which must be applied as required by law.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community

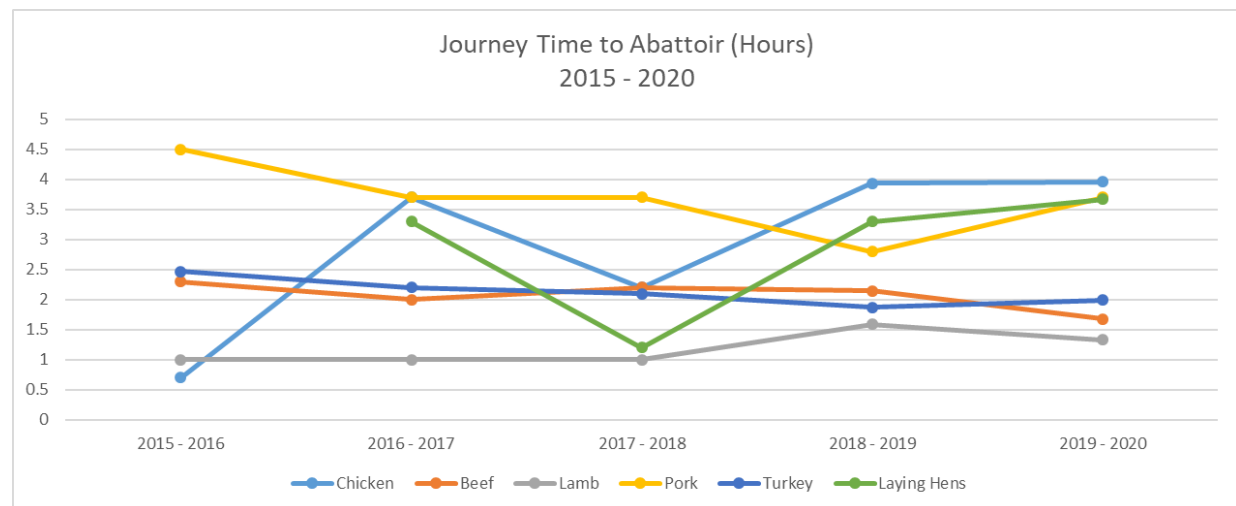


All data recorded below has been logged by our farmers that we work with as part of our farming groups, this detail is inputted on to our online platform run by [Authenticate IS](#). The farmers upload data on either a monthly, quarterly or by flock period. The KPIs submitted allow us as a farming & fisheries team to work closely with the individual farmers and suppliers, we review this data on a quarterly basis and discuss with the farmers in the farming group meetings.

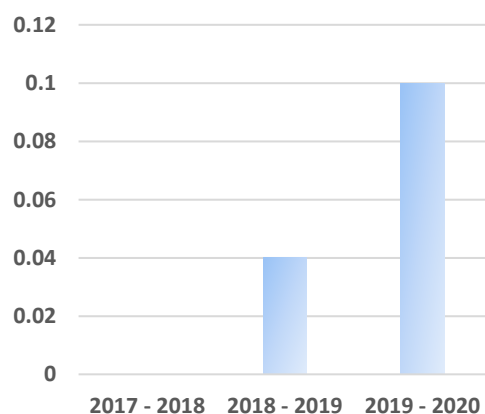
Transport Data

Average Journey Time for Livestock Sourced by the Co-op

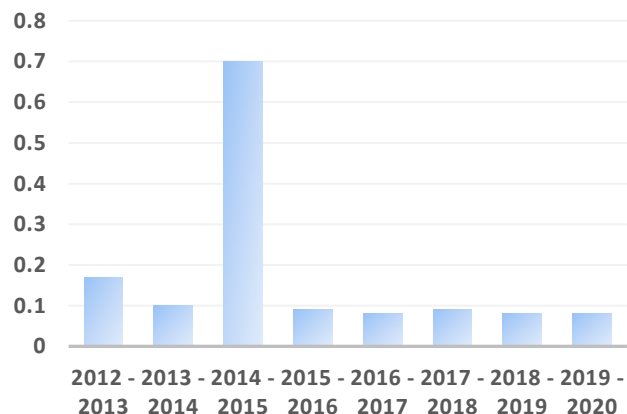
Co-op is committed to ensuring the transport of live animals in our supply chain is carried out in a humane manner, which minimises fear and distress, ensuring good animal welfare and product quality. We have measured the average journey time to abattoir over a 5-year period in our farming group by using our online platform. Where livestock do not survive a journey, they are recorded as Dead on Arrival (DOA), all animals are transported in accordance with the approved farm assurance scheme to which they are aligned.



Laying Hens D.O.A (%)



Chicken D.O.A (%)

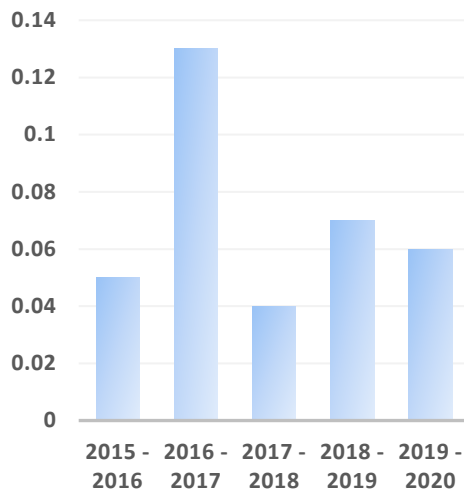


Animal Welfare at the Co-op

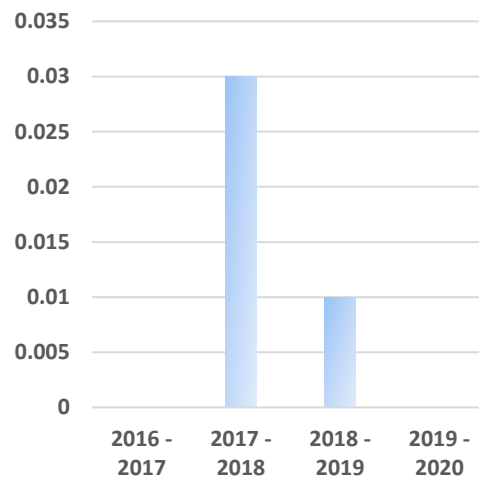
A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Turkey D.O.A (%)



Pigs D.O.A (%)



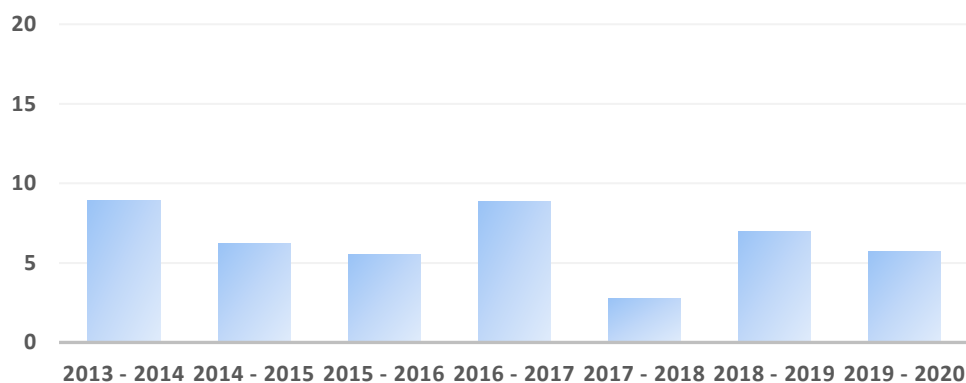
Species KPIs

Dairy Cows

Co-op Dairy Group farms monitor the mobility of their herds closely, focus on cow comfort and use preventative health care to maintain high level of mobility in their herds. We use a recognised dairy industry standard. The scoring system is explained below with 0 being the best and 3 being room for improvement:

- Score 0: walks with even weight bearing and rhythm on all four feet, with a flat back
- Score 1: steps uneven (rhythm or weight bearing) or strides shortened; affected limb or limbs not immediately identifiable
- Score 2: uneven weight bearing on a limb that is immediately identifiable and/or obviously shortened strides, usually with an arched back.
- Score 3: unable to walk as fast as a brisk human pace and cannot keep up with the healthy herd, also signs of score 2.

Lameness (Score 2+3) %

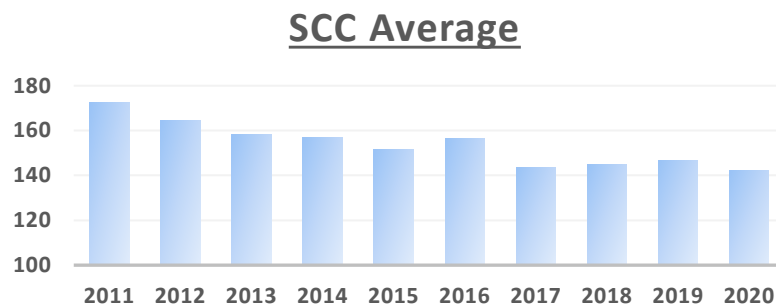


Animal Welfare at the Co-op

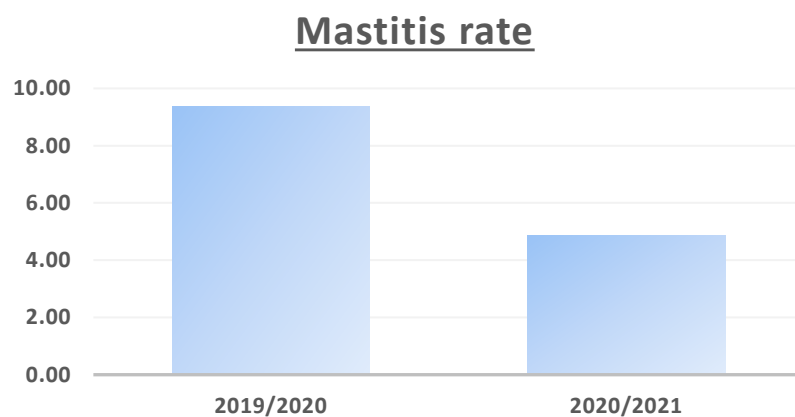
A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Somatic cell count (SCC) is an indicator of the quality of milk and animal welfare. Exceptionally high cleanliness and hygiene standards in the Co-op Dairy Group farms deliver consistently high-quality milk with low levels of mastitis. SCC levels are slightly higher in the summer months due to changeable weather conditions.



Mastitis is the inflammation of the mammary gland and udder tissue. It usually occurs as an immune response to bacterial invasion of the teat canal by variety of bacterial sources present on the farm



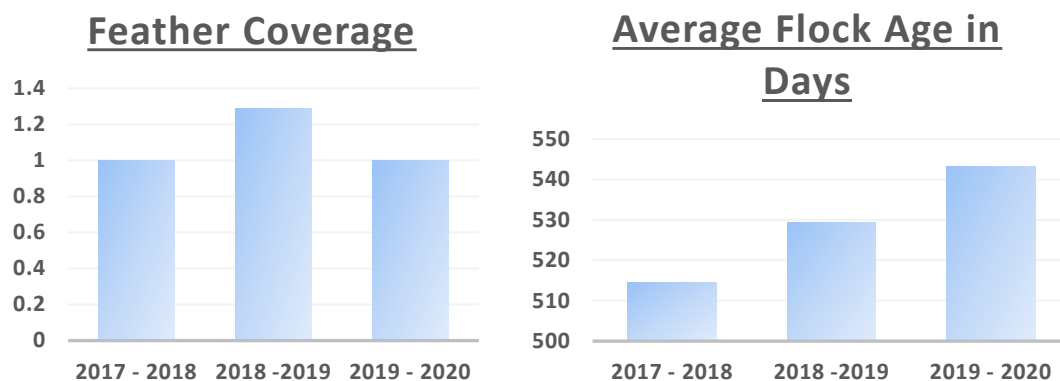
Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



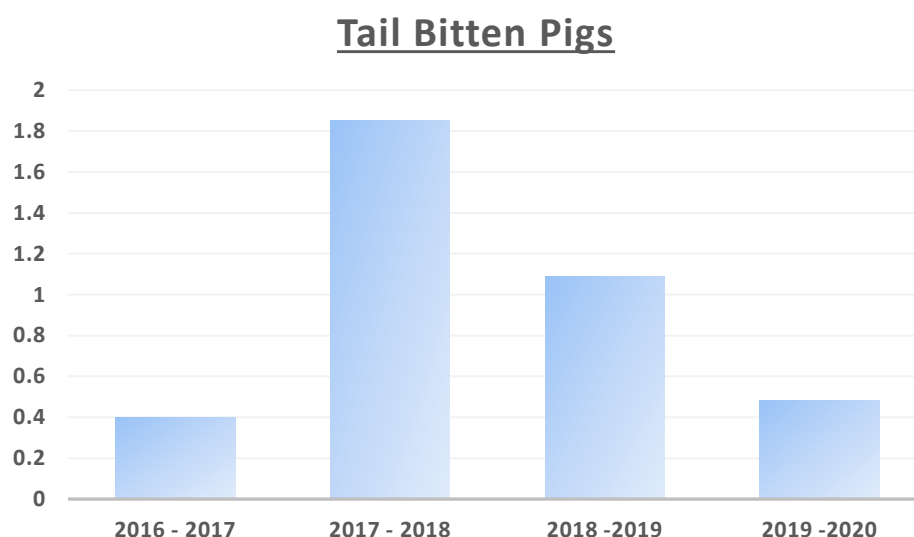
Laying Hens

Feather coverage recording allows for a clearer picture to be made in understanding levels of stress within the flock as well as pain and discomfort. It is also linked to cannibalism within flocks. Average Flock Age is a recording that indicates how long the birds in our supply chain are laying eggs. This data allows us to create links to any health issues on farm as well as understanding reasons for drop in supply.



Pigs

Tail biting in pigs is due to pigs feeling stressed or discomfort and are looking for something to divert their attention. In the Co-op Pig farming group, we see very low numbers of this happening.



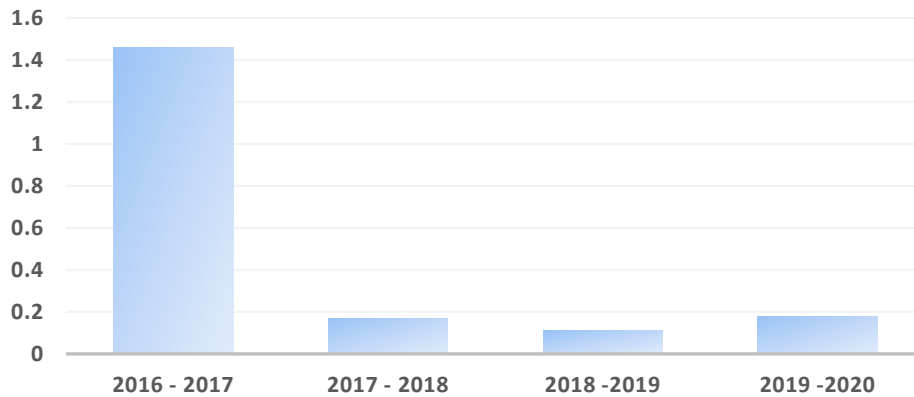
Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Lameness in pigs can be caused through the pig's environment or through infection, we thoroughly inspect the pigs in our farming group and since the move to Outdoor Bred the cases have dropped.

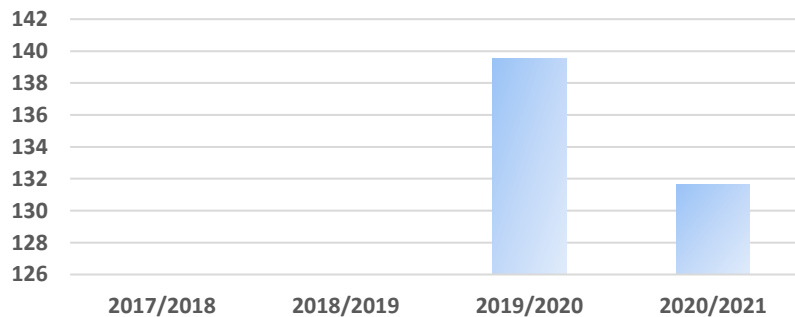
Lameness



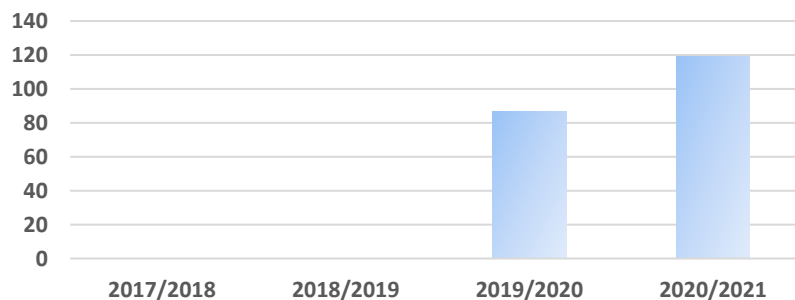
Lamb

Lambing percentage and Lambs Weaned is used to show the number of ewes lambed and number of lambs born (including dead). This has only recently started to be collected as we have updated our KPI requirements.

Lambing %



Lambs weaned per 100 ewes



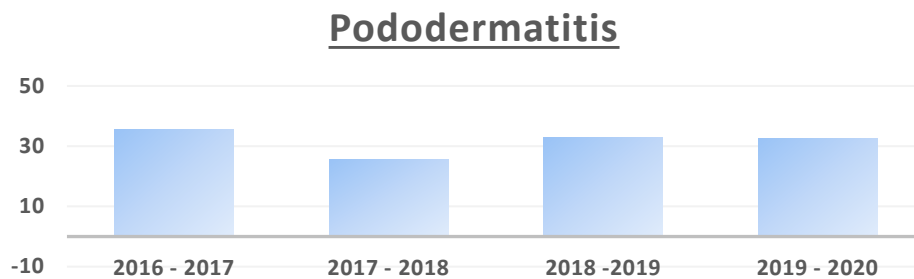
Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community

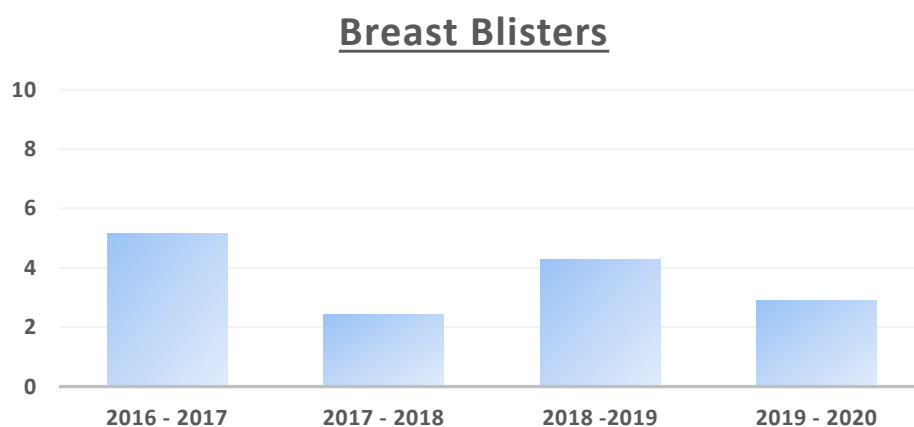


Turkey

Pododermatitis is an inflammation of the skin which marks the sole of the Turkey's foot through dietary factors and litter conditions. The procedure for identifying pododermatitis is to check and record 100 birds per flock for pododermatitis.



Breast Blisters are caused by a Turkey sitting on the floor or from an irritant, Breast Blisters do not have a clinical effect on the turkey.



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

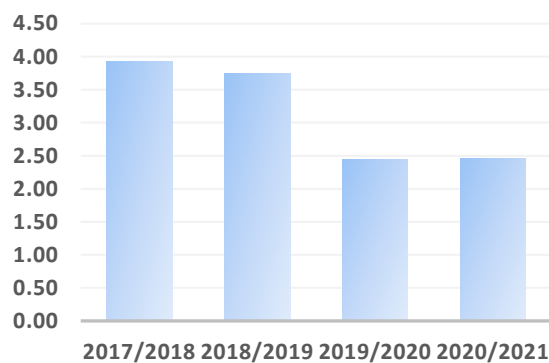
A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



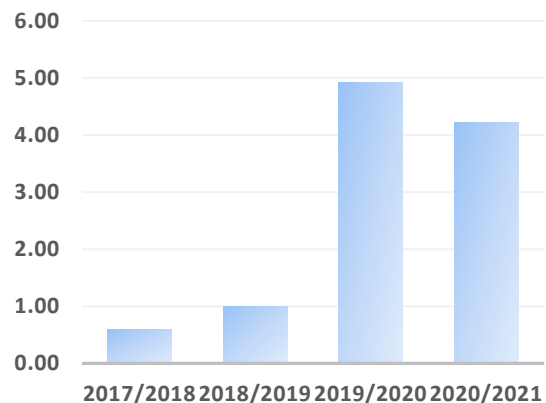
Beef

As the carcasses are processed at the abattoir, they are inspected by an independent staff member from the [FSA](#) who will record and assess cases of Active Fluke and Pneumonia. Pneumonia is assessed in the lungs and Fluke assessed in the liver.

Pleuracy Pneumonia Cases %



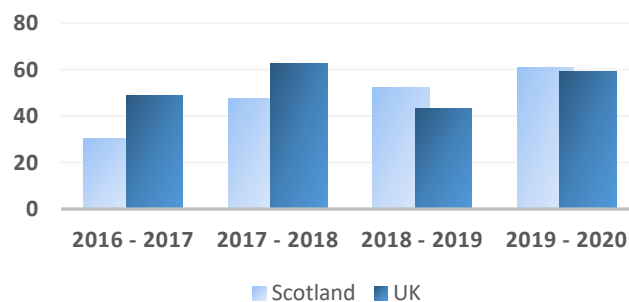
Active Fluke Cases %



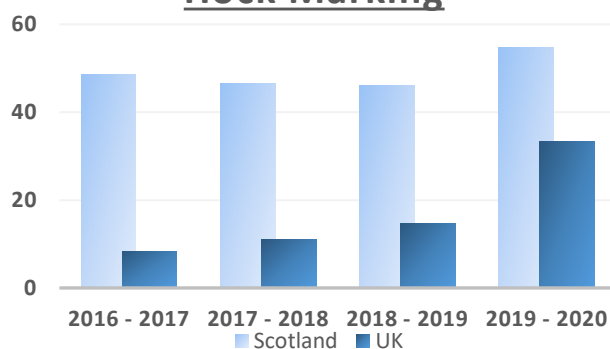
Chicken

Pododermatitis is an inflammation of the skin which marks the sole of the Chicken's foot through dietary factors and litter conditions. Hock marking is found on the upper joints of chickens and gives an understanding of conditions in house.

Pododermatitis



Hock Marking



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Research & Development

To be sustainable and make improvements to animal welfare, we need to anticipate future opportunities and challenges ahead. We have worked with [FAI](#) (Food Animal Initiative), an independent consultant, to review our livestock standards and welfare reporting. We engage with industry organisations such as [AHDB](#) (Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board).

A few of our projects are highlighted below;

Dairy

The Farming Groups let us know what the key health and welfare issues are, so we can investigate further. Therefore, we're working with our dairy farmers on a disease eradication programme with the aim of removing disease such as BVD & Johnes from Co-op Dairy Group farms. We're also pioneering a way of capturing accurate data on antimicrobial usage across the Co-op Dairy Group, before sharing our usage data with Kite Consulting, who will evaluate and deliver the data back to Group members. This will also give farmers information to discuss with their own vet and lets them benchmark themselves against the rest of their Group. See antibiotics section for more information.

Beef

Sustainability has always been an important aspect of the Co-op Farming Groups with carbon footprint assessments completed annually. With ambitious environmental targets, we are currently looking at projects that can examine strategies that will help reach these targets while maintaining animal health, welfare and farm productivity. These strategies vary from looking at diets and sward composition to farm infrastructure and nutrient management planning. Our farming group members will implement the results of this work and will be the ones demonstrating the positive effects to the wider industry.

Lamb

Over the course of the last year, we have developed and installed a system that will provide farmers with individual data for each lamb that is supplied to us. The data provided allows farmers to make data driven decisions in terms of breeding, health and welfare. The data provided will also allow farmers to benchmark their production and allow for continuous improvement year on year. In line with the environmental target, we are also investigating diet and health in the sheep flock.

Pork

The Co-op Pork Farming Group are proactively working with the industry to carefully monitor and record our antibiotic usage using the AHDB EMedicine Book, we have trialled the use of handheld recording devices to allow us to be more efficiently managing the real time data recording of medicines administered to our ODB pigs. The implementation of this technology should minimise any time lag in medicine usage recording and data errors. We have also been investigating water quality and impact on pig health through our clean water program to ensure the hygienic efficient supply of water to its pigs. The clean water program involves analysis of water samples to determine water quality. Implementation of a water delivery improvement program (where appropriate including installation of new water systems, and on-going monitoring of water quality in conjunction with key welfare and production indicators to assess pig health and performance. In 2019/20 BQP completed trial work in tail biting and behaviour monitoring to assess the performance and behaviour of pigs sired by 4 different sirelines. Specific areas of interest and focus included tail biting and aggression levels in the 4 test groups. In pen CCTV footage of the pigs was assessed to objectively monitor behaviour of the pigs and identify any tail biting incidences and the circumstances in which this occurred. Research continues to investigate the impact of genotype and environmental factors on tail biting occurrence.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Chicken

We worked with our supplier to investigate whether our chickens would prefer to have perches, platforms or bales, as environmental enrichment is important to us. We concluded that the best option for our chickens were straw bales, as it allowed chickens to exhibit their natural behaviour. It also presented the most bio-secure option compared to the perches and platforms.

We worked with our chicken supplier, Food Animals Initiative (FAI) and The University of Bristol to trial a new method of measuring chicken welfare called Qualitative Behavioural Assessment (QBA).

The QBA considers the behaviour of animals within its environment, and our study aims to explore this as a method our farmers can use to observe bird behaviour and monitor animal welfare. This training material was gifted to the industry and Poultec took the decision to implement this work into their training programme which has the potential to benefit a significant percentage of chicken within the industry.

Laying Hens

Keel bone damage is prevalent in all laying flocks made worse by the move to multi-tier aviary type systems and the introduction of aerial perches in free-range and barn production. The damage is caused by the impact on the multiple fixtures and fittings as the birds move around accessing the various levels within the unit. As part of their welfare outcome recording, Noble Foods have carried out keel bone assessment by breast palpitation on all their laying flocks post 60wks of age with 60 birds being assessed and scored 0 – 2 depending on the severity of the damage. The purpose of the study was to identify if the system type and the breed of bird affect the level of damage found. Key findings so far suggest that housing systems do make a significant difference in the occurrence of damage with different manufactures also having an effect, data shows perching adding 41% to the level of keel bone damage in single tier systems (17.44 vs 24.61). The breed is suggested to make a difference, but more data will be required to make a reasonable comparison. The plan is to continue to collate the data, identify high and low incidence in order to understand what particular configurations and management constitute best practice.

Fish

In order to support developing fisheries on their journey towards the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) standard, we actively support a number of Fisheries Improvement Projects (FIPs) such as Project UK Fisheries Improvements (PUKFI). FIPs provide a framework within which fisheries can make improvements to reach a standard where they could meet MSC Standard, the collaborative nature of these projects means that stakeholders from all parts of the supply chain and wider interest groups are represented through the process.

We work collaboratively with other industry stakeholders to address challenges such as fisheries management through the Global Tuna Alliance (GTA) and North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy (NAPA). In addition, we co-fund a project which monitors fishing activity to prevent fishing in prohibited areas in the Arctic.

We have worked with our farmed fish suppliers to risk assess all the feed ingredients within these supply chains, this will allow us to identify high-risk feed ingredients within aquaculture supply chains and from this develop suitable action plans to mitigate these risks.

In 2019 we became members of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative in order to promote best practice to limit the impact of lost and abandoned fishing gear. We also co-sponsor a PhD at Heriot Watt University, which focuses on ghost gear and mitigation opportunities.

Environmental Projects

Feed policy development

In 2020, we worked with [Forum for the Future](#) to develop a holistic approach to animal and fish feed at Co-op. This incorporates understanding and mitigating risk and identifying opportunities in our feed supply chains around environmental sustainability, carbon emissions, animal welfare, people within our feed supply chains and sustainable diets. We will work with our suppliers on continuous improvement of animal and fish feed and report our findings publicly.

Feed risk mapping tool

Through consultation and collaborative work with Co-op suppliers and industry stakeholders we have developed a Feed Risk Mapping Tool. The tool is designed to highlight risk in aquaculture and animal feed supply chains. The tool is being used to identify high risk ingredients and be a supporting tool for future business decision making and R&D involvement; specifically, the implementation of appropriate action plans to mitigate risk.

Soy

We are making sure that all the soy we use in Co-op food products is covered by zero deforestation and sustainable soy credits. We are also working with our suppliers to make sure that 100% of the soy used to feed animals in our supply chain is zero deforestation and sustainably sourced by 2025. As a full member of RTRS we publicly report our use of soy.

Environmental Mapping

In 2015, Co-op began an Environmental Mapping project with which has collected and modelled 3 years of data for all farming groups (exc. Salmon) relating to greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity. Capturing this information allowed us to understand what our farms environmental impact is and what the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions are. We aim to ensure our partner farms are helping to reduce their environmental impact through efficient farming practices and unique measurement initiatives identified through our project. As a Farming and Fisheries team, it is more important than ever that we support our farmers and producers to innovate on responsible resource use and play our part in caring for the world we share.

Environmental Mapping Next Steps

The data collected allows us to understand what our farms' environmental impact is and what the primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions are. Moving forward for year 4 and onwards, the data collected during the project will be used to help identify areas where the carbon footprint can be targeted and reduced by partnering with a specialist in environmental strategy. This will allow us to focus on species in order to meet the reduction of the Co-op's science-based emission targets.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Industry Involvement

We work closely with various industry organisations, including NGOs, industry bodies, consultants, educational establishments and government.

We work with NGOs such as Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance (RUMA), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and since 2017 we have been a member of Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF).

Within the industry we regularly engage with the National Farmers Unions, Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB), National Pig Association (NPA), Seafish, Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), British Benchmark for Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW), RSPCA Assured and Red Tractor. In fact, members of our Farming & Fisheries team hold BRC positions on the poultry, dairy, beef and lamb Red Tractor boards or development committees. This ensures that we can influence and input into the improvement of Red Tractor standards. A member of our Co-op team is on the governing body of the Marin Trust (Marine feed ingredients certification) as well as the steering committee of Project UK, Seafish Common Language Group and North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy. As such, we regularly engage with and influence the seafood industry and have a good network in this area.

We work with educational establishments such as Heriot Watt and Exeter Universities on R&D projects. We also work with expert consultants such as Food Animal Initiative (FAI), ADAS RSK and Kite Consulting on our dairy group and our Farming Pioneers programme.

The responsible use of antibiotics is extremely important to us, so we are working with Kite Consulting on a project to measure the use of antibiotics, which is why we continue to engage with many organisations listed above and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD).

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Please see our endorsements below:

Authenticate IS have provided The Co-op with a platform to collect, manage, report and benchmark their supply chain for more than 7 years.

During this time, they have been able to geo-map all of their Beef, Lamb, Pork, Egg, Poultry and Dairy farms, giving them the ability to confidently state that all of their farms are British, while also ensuring that they hold any other relevant certification status, RSCPA, Red Lion, Red Tractor. They have also geo-mapped their Fish & Aquaculture supply chains.

The Co-op continue to develop a robust and clear standard that they want all of their farmers to work towards, while also ensuring that the farming partnerships they hold drive continued improvement for all farmers.

For the past 7 years The Co-op have continually reported on many animal welfare metrics across all protein at a farm level and have over the last year utilised this technology to begin to bring in some of the sustainability, and transparency reporting they do within their well-documented Healthy Oceans Strategy.

The Co-op's focus on improving reporting is driven first and foremost by their desire to ensure that all of their products are as sustainably, and ethically sourced as possible, but also to help them work more collaboratively with suppliers by increasing insight and reducing workloads.

Daniel Hall Authenticate IS, Account Director

The Co-op and Noble Foods have a long-standing partnership with common goals working to identify and promote the highest levels of animal husbandry and farm practice.

This has included the development of clear sourcing standards outlining Co-op's high expectations with regards to food safety and quality, sustainability and the environment and above all farm animal welfare.

We are working jointly and in conjunction with the Co-op producer group and the Food Animal Initiative to identify and share best practice and find solutions to current industry challenges

Key work streams are to reduce environmental impacts from current farming practices and the animal feed supply chain, as well as collating and analysing data to measure key welfare outcomes and understand levels of antibiotic use across the Co-op supply base.

It's great to work with a forward-thinking retailer that is not only committed to high welfare, quality egg production, but also the impacts of the wider agricultural supply chain both from an environmental and ethical perspective to drive long term sustainable farming practices.

Jean-Paul Michalski, Account Manager, Noble Foods

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



The Co-op Agriculture Team engaged with RSK ADAS Ltd in January of this year to devise, and subsequently deliver, an Environmental Strategy that will primarily address the reduction of carbon emissions across all livestock sectors. Dairy and beef have been targeted as the sectors to address initially and strategies to reduce carbon emissions have been identified. Many of these strategies go hand in hand with an increase in animal health and welfare protocols, in most cases, over and above the obligatory Red Tractor Standards. Examples will include reducing the incidence of lameness that will reduce mortality rates, improving the health and nutrition of youngstock to reduce the age at first calving and promoting a healthy housing environment that reduces disease impact and subsequent antibiotic use on the animals. The project will run for a number of years and work directly with processors, group facilitators and Co-op producers to inform and educate best practice

James Dunn, Business Management Technical Director, ADAS RSK.

We continue to develop a strong partnership with Co-op based upon their commitment to British farmers, animal welfare and sustainability. Due to COVID 19 we have had to put on hold our CPG meetings and related activities, but we continue to work closely with their chicken farming group, using data and R&D to drive continuous improvements in both animal health and welfare. 2SFG have committed to investing in Co-op's Agriculture base which will enable us to focus on Innovation & R&D which will assist us in finding new ways of addressing some of the key industry challenges such as the reduction and responsible use of antibiotics. Continued focus on Soya reduction and the responsible sourcing of Soya will be a high priority for 2020/ 2021"

Andrew Gibson, Agricultural Manager, 2SFG Agriculture

Pilgrim's Pride Ltd. (formerly known as Tulip Ltd.) works closely with the Co-op's Agriculture team to nurture and develop the Co-op Pig Producer Group which started in 2013. Our producers particularly value the close relationship with Co-op which helps support them to deliver higher welfare British RSPCA outdoor bred pork. The Co-op's Agriculture team is forward thinking and continually look for ways to deliver sustainably farmed high welfare pork - just one of the many reasons why the partnership works so well. We share the same values and goals which places sustainable farming and pig welfare at the centre of everything.

Mark Houghton, Pig Supply Chain Director, Tulip/ Pilgrims Pride

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Andersons became involved in facilitating the Co-op beef and lamb farmer group meetings in early 2020 and we have also been looking at the longer-term strategy for these groups in alignment with the Co-op Pillar Model. From the outset, it was clear that animal welfare is a crucially important part of the Co-op ethos and previous discussions around promoting greater animal health and more effective vaccination strategies were cited by farmers as being the most informative. It is also evident that adhering to the highest animal welfare and environmental standards are critical in showcasing the “Best of British” quality produce.

In the past year, a lot of Andersons’ work has focused on improving efficiency, profitability and having a sustainable business. It is crucial to point out that such improvements cannot be achieved without having strong animal welfare standards in place. Accordingly, the efficiency measures included in the benchmarking tools that we have developed are closely linked with safeguarding animal welfare. In our grassland management webinars, there were detailed discussions around managing the correct feed supply to different stock classes where safeguarding animal welfare was a central consideration. The strategy review analysis that we undertook has shown that highest animal welfare should always be a fundamental requirement for all suppliers with Health, Welfare and Quality continuing to be a core element of the Co-op Pillar Model. In this regard, animal welfare will continue to be a key focus of the meetings that we plan to run in the next year relating to herd and flock health as well as producing quality products that match British consumers’ high expectations in terms of animal welfare and sustainability standards.

Michael Haverty, Partner and Senior Research Consultant, The Andersons Centre

Consumer buying decisions are always evolving, however one aspect that has continuously been a requirement at Co-op is that their beef and lamb products are reared under high animal welfare standards.

Animal welfare can mean different things to different people and under our strict sourcing standards for Co-op, we ensure that all of our beef and lamb is sourced to meet these standards over and above.

We have a close working relationship with our Beef and Lamb Farming Groups where transparency from farm to fork is pivotal. The basis of this trust begins from all of our farms being Farm Assured, to each farm supplying us with key animal health and welfare data that is monitored on a quarterly basis. From this data we are able to monitor welfare outcomes that meet Co-op welfare targets and from this, can provide knowledge exchange on best practice in relation to healthcare and feeding to ensure continuous improvement.

Our Beef and Lamb Farming Groups are proud of the standards that they adhere to, providing Co-op customers with products that they can trust. Dunbia value the relationships we have with our producers, knowing that the animals have been produced with the utmost care throughout their lifetime.

Claire Windrum, Agricultural Account Manager, Dunbia Ltd

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Farne Salmon and Trout, located in the picturesque Scottish Borders, has been working with Co-op in the supply of Scottish farmed Atlantic salmon products for over four years, and more recently, in the sourcing of Norwegian farmed salmon. Together, Co-op and Farne Salmon are working closely with our Scottish and Norwegian salmon suppliers to ensure the highest standards of responsible sourcing in relation to our attention to animal health and welfare and environmental stewardship.

High standards of animal welfare are the key to the success of our supply chain. Co-op have a specific key focus towards animal welfare, and their integrity in this area has been well established and extends across all other agricultural sectors such as beef, poultry, lamb and pork. At Co-op, the philosophy is that “for each fish, welfare should be a given, and not a choice” which is why Co-op developed their own Aquaculture Code of Practice known as “The Co-op Farmed Atlantic Salmon Standard”. The Standard defines specific welfare practices which our salmon suppliers must employ thus ensuring the highest levels of welfare are afforded to our salmon. The practices themselves have been developed from the latest international fish health and welfare R&D outputs as well as input from veterinary and animal welfare experts who have a specific focus on farmed salmon and the development of effective and meaningful standards for improvements in farmed salmon production.

It is clear when working with Co-op that the fundamental elements of fish welfare apply to all their salmon.

Dale Hill, Head of Aquaculture & Quality, Farne Salmon and Trout

Co-op has been a supporter of RSPCA Assured ever since its inception in 1994. Today, it is the second-largest retailer of RSPCA Assured labelled food, offering more than 130 different products. It's also unique in being the only major retailer to stock 100% RSPCA Assured own-brand pork products, which is something to be really proud of. Thank you, Co-op, for your continued support.

Clive Brazier, Chief Executive, RSPCA Assured

The Co-op is a valued long-term supporter of the Red Tractor Assurance scheme. Playing an active role on the assurance scheme's Technical Advisory Committees and sector boards, they have helped to shape and influence the future direction of Red Tractor farm assurance standards.

Importantly, this includes helping to set the standards which ensure that food produced on assured farms is being produced to world-class standards which include animal welfare and high levels of food safety while protecting the environment.

The Co-op's involvement in Red Tractor's seasonal promotions and high-profile annual awareness campaigns – such as Red Tractor Week – helps to raise the profile of the logo to consumers and demonstrates its commitment to backing farm assured food in the UK.

Retail support for the logo, which now appears on more than £13bn of food and drink, will continue to be fundamental to the future success of the scheme.

Red Tractor Assurance

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Farming Groups

In the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 169 members of the Co-op's dairy farmer groups have continued to work towards improving sustainability and business efficiency. Traditionally, our regional dairy groups would meet three times a year for face-to-face meetings and peer led discussions, but when the Covid-19 lockdown forced a halt to our usual activity programme, dairy group members were quick to embrace online-based alternatives.

The Co-op is a community minded business, eager to look after the wellbeing of its farmer members, so farm safety was a key element in the 2019 group meetings. Other topics covered included the challenges of climate change and reduction of soya use within the dairy industry. Despite moving to an online based support system during 2020, we have kept dairy group members highly engaged and successfully supported members working to improve farm efficiency, business sustainability and changes to working practices.

Ainsley Baker, Partner, of Kite Consulting LLP

Farming Pioneers

Agriculture continues to ask more and more from its young producers and our aim is to support the next generation of Co-op food suppliers to develop resilient and sustainable businesses. Between 2016 and 2021, over 100 of agriculture's future managers and leaders will have been selected to take part in the Co-op's Farming Pioneers training programme, where they develop key business skills and knowledge that will help them flourish within the agricultural industry. All Farming Pioneer members are aged between 21 and 35 and currently work in the farming sector, supplying food to the Co-op.

Previous producers who have graduated from the two-year long Pioneers programme have gone on to make significant changes and improvements to their family businesses, take up leadership roles within the agricultural industry and embrace continued professional development. You can't help but be buoyed by the enthusiasm of young farmers and with the support and training opportunities provided through the Pioneers programme, the future looks bright for the Co-op's young food producers."

John Allen, Managing Consultant, of Kite Consulting LLP

"We are proud to work with the Co-op, it's a long-term relationship which places the welfare of dairy cows at its core. By working closely with the Co-op, we've been able to develop unique collaborations with dairy farmers to ensure that everyone within this network is able to access and leverage the latest data, research and best practice on herd health and welfare standards. We look forward to maintaining this long-term relationship, one which not only benefits the dairy cows themselves, but also Co-op members, farmers and our business."

Rob Hutchison, Chief Operating Officer, Muller Milk

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



AB Sustain work with the Co-op Farming groups to independently audit each farmer supplier against the Pillar model standards, carry out a biodiversity survey and calculate a carbon footprint for the product they supply to Co-op. AB Sustain have a wealth of expertise and experience working across supply chains with farmers, processors and brand owners, and retailers to independently assess, benchmark and signpost actions for improvements. Efficiency gains at farm level are key to improving sustainability whilst improving farm level profitability.

The Co-op Pillar model benchmarks and aims to drive continual improvement through the supply chain, focussing on animal health, welfare and quality, farm appearance, community and brand engagement, responsible use of resources and environmental impact, and people and skills. The analysis and insight into the data gathered helps to target further support for farmer suppliers through Business Groups.

The carbon footprint and biodiversity data further reinforces the credentials of each individual farm and defines areas where improvements and efficiency gains can be made to maximise the use of resources available, increase the resilience of the farm to volatile market places and drive profitability. invested

Danni Cooke, Technical Manager, AB-Agri Ltd

Awards & Marketing

We're proud of our commitments to animal welfare and the awards we have won. We are also hugely passionate about educating our customers and members about animal welfare.

We have won a number of awards for our animal welfare standards;

2020

- Compassion in World Farming – Cage Free Award

2018

- Compassion in World Farming -Good Pig Award
- Shortlisted for Antibiotic Guardian Award – Food & Farming

2017

- Grocer Gold Sustainability Award Finalist – for our Integrated Calf Scheme
- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'

2016

- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'

2015

- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'
- Northern Ireland Food and Drink Awards (NIFDA) – Supply Chain Excellence Award for the Hereford Beef supply chain

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



2014

- Greenpeace Tuna Sustainability League Table – achieved top tier as one of the market leaders

2012

- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'
- RSPCA Hot Topic Award (Live animal transportation times)

2011

- Compassion in World Farming – Good Dairy Award
- Compassion in World Farming – Most Improved Supermarket Award
- RSPCA People's Choice Supermarket Award

2010

- RSPCA People's Choice Supermarket Award

2009

- RSPCA People's Choice Supermarket Award

2008

- Compassion in World Farming – Good Egg Award
- RSPCA Lifetime Achievement Award
- Supermeat Awards – Best Head Office Initiative (Elmwood Chicken)

We promote high animal welfare to customers in a number of ways;

- Events such as; Agricultural shows, Open Farm Sunday in 2019 we helped 7 farmers open their farms and in 2020 we assisted in online events, In-store roadshows, taken part in Antibiotics forum for wider Co-op supply chain, engaged in school visits with Co-op academies - These enable consumers to connect with animals and our agriculture team first hand. We have provided information booklets, quizzes and engaged them in games to talk about animal welfare.
- Instore: Co-op in-store magazine- 'Meet the Producer articles'
- Digital: Social Media - [@CoopAgriMatters](#), Co-op Food website – www.co-op.co.uk/farming.
- We have created a 'Where to buy higher welfare products' webpage which sits on the RSPCA website, which promotes higher welfare products that we source in our stores, so customers can access these.

Meet the producer videos (see links below)

- We headed to Dumfries to visit Keith who supplies Scottish Co-op stores with Aberdeen Angus beef: <https://youtu.be/AOU9BTclE-8>
- We meet Robert, one of the many farmers who provide the Co-op with Chicken: <https://youtu.be/ggzjvtxiS0Y?list=PLYV-Re56pTDIPYSHh9GZ8PPllYeqdDq9>
- We head to Dumfries in Scotland to meet Grant and Richard, two dairy farmers who are part of the Co-op's Farming Pioneer Programme: <https://youtu.be/QGjBWwaltlo>
- We meet Rob and Sian, one of the many farmers who provide the Co-op with free-range eggs: <https://youtu.be/TweaNSV5PXI>
- We visit a family farm that supplies Co-op with tasty Hereford beef: <https://youtu.be/Oiwbblvcw0k>
- Co-op is really proud of its British lamb, so Rosie Mullender went to meet one of the farmers who produce it: https://youtu.be/LjBBI_hDFAE
- We headed to Oxfordshire to show you how our Irresistible British pork products are produced: https://youtu.be/_Y0yeMk_MlQ
- We headed to the beautiful landscape of the Outer Hebrides to find out why Co-op Scottish salmon tastes so great: <https://youtu.be/X2rDxfkeFrg>
- We headed to Norfolk to find out why our British turkey tastes so good: <https://youtu.be/pH8Jt5b8w0U>

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Terms & Conditions

The Co-op is committed to producing products sourced to strict standards of animal welfare, food safety and quality and ethical standards. Our minimum requirements are detailed within our Supplier Terms and Conditions. The following section from our T&C's detail our minimum requirements for each supplier which includes animal welfare. All documents referred are held within our supplier technical portal including livestock standards, product composition document and, product specifications and guidelines,

Relevant section from Co-op Terms and Conditions:

6.1.1. Conform to the Co-operative Product Composition Policies – Food and the Co-operative Product Composition Policies - Non Food as may be applicable from time to time as notified in writing to the Supplier

6.1.2. Conform to the Co-operative's Technical Specifications and Supplier Guideline Documents as may be applicable from time to time as notified in writing to the Supplier

6.1.3. Use such of Co-operatives Trademarks as may be specified from time to time by the Co-operative in accordance with any and all guidelines and requirements provided by the Co-operative in relation thereto for the purposes of fulfilling the Contract but not further or otherwise

6.1.4 Be manufactured by the Supplier at sites prior approved in writing by the Co-operative or its agents. For avoidance of doubt sub-contracting of production shall not be permitted except in accordance with any prior written approval of the Co-operative on such terms as the Co-operative shall deem appropriate. Sites will be expected to comply with the Co-operative's Sound Sourcing Code of Practice and Monitoring Programmes and be registered on Sedex (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange)

6.1.5 Be produced in accordance with the Co-operative's Codes of Practice from time to time as notified in writing to the Supplier

6.2 In addition to the requirements at Term 5, where the Supplier supplies Co-operative Brand Groceries, the Supplier shall:

6.2.1. in the case of the supply of food Groceries, have achieved and maintain accreditation to the BRC Global Standard For Food Safety or such other higher standard as may be expressly prescribed in writing by the Co-operative; and/or (as appropriate)



Co-op Antibiotics Policy



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

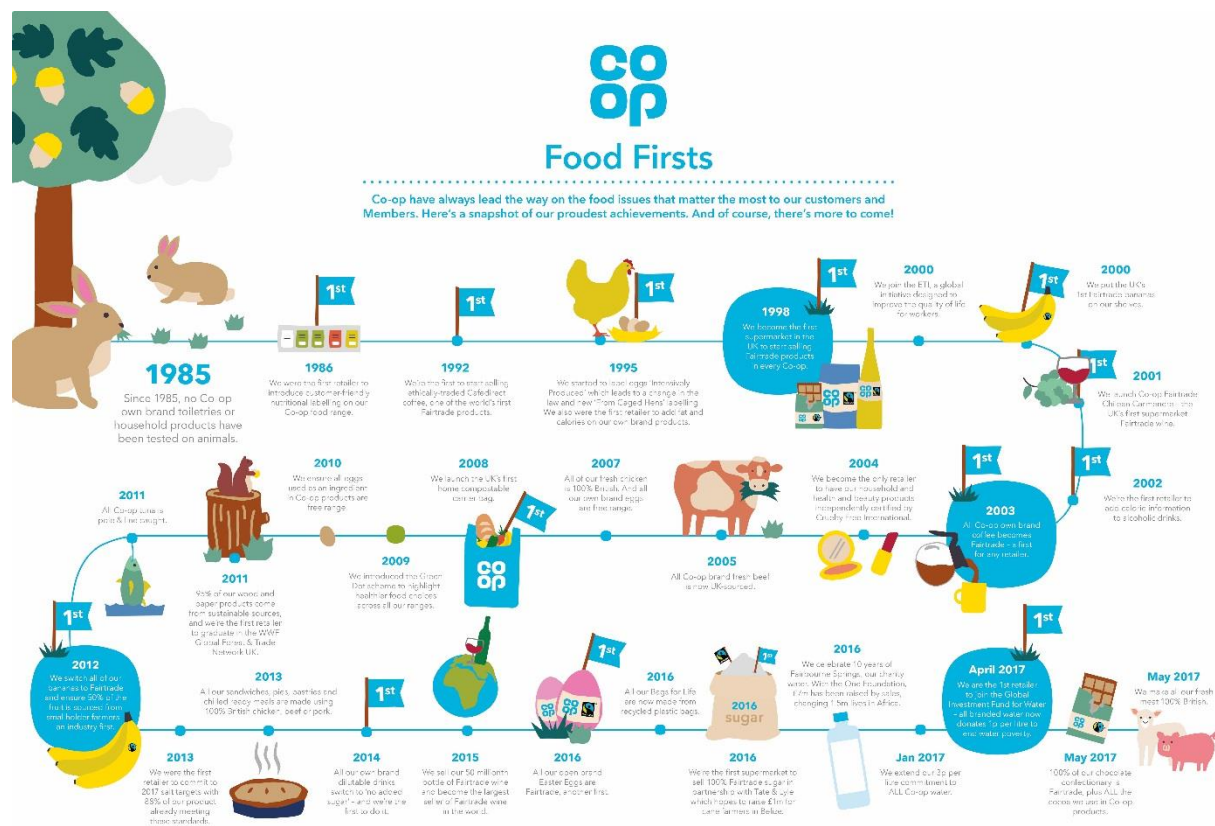
A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Background

Since we were founded by the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844, our commitment to producing good quality, safe food has been embedded in our history. Rather it illustrates how for over 30 years, and much longer, we have been pioneering to make a difference for members, customers and communities. The Pioneers responded to an urgent social need in addressing the lack of safe food, and fair prices. From then to now, we have responded by ensuring we produce food "The Co-op Way". This isn't a recent fad, marketing play, or desperate action to receive good will.

From not testing toiletries and household products on animals, to being the first to start selling Fairtrade, to being the leaders in honest labelling we have tried to make a difference; we have worked diligently to find new ways of doing what just feels right.



At Co-op, we've always supported the UK farming industry and promoted British food. Our customers and members have shown a big interest in where your food comes from, and we know how important animal welfare, the environment and fairness in the supply chain. For this reason, it is imperative we address one of the biggest challenges our society faces today: antibiotic resistance.

We've taken this on board and have created long-term relationships with our farmers and suppliers so that we can provide complete transparency in our supply chain, which is built on honesty, fairness and trust. We have established Farming Groups, which, combined with a clear sourcing strategy, gives us a great future. Co-op fully supports the need to protect our antimicrobial medicines and reduce the threat of antibiotic resistance to global human health. So, through our farming groups, we are actively addressing the use of antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines in our supply chains. In addition, we feel that veterinary care and responsible antibiotic use is paramount to protect the health and welfare of the animals in our supply. Animal welfare must be upheld always.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Therefore, at the Co-op all antibiotics are used according to strict protocols. They are used responsibly and within controlled circumstances. Animals are not routinely given antibiotics, they are only given to animals or groups of animals which are demonstrating clinical signs of illness. We have strict protocols in place for the types of antibiotics that can be given to those animals when administered – find out more within our antibiotic policy below. We work with industry experts to support our policy development, engage with industry colleagues to share best practice and most importantly work within our Farming Groups to deliver great quality products. Our supply chains are focusing on the collation of antibiotic usage data for all livestock and aquaculture and have active plans as part of our approach to responsible antibiotic use across all livestock species.

Industry Background

Co-op is a member of [RUMA \(Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance\)](#) through the British Retail Consortium (BRC) which brings together participants in the food supply chain. RUMA was established in November 1997 to promote the highest standards of food safety, animal health and animal welfare in the British livestock industry.

In response to the [O'Neill Review on Antimicrobial resistance published in May 2016](#), Defra committed to work collaboratively with vets and the agriculture industry to agree tailored sector specific antibiotic usage reduction targets by the end of 2017.

The [Veterinary Antibiotic Resistance and Sales Surveillance \(VARSS\) Report 2016](#) outlined the Government's commitment to reduce use of antibiotics in livestock and fish farmed for food to a multi-species average of 50mg/kg by 2018. This target was set out in response to the O'Neill. The 2016 VARSS report highlights how the UK Agriculture Industry needs to work to reduce its antibiotic usage, to aid the overall global initiative to decrease the use of antibiotics to reduce the risk of emergence of antimicrobial resistant bacteria. The average UK sales levels recorded in livestock was at 45 mg/kg PCU (population correction unit) in 2016, compared with 62 mg/kg PCU in 2014 and 57 mg/kg PCU in 2015.

Co-op strives to achieve the outputs from [The Targets Task Force](#) formed in 2016 with the specific aim of delivering on the Government objective of identifying sector-specific targets for the reduction, refinement and replacement of antibiotics in food-producing animals. Co-op supports the approach of working on a coordinated and integrated way to share best practice in this area in a pre-competitive manner. The [Targets Task Force updated report](#) in 2018 showed what progress has been made, with further updates found [here](#). Co-op, in line with RUMA guidelines, and working in conjunction with its suppliers, farmers and industry experts have developed programmes and policies to reduce the total use of antibiotics across its supply chains, whilst keeping animal welfare at the forefront of any decisions.

Co-op is also part of the [Food Industry initiative on Antimicrobials](#) (FIIA) which is made up of retailers, manufacturers, processors and food service companies. The aim of the group is to ensure that work is aligned, and duplication of effort is avoided in relation to antimicrobials it also links into the work done by RUMA by supporting the targets and agreeing with their guiding principles. As part of FIIA we have developed a policy that sets out a categorisation of antibiotics and the stewardship advice attached to the use of active ingredients. We also are working towards reduction of antibiotic usage without compromising standards of animal welfare, this will initially be directed at product produced in the UK but is intended to eventually encompass all food sold in the UK.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Our Approach

Our Antibiotics Strategy, in line with the industry approach, is based on the '3Rs' framework (originally devised for controlling the use of animals in research) to **Reduce, Replace and Refine** the use of medicines. This involves:

- Reducing the annual usage of antimicrobial agents in animal agriculture, per unit of livestock at the time of treatment (PCUs), whilst preserving animal health and welfare;
- Replacing the use of antimicrobial agents in animal agriculture where possible with evidence-based and sustainable solutions to prevent diseases and protect animal health and welfare (vaccines, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices, novel technologies); and
- Refining the administration of medicines by ensuring the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication for treatment.

The 3 R's - The Co-op Way

Reduce	→ Replace	→ Refine
Implement The Co-op has adopted the EMA classification and therefore advise that the fluoroquinolones, 3rd and higher generation cephalosporins and colistin are the 'critically important antimicrobials' (CIAs) and will prohibit use of these within our supply chain, unless used as a treatment of last resort where usage can be supported by relevant diagnostic tests, to protect animal welfare. Co-op must be informed of the usage of CIAs via the supplier.	Driving improvements in the health and resilience of livestock and aquaculture species is vital for preventing disease, and can replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives. The Co-op will continue to support our farmer groups to apply best practice in animal husbandry, nutrition, genetic selection, health planning and preventative health care including use of vaccines in livestock and aquaculture.	All antimicrobial treatments within the Co-op supply chain will continue to be under the jurisdiction and prescription of a veterinary surgeon to ensure compliance with the correct dosing regime. Where necessary, veterinary surgeons will deploy the use of diagnostic tests to ensure the appropriate selection of antibiotics for the condition.
Ambition We currently record, measure and benchmark antibiotic usage within our Farming Groups. We aim to widen this data collection to our full supply chain. Reduce our antibiotic usage across our supply chains but also monitor welfare outcome measures to ensure welfare is never compromised.	Use no CIA's within our supply chain with a key focus on alternatives being used in conjunction with best practice on farm. Understand the link between antibiotic usage on farm and the resistance in meat consumed by the customer. Work with human health bodies such as NHS & PHE to gain this understanding.	We acknowledge the need to explore opportunities to widen our classification of CIA's to those within WHO guidelines. Antibiotics is a pre-competitive area so Co-op will continue to work with industry bodies, suppliers and producers to deliver progress against our policy.



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Policy

In line with the 3R principles guided by our independent expert Food Animal Initiative (FAI)ⁱⁱ we have taken the following approach for our antibiotics policy. Please see the Glossary of Terms for definitions.

Our position is that we care about the welfare of animals used to produce our products. For all Co-op own brand meat, dairy and fish we don't allow the use of antibiotics, unless there is a written prescription from a vet to address a specific health issue with the animal. We also don't allow the routine preventive use of antibiotics within our supply chain.

Our position

Approach	Using the '3Rs' framework (originally devised for controlling the use of animals in research) to Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of medicines This involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reducing the annual usage of antimicrobial agents in animal agriculture, per unit of livestock at the time of treatment (PCUs) whilst preserving animal health and welfare• replacing the use of antimicrobial agents in animal agriculture where possible with evidence-based and sustainable solutions to prevent diseases and protect animal health and welfare;• refining the administration of medicines by ensuring the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication for treatment
Scope	Our antibiotic usage policy is in place for our full supply chain and applies to all suppliers and farmers producing livestock and aquaculture products for Co-op's own brand range including ingredients.
Monitoring progress	Recording the usage of antibiotics within our supply chain is vital to The Co-op to allow us to monitor and report on our progress towards industry goals. Our supply chains are focusing on the collation of antibiotic usage data for all livestock and aquaculture species. We are committed to collecting data on Co-op antibiotic usage performance within our Co-op Farming Groups on a quarterly basis (dairy- biannually) and we are committed to publishing this data biannually. We will also use this data to benchmark the performance within our farming groups and against industry targets.
REDUCE	
Prophylactic Administration	Reductions in antibiotics use can be achieved by ceasing unnecessary routine treatments, including routine prophylactic treatment of farm animals. The routine prophylactic administration of antibiotics is therefore not permitted within Co-op Supply chain.
Critically Important Antibiotics	Reductions in antimicrobial use in animals will also be achieved by focusing on the usage of the antibiotics identified as 'critically important' to human health. Co-op has adopted the EMA classification and therefore advises that fluoroquinolones, 3rd and higher generation cephalosporin's and colistin are 'critically important antimicrobials' (CIAs) and will prohibit the use of these within our supply chain, unless used as a treatment of last resort where usage can be supported by relevant diagnostic tests (under veterinary advice), to protect animal welfare.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



	Co-op are keeping a watching brief of other classifications by World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Health Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) which raise additional concerns over products such as the macrolides. See Figure 1 below on classification of antibiotics.
REPLACE	
Preventative animal healthcare	<p>Driving improvements in the health and resilience of livestock and aquaculture species is vital for preventing disease and can replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives.</p> <p>The Co-op will continue to support our farmer groups to apply best practice in animal husbandry, nutrition, genetic selection, health planning and preventative health care including use of vaccines and alternative products to antibiotics in livestock and aquaculture through our Farming Group Meetings.</p>
REFINE	
Veterinary treatment and diagnostics	<p>There are circumstances in which livestock and aquaculture species require treatment with antibiotics in order to protect their health and welfare.</p> <p>The Co-op supports the responsible use of antibiotics for the metaphylactic and therapeutic treatment of animals – i.e. the treatment of animals or groups of animals that are showing clinical signs of illness.</p> <p>All antimicrobial treatments within the Co-op supply chain will continue to be under the jurisdiction and prescription of a veterinary surgeon to ensure compliance with the correct dosing regime. Where necessary, veterinary surgeons will deploy the use of diagnostic tests to ensure the appropriate selection of antibiotics for the condition.</p>

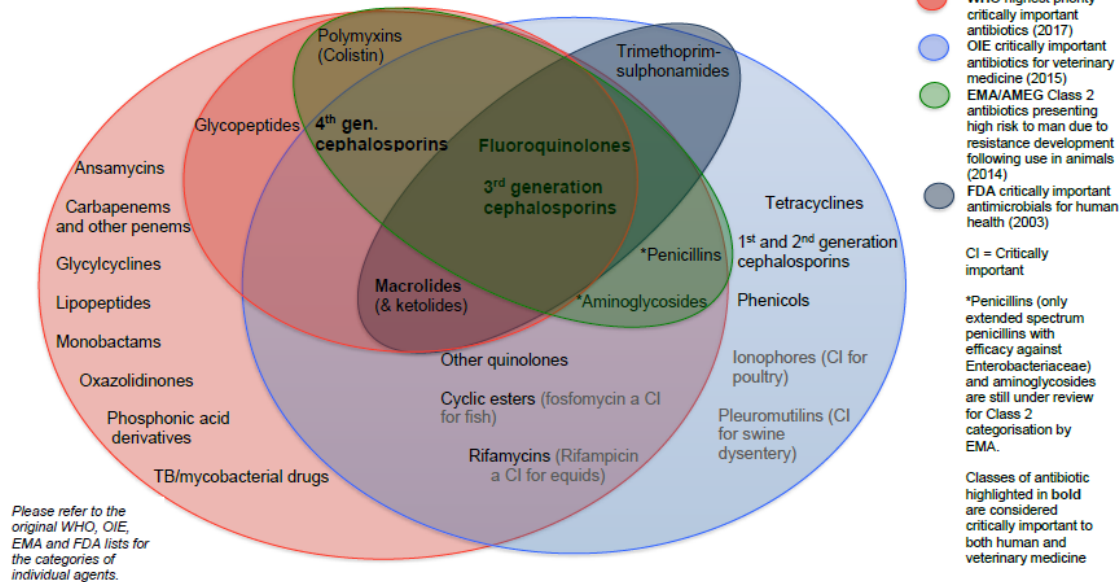
Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Classes of Antibiotics- Figure 1

Classes of antibiotics included in the WHO, OIE, EMA and FDA lists of “critically important” and “class 2” antimicrobial agents



FAI Farms Ltd © March 2018



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Engagement

Antibiotics is a pre-competitive area, so Co-op will continue to work with industry bodies, suppliers and producers to deliver progress against our policy. This is of paramount importance and therefore requires the whole sector to work together to enable change; for example, electronic data recording of antibiotic use for beef and sheep farms. We will continue to be members of RUMA and deliver against the RUMA Targets Task Force species targets. We will continue to attend and represent the industry at various sector panels, conferences and working groups such as BRC Antimicrobial working groups, RUMA Targets Task Force meetings, AHDB sector specific antimicrobial workshops and other conferences such as NFU, Innovation for Agriculture and MSD on antibiotic stewardship. We are actively working with our Farming Groups and our supply chains to engage and collaborate on ways of working that will allow us to holistically meet the RUMA Targets by the set deadlines and to improve best practice and knowledge of antimicrobial medicines across our supply chains to protect our future.

We can enable collaboration within our Farming Groups. Our Farming Groups, which were set up from 2011, include over 400 farmers of meat, poultry and dairy. These groups were set up to make it easier for farmers to collaborate, both with us and other farmers, and to also protect animal welfare as well as progressing responsible sourcing practices such as antibiotic usage.

Customer Research

We regularly undertake customer research to understand the needs of our customers. We are eager to understand their expectations of the Co-op Brand, areas of concern to them and how we can address their needs. In the last year we have carried out research into a number of food challenges. One of these is the subject of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and its relationship to food and farming. We found out that people are aware of the issue of antibiotic resistance in humans, in fact 49% of those surveyed were aware, in the over 55's.

This was mainly associated with overuse of antibiotics amongst the human population and that this overuse can result in resistance to diseases and infections. In fact, there was recognition that overuse is reducing the efficacy of antibiotics in treating illnesses. The results from our customer research also showed that 70% of those aware of the issue in humans had an awareness of the issue within farming. However, this was coupled with an increased confusion of associated issues such as impacts on growth, quality and contaminants. This demonstrates that this is a complex issue and the need for engagement with customers on responsible use of antibiotics within our supply chain is paramount to disperse incorrect associations and understanding. Although there is limited awareness of AMR, when customers were asked about it in relation to other food production and industry challenges, its importance ranked similar to that of animal welfare and food fraud.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Co-op Programme of Activity for each species

Species	Action Plan for the Co-op Supply Chain			Key Challenges Identified and current Co-op R&D projects
	Reduce	Replace	Refine	
Dairy cattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the collection of robust veterinary sales data across liquid milk supply for tracking against the RUMA targets, and biannual feedback/action planning to reduce usage with farm vets Implementation of selective dry cow therapy across Co-op Dairy Farming Group Work with our Dairy Farming Groups to identify and discontinue any routine prophylactic treatments Support our farmers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics Support our farmers in discontinuing the use of antibiotic footbaths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of proactive herd health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, use of teat sealants, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices, use of anti-inflammatories and novel technologies Use herd health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent conditions such as mastitis, lameness, pneumonia and metritis; and control or where possible eliminate endemic infectious diseases such as BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea), Johne's, IBR (Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis), Leptospirosis, Neospora and BTB (Bovine Tuberculosis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication for treatment, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. Support the training of staff involved in animal care in the correct storage, handling, administration and disposal of veterinary products 	<p>Industry Challenge: The key challenge is the lack of a dairy industry-wide system for collecting antibiotic usage data. A further challenge is to review the antibiotics being used in the management of dry cows and foot health and pneumonia and the treatment of respiratory disease in young stock.</p> <p>Co-op response: Co-op are working with a key supplier to collect veterinary antibiotic sales data as an indicator of farm-level use. The levels reported by this method are likely to be an overestimated usage figure. The Co-op Dairy Farming Group also has a BVD eradication programme in place to contribute to the reduction of antibiotic usage.</p>

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Beef cattle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of robust usage data from our Co-op Beef Farming Groups for tracking against the RUMA Task Force targets • Work with our Co-op Beef Farming Groups to identify and discontinue routine prophylactic treatments e.g. calf treatments • Support our farmers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of proactive herd health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices, use of anti-inflammatories and novel technologies • Use herd health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent diseases such as lameness and calf pneumonia, and control and, where possible, eliminate endemic infectious diseases such as BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea), Johne's, IBR (Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis), Leptospirosis, Neospora and bTB (Bovine Tuberculosis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. • Support the training of staff involved in animal care in the correct storage, handling, administration and disposal of veterinary products. 	<p>Industry Challenge: The key challenge is the lack of a beef industry-wide system for collecting antibiotic usage data due to the fragmented nature of the beef industry. The beef industry in the UK is made up of suckler beef farms; calf rearing farms and finishing farms. Each type of farm will have its own disease challenges. The main reasons for using antibiotics in beef animals are: respiratory disease, calving problems and calf illness, lameness and calf respiratory diseases.</p> <p>Co-op response: Co-op are funding a Herd Health Project with a key supplier which is focused on demonstrating the benefits of Proactive Herd Health Planning. The farms involved in the project have had 6 monthly vet visits to discuss and amend the herd health plan.</p>
--------------------	---	--	---	---

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Lamb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of robust usage data from our Lamb Farming Groups for tracking against the RUMA Task Force targets • Work with our Lamb Farming Groups to identify and discontinue routine prophylactic treatments e.g. watery mouth in lambs • Support our farmers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of proactive flock health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices, use of anti-inflammatories and novel technologies • Use flock health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent infectious diseases such as lameness, enzootic abortion, watery mouth and pneumonia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. • Support the training of staff involved in animal care in the correct storage, handling, administration and disposal of veterinary products. 	<p>Industry Challenge: The key challenge is the lack of a sheep industry-wide system for collecting antibiotic usage data due to the fragmented nature of the sheep industry. The major disease challenges for the sheep industry are lameness; enzootic abortion and neonatal disease.</p> <p>Co-op response: The collation of accurate data throughout animal life is a challenge. We are working with our British Lamb Group on this data collection and ensuring we have accurate and robust usage figures. These farmers joined as forward-thinking members of the industry who use data to drive their businesses.</p>
-------------	---	---	---	--

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Pigs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of robust usage data across all supply through the EMedicine book, for tracking against the RUMA Task Force targets Work with our Pork Farming Group to identify and discontinue in-feed medication and routine prophylactic treatments e.g. weaning treatments for piglets Support our farmers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of proactive herd health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, water acidification, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices and novel technologies Use herd health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent health and welfare issues such piglet mortality and tail biting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. Support the training of staff involved in animal care in the correct storage, handling, administration and disposal of veterinary products. 	<p>Industry Challenge: The key challenges in pig production are respiratory issues and neonatal/weaner pig diseases, for which preventative or therapeutic antibiotics are used.</p> <p>Co-op response: Within our Pork Group we are currently looking at addressing antibiotic usage through using an acid-based product in the water. By cleaning out water drinking systems between batches with acid we will improve the quality of water the animals consume. Therefore, by improving the quality of the water we should see an increase in performance and reduce health risks to the pigs.</p>
-------------	---	---	---	---

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Chicken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of robust usage data across all supply for tracking against the RUMA targets Support our poultry supplier in ceasing use of routine prophylactic treatments such as chick treatments, and use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of proactive flock health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, use of probiotics/competitive exclusion products in the hatchery, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices and novel technologies Use flock health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent issues with implications for bird health and welfare such as Campylobacter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. 	<p>Industry Challenge: The poultry sector currently reports relatively low antibiotic usage and the focus must remain on continuous monitoring of usage levels and the tracking of health and welfare outcomes such as mortality to allow protection of animal health and welfare.</p> <p>Co-op response: Co-op have funded a Seed, Feed and Weed Project within our Chicken Farming Group which is detailed in a case study below. The project seeks to improve gut development which should benefit feed absorption and improve gut microflora; improving bird immunity and performance to support the reduction of antibiotics throughout life.</p>
----------------	---	--	--	--

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of robust usage data across all supply for tracking against the RUMA targets • Work with our Turkey Farming Groups to identify and discontinue routine prophylactic treatments • Support our suppliers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of proactive flock health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices and novel technologies • Use flock health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent issues with implications for bird health and medicine use such as ORT, colibacillosis and Blackhead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. 	<p>Industry Challenge: The key challenge in turkeys is infectious disease outbreaks such as Avian Influenza. The other key challenge is enteric issues as turkeys are more susceptible to these issues than other poultry, and the use of critically important antibiotics. There are fewer licensed antibiotic products available for use in turkeys that are effective in treating these infections.</p> <p>Co-op response: Co-op routinely collects antibiotic usage data from its fresh turkey supplier.</p>
---------------	--	---	--	--

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Laying hens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of robust usage data from the supply chain using the Lion Code reporting system for tracking against the RUMA targets • Support our suppliers in ceasing use of routine prophylactic treatments • Support our suppliers in discontinuing the use of critically important antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of proactive flock health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as vaccines, use of probiotics, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices and novel technologies • Use flock health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent issues with implications for bird health and welfare. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. 	<p>Industry challenge: The Laying hen sector currently reports low antibiotic usage however the focus for the industry remains on continuous and robust monitoring and detailed data analysis. The identification of alternative therapeutic and management techniques to combat common health challenges will aid egg producers to further reduce the need for AB treatment.</p> <p>Co-op response: The Co-op have funded a R&D project with its egg supplier to look at perch design and the effect of perch design on keel bone damage. We routinely collect antibiotics usage data from our Egg Farming Group.</p>
--------------------	---	--	--	--

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Salmon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of robust usage data from the supply chain using an electronic medicine book for tracking against the RUMA targets Support our suppliers in ceasing use of critically important antibiotics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement proactive health planning to replace antibiotic use with sustainable alternatives such as biological control of sea lice, vaccines, biosecurity policies, improved husbandry practices and novel technologies Use health planning and medicine records to identify and control prevalent issues with implications for fish health and medicine use such as sea lice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with suppliers, veterinary surgeons and farmers to ensure the responsible and informed selection and correct administration of products to animals that have a clinical indication of disease, including the use of appropriate diagnostic testing. 	<p>Industry Challenge: UK farmed fish production is dominated by Atlantic Salmon production in Scotland. The key challenges facing the Scottish salmon industry are bacterial, viral and fungal infections including those causing gill disease, winter sore, PD and HSMI together with parasitic infections such as sea lice</p> <p>Co-op response: Relevant projects for Co-op to consider for the improved management of antibiotics within the salmon supply chain would be those involving the development of vaccines, biosecurity management, breeding selection (selection of strains with natural resistance to bacteria and viruses).</p>
---------------	--	---	--	---

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Future commitments and ambitions

Approach	Our Antibiotics Strategy is based on the '3Rs' framework (originally devised for controlling the use of animals in research) to Replace, Reduce and Refine the use of medicines.
Scope: Wider supply chain	Currently we record, measure and benchmark antibiotic usage within our Farming Groups. We aim to widen this data collection to our full supply chain
Antibiotic Policy Position	We remain committed to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Routine prophylactic administration of antibiotics is not permitted within Co-op Supply chain❖ Ensure animal welfare is maintained within all parts of our approach to reduce antimicrobial usage on farm❖ We will continue to look at opportunities to enhance our position and performance.
CIAs	We acknowledge the need to explore opportunities to widen our classification of CIAs to those within WHO guidelines. We will investigate opportunities by a species by species basis. We will continue within our commitments to AMR to take steps to phase out the use of all of the WHO's highest priority critically important antimicrobials, including those most relevant to animal production, including macrolides.
Monitoring Progress	We will continue to record usage on farm from our producers and benchmark the performance within our Farming Groups and against industry targets as well as widen to our full supply chain.
Transparency	We are committed to publishing Co-op performance in antibiotic usage within our supply chain biannually.
Surveillance	We will explore the opportunity to investigate the impact of antibiotic use within the environment (for example water, slurry, soil) as part of a wider surveillance project across our farming groups and work with industry and government bodies such as the Food Standards Agency (FSA) on the outputs from the surveillance of AMR bacteria at Retail.
Engagement	We will continue to work in partnership with our independent experts FAI to challenge and support our policies and work to deliver progress in antibiotic usage within our agricultural supply chain. Antibiotics is a pre-competitive area, so Co-op will continue to work with industry bodies, suppliers, farmers and other retailers to deliver progress against our policy.

Glossary of Terms

Antibiotics - Medicines used to prevent and treat bacterial infections.

Antimicrobials - Substances that kill or inhibit the growth of micro-organisms (including bacteria, parasites, viruses and fungi). However, in line with OIE and EFSA, we are limiting the term to describe antibacterial agents used for the treatment of bacterial infections. We therefore use the terms 'antimicrobials' and 'antibacterials' interchangeably, unless clearly explained otherwise.

Antibiotic / Antimicrobial resistance - Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in response to the use of these medicines, and the medicine is then no longer effective in killing or inactivating the bacteria.

Therapy / Therapeutic treatment - The treatment of an individual animal, or a group of animals showing clinical signs of a disease.

Metaphylaxis / Metaphylactic treatment - The treatment of a group of animals in which one or more of the animals, or previously 'in-contact' animals, are showing clinical signs of a disease.

Prophylaxis / Prophylactic treatment - The treatment of a healthy animal or group of animals, to prevent infection before an expected disease challenge.

References

i Russell, W.M.S. and Burch, R.L., (1959). The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique, Methuen, London. ISBN 0900767782

ii FAI (2014) Antimicrobials – who needs them? A roundtable event, chaired by FAI in partnership with Ceva. 14 May 2014, FAI, Wytham, Oxford. [online] Available from:
http://www.themeatsite.com/news/contents/AMR%20Roundtable%20Report_15July2014.pdf

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



Coop Farming and Food Pillars



Health, Welfare & Quality	Community & Engagement	Responsible Resources	Environmental Impact	People & Skills
Welfare & Quality KPI's	Attendance at producer group meetings	Antibiotic Use	Carbon Footprint	Ethical Trading
Quality & Consistency	Co-op engagement and membership	Water and Electricity Use	Water pollution controls	Formal training and development
Audit Performance	Community Engagement	Soya use/alternatives	Farm waste management	Apprenticeships
Research & Development	Hosting of producer group farm visits	Local sourcing of materials	Farming efficiency	Industry schemes