



Co-op Animal Welfare Standards & Performance and Antibiotics Report



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

A Better Way of Doing Business for You and Your Community



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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 and have continued to do so since then.

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

In 2023, we announced at our AGM that we would reduce the stocking density of the chickens within our supply chain by the end of 2024. This move will allow 20% more space in sheds on farm. We continue to explore how to improve welfare within our chicken supply chains. Particularly how a change of breed would impact the cost of chicken to our customers as well as the environmental impact of such a move, ensuring we are able to meet our carbon reduction commitments.

The Co-op is committed to promoting and supporting animal welfare by recognising and acknowledging animals including fish and crustaceans as sentient beings, we understand that animals have the capacity to experience pain, pleasure, and emotions. When we are developing and reviewing our standards and policies, we consult many different [experts](#) in this area and recognise and use the [Farm Animal Welfare Committee's](#) Five Freedoms as a reference document for guidance to promote positive welfare states for all animals in our supply chains.

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 the appropriate company of the animal's own kind.
- Freedom from fear and distress, by ensuring conditions and treatment, which avoid mental suffering.

Sustainable Diets

To find out how the Co-op is helping our customers have a more balanced diet such as eating more [fruit & veg](#) and reducing consumption of products high in fat, sugar, salt and protein through the products that we sell then please read our [Health & Wellbeing report](#). You can also read about how we have scored as part of the Plating Up Progress project [here](#).

How are we committed to animal welfare?

The scope of our animal welfare policy is universal to all products produced under our own brand label irrespective of tier, geography, or species. Data reported within this report covers goods sold under the Co-op own label banner, Co-op own label protein product sales represent 81% of all Co-op sales in the fresh, frozen, and chilled categories, this means that branded sales only account for 19% of our protein sales, 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.

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We actively support and promote higher welfare standards for farm animals, ensuring they have access to spacious and enriched environments, appropriate veterinary care, and are free from unnecessary suffering through the support of animal welfare 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. When reporting on KPIs we ensure that they are in line with the requirements set out in the assurance schemes we require our farmers to adhere to.

To give our customers the choice of higher animal welfare products, our Irresistible and Pioneer bacon, ham, sausage, pork, chicken and Irresistible salmon are 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](#).

In addition to these accreditation schemes, we have a set of Co-op animal welfare standards that cover beef, lamb, game, pork, continental 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 the Terms and Conditions by clicking [here](#).

The Co-op has invested in a dedicated Farming & Fisheries team, who are agricultural and seafood specialists with a passion for British farming, and responsible sourcing with experience in the food industry. The daily management and implementation of our welfare policy are the responsibilities of our Farming & Fisheries team who allow us to support more than 3,000 UK farms and suppliers as well as working with our global supply base. The Farming & Fisheries team is part of the Co-op's Sustainability Team, which also covers the Co-op's work on Climate Change, Fairtrade, Deforestation, and Worker Welfare including Ethical and Human Rights. By being part of a larger team, we can have positive conversations within our business and with our supply base. We have recently been recognised for our sustainability work by being awarded the [Queens' Award for Enterprise](#) which celebrates our excellence in sustainability. Our Exec is ultimately accountable for the entire sustainability program, which encompasses livestock, all farmed and wild-caught seafood, including decapod crustaceans. To find out more about the Co-ops work in sustainability we publish different reports that cover a wide range of topics and areas, it is within these reports that we discuss our animal protein reduction plans as a business and what that means to us as a Co-op:

- [Co-operate: It's What We Do](#)
- [The Future of Food](#)
- [Co-op Climate Plan](#)

The Co-op has a well-defined process in place to address internal changes that could impact various important areas, such as Animal Welfare, Climate Change, Fairtrade, Deforestation, and Worker Welfare, which also includes considerations for Ethical and Human Rights. This process involves several key steps to ensure responsible decision-making.

First, any proposed changes that fall within these categories go through a thorough approval process within the Co-op. These proposals are presented to specific steering groups for their consideration and approval. These steering groups consist of relevant experts and stakeholders who can assess the potential impact of the proposed changes on the business.

This approach ensures that decisions are not made in isolation or without comprehensive evaluation. Instead, they require endorsement and approval from the relevant leadership groups before being finalised by the Exec and the board members of the Co-op. This collaborative approach guarantees that decisions are well-informed and align with the Co-op's values and commitments.

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Additionally, Co-op encourages active participation from its members in shaping the company's policies. Members have the opportunity to submit motions at the annual AGM (Annual General Meeting). These motions can cover a range of topics, in the 2023 AGM a motion was raised to adopt specific components of the [Better Chicken Commitment](#). Once submitted by the members, this motion was further discussed and deliberated upon by the Executive Board and they agreed to implement a reduced stock density for our own brand chicken products.

Compliance with the welfare policy requirements is incorporated into our terms of agreement with suppliers, which includes both wild and farmed decapod crustaceans. This compliance is reviewed through our Farming & Fisheries Team, who work with suppliers to ensure that all sources maintain accredited to an approved assurance scheme.

We have undergone significant changes in our approach to our farming groups by transitioning to a comprehensive supply chain data model instead of relying on a limited selection of farmers. Our initial Farming Groups which were established in 2011, typically comprised around 400 meat, poultry, egg, salmon, and dairy producers. These groups were originally created to facilitate collaboration among farmers, aiming to promote best practices in animal welfare, responsible sourcing, and to foster stronger relationships within our supply chains.

In response to the evolving landscape of our business, we have re-evaluated our engagement with farmers. This has led us to the decision to adapt our farming groups and adopt a different approach. Rather than gathering data from a restricted pool of farmers, we have shifted to obtaining regular, comprehensive supply chain data from all our key protein suppliers. In this new approach, we will still collaborate closely with a select group of farmers within each sector who will take on the role of advocates. These farmers will have the opportunity to be part of our farming committee, participating in regular meetings to address sector-specific issues and serve as representatives for their respective sectors. This change is part of our commitment to enhancing our relationships with our farming partners and maintaining a high standard of ethical and responsible practices in our supply chains. We still encourage our farms to incorporate our '[Five Farming Pillars](#)' into their farming practices and we will still assess a selection of farmers that feed into our supply chain every year by an independent auditing body.

These pillars cover:

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

We will still hold regular meetings to discuss issues affecting them, allowing them to share ideas and best practices, and drive improvements in animal welfare. The Co-op's dedicated Farming & Fisheries team will continue to visit farms when possible, throughout the year, as well as taking part in broader team visits to abattoirs, factories, and processing sites.

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](#).

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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 label brand product range. In response to customer opinion, we developed the most stringent 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 Policy – General Policies

All our policy commitments, and all our reporting, unless explicitly stated otherwise, apply to 100% of our own-label supply chains (fresh, frozen, ingredient) irrespective of geographic location. These include all UK supply, and our authentic continental pig meat sourced from Europe and our international supply of fish.

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 the traceability of animals that are offspring of cloned animals. Therefore, we do not permit any animal to be supplied to The Co-op from cloned or genetically modified animals or any progeny of cloned animals in any of our supply chains.

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 the use of animal testing for toiletries and household goods remains a concern for the overwhelming majority. In response to customer opinion, we developed the most stringent 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 is 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 an 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.

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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.

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. As we use these assurance schemes for all our own sourced brand products it means we do not permit specific production and confinement systems as these do not meet our livestock standards; these include sow stall¹ and tether systems, battery hens, force-feeding of geese and ducks for foie-gras, live plucking of any poultry or bird, and rearing of calves for white veal. As these production methods do not meet our standards, we will not sell products such as foie gras, meat from birds reared for foie gras or products from any animals that have been force fed.

Genetic Engineering

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

Growth Promoters

The use of growth promoters and artificial substances specifically to promote abnormal muscle growth. Is strictly prohibited – they have been banned from use in the European Union since 2006 and therefore it is also banned in all own-brand meat, fish, and poultry products.

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 that supply our own-brand products are required to work to the standards laid down by Co-op's 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 this is all stunned prior to slaughter.

¹ This covers UK production, we are currently working with our continental meat supplier to extend this commitment to our European supply chain.

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Mutilation

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 controlled by Assured Food Standards, which allows meat to display the Red Tractor Logo (or equivalent) as a minimum. All fish both wild and farmed including decapods sold under the Co-op brand are sourced from certified or Fishery Improvement Project sources and must adhere to the standards set out in these accredited schemes. The rules set out by RSPCA Assured must also be adhered to, to allow the use of the logo. We do not permit the routine mutilations of farm animals, fin clipping in our finfish or other seafood (including decapod crustaceans) it would only be allowed under derogation from the relevant assurance body and with veterinary approval that there is an animal welfare issue that requires this action. We are aware that eyestalk ablation has been a common practice in the warm water prawn supply chain. However, we are proud to announce that Co-op has successfully eliminated this practice from our supply chain. As of now, our prawn supply chain is 100% eye stalk ablation-free. This achievement reflects our ongoing commitment to ethical sourcing and animal welfare. 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.

Travelling/Transport

We ensure our supply base keeps 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, except for our RSPCA Assured supply of chicken which must be under 4 hours. Within our standards and third part certification we have key targets in place for all species. The data shown below in the species-specific sections is reviewed through monthly data collection from our supply chain, which is uploaded onto our animal welfare platform.

Welfare Data 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, and we will 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-operate \(CSR\) 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 practices.
- Working with the industry and our suppliers to improve animal welfare through improved legislation and regulations to protect animals from cruelty and exploitation
- Collect relevant data to allow us to review our supply chains.

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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 Kite Consulting, Promar, and AB-Agri to engage with our farmers. We also engage with academies & schools, attend industry events, and workshops in animal welfare, and engage with welfare organisations such as RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming, Business Benchmark For Animal Welfare, and Crustacean Compassion. 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](https://twitter.com/coopagrimatters).

We work with our suppliers and farmers to ensure animal in our supply chain are treated ethically and with respect, we also have a welfare improvement plan for each species in place, these are 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 sector, 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 products to display the Red Tractor Logo (or equivalent) as a minimum.

All farms that provide primary proteins such as Beef, Lamb, Milk, Chicken, Eggs, Pork, Turkey, and Salmon within our supply chains are registered on our farming platform. Data are collected monthly or quarterly for health & welfare KPIs for input, outcome, and quality measures. The Farming & Fisheries team analyses this data, taking any necessary actions, and communicates performance to the business.

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 it 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 works closely with the Policy and Social Goals teams as they cover a wider area within our business, we also draw from a broad base of internal and external stakeholders such as [Kite Consulting](#) and [AB Agri](#) are able to offer advice and give real world examples to our farmers. 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 farming groups. The collaboration between all these teams is seen in our [Future Of Food](#) reporting, we have also engaged with charities like [The Food Foundation](#) who we have worked closely on the Peas Please project where we have signed up to help increase vegetable consumption across the UK.

Our biggest piece of work on transforming the global supply chain has been with WWF on the report: [What's in store for the planet](#)

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At Co-op, we have developed an internal risk assessment process to ensure all our fish and aquaculture are 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 products being launched into our business. At critical stages of this process adherence to the Co-op's strict sourcing criteria in particular animal welfare, origin, and 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, through these policies and our ongoing commitment to animal welfare and by doing so Co-op is setting a positive example and making a meaningful impact on the lives of animals.

Animal Welfare Policy – Species Specific Welfare

Beef

All our fresh own-brand Fresh & Frozen beef is British in all our Co-op branded products and when included as an ingredient. In 2022 for our own label fresh protein, we used around 58,000 cattle. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a beef animal and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of the on-pack weight. The Co-op own label fresh beef products makes up 92% of our supply chain with branded lines being 8%. Based on our calculations this would equate to only 450 cattle being used, our estimation is that these cattle will also be from British & Northern Ireland sources.



We work with beef & lamb farmers from across Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England. The beef & lamb group was formed in 2013 and reviewed in 2023. The group meets regularly throughout the year to discuss a range of topics with a particular focus on animal welfare, environmental impact, and farm efficiency. Meeting with our farmers regularly enables us 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. Farming group members work with the Co-op Agricultural Pillar Model and submit welfare KPIs every quarter directly to our online KPI platform.

Through our knowledge exchange activity, we provide regular updates to the members on what is expected from them to meet the Co-op pillars.

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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.

As our beef is 100% British and sourced to Red Tractor Standards this means we do not allow:

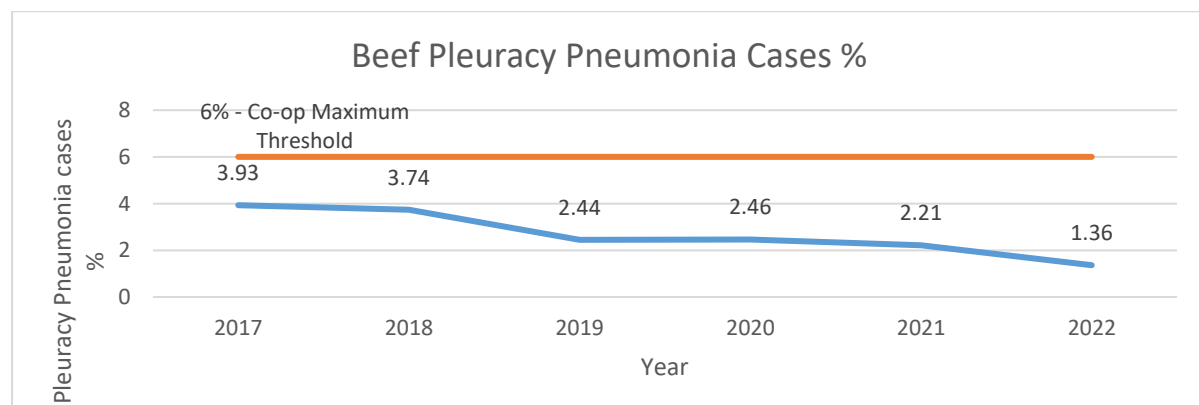
- Tethering of any cattle,
- Hormones or antibiotics as growth promoters
- Dehorning cattle without anaesthetic
- Hot Branding

The farm standards ensure:

- Anyone working on certified farm must be trained and demonstrably competent to carry out their role
- All cattle have a UK passport and receive 2 tags within 20 days of their birth to maintain traceability safe, comfortable, and hygienic housing must be available for all animals
- Cattle must have sufficiently sized housing and be kept in appropriate groups
- Cattle being kept outdoors must have access to shelter and a dry lying area
- The animals must receive a full, healthy diet
- The health and welfare of the animals must be proactively managed
- Every certified farm must have a farm biosecurity policy to help prevent the spread of disease and protect food safety and animal health
- The health and welfare of livestock must also be well managed during transportation

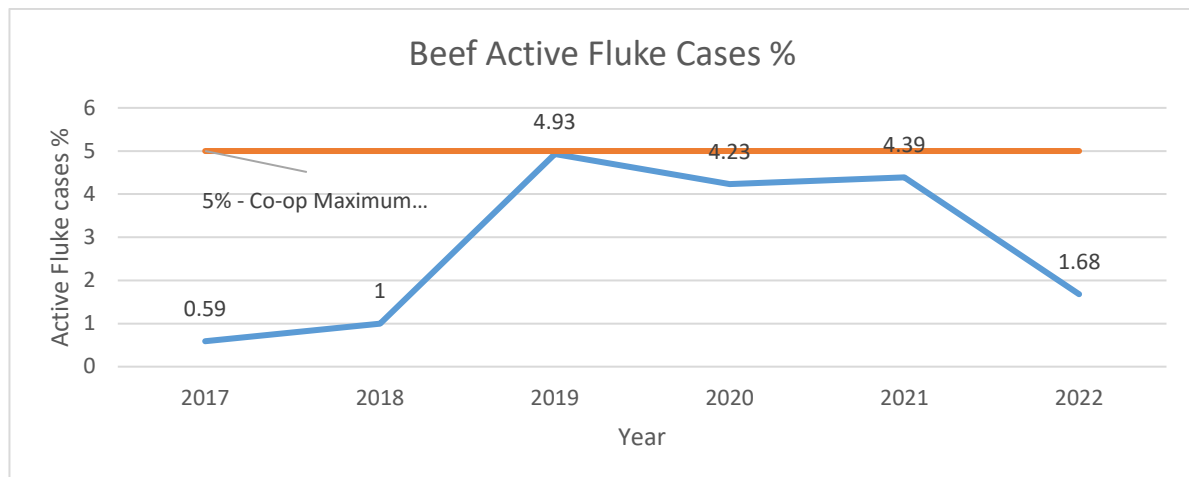
Beef Welfare Data

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 is assessed in the liver. We have seen a slight fall in the number of active fluke cases and a levelling of pneumonia cases, both are attributed to weather conditions. We encourage farmers to act upon this based on feedback they receive on cases from the abattoir.



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Confinement

100% of our beef cattle are free from confinement in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient, because we are 100% British, we have no global beef supply.

Grazing

100% of our beef cattle sourced in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient. The mainstay of British beef is grass-based production and grass makes up the majority of an animal's diet over its lifetime. We continuously look at ways to improve the quality of beef even further and work with many farmers across all four nations of the UK. A particular focus of ours is looking at how farmers manage their pastures for both the animal and the environment and because we are 100% British, we have no global beef supply.

Pre-stunning and Ineffectively stunning

Co-op's beef in all own label products is 100% British sourced, therefore, in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor Assurance and the Humane Slaughter Association regulations it is required that pre stunned before slaughter and in 2023 Ineffective stuns made up 0.170% of all cattle processed in our British supply. As we are 100% British, we have no global beef supply chain on all our own label products.

Environmental Enrichment

Co-op's beef in all own label products is 100% British, the best form of species-specific environmental enrichment is grazing which we encourage all our farmers to do as discussed above. Cows are herd animals so keeping the cattle together in groups allows them to express natural behaviours. We also encourage our farmers to install cow brushes for additional enrichment, because we are 100% British, we have no global beef supply.

Mutilation

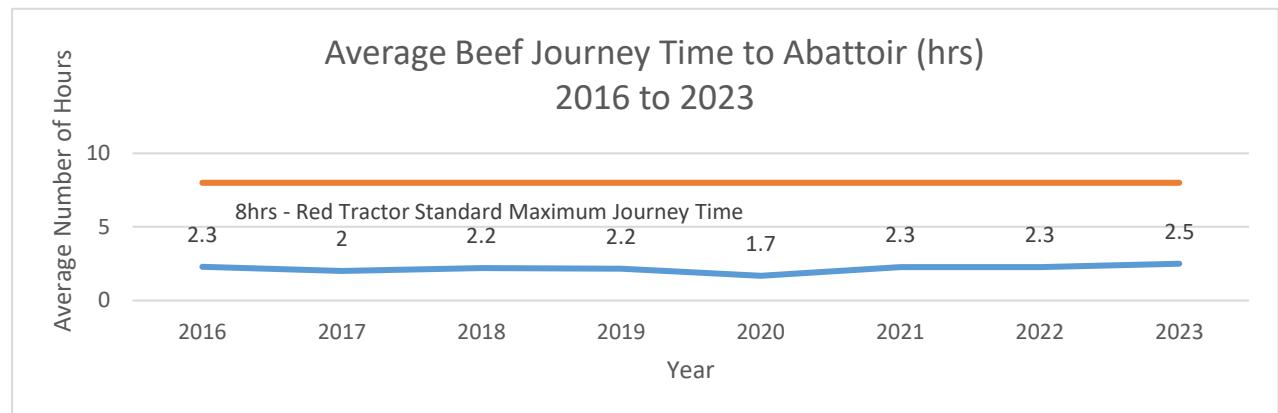
100% cows in our own brand products are free from tail docking, where animals are disbudded, appropriate analgesics are given and because we are 100% British, we have no global beef supply. We source from [Red Tractor](#) assured farms which has clear rules and guidance that govern livestock husbandry procedures such as castration, disbudding and dehorning.

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Beef Transport Times



Co-op's fresh and frozen beef is 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations and as per the Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association which we adhere to, it is transported in under 8 hours, as shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 2.17 Hours between 2016 and 2023 in our own brand products and because we are 100% British we have no global beef supply.

Chicken

At our Co-op AGM in May 2023, we announced we would take steps to improve welfare by the end of 2024. We are proud to have delivered this change for our customers and member owners early.

We will also maintain our commitment to all our chicken being 100% British sourced. Whilst we are proud of the move we have made, this move is our first step, and we aim to roll out this change on our 'added value' poultry products such as breaded chicken in the near future.



We're committed to animal welfare at Co-op and our fresh chicken welfare standards go above and beyond the Red Tractor Assurance. We are also proud to stock RSPCA Assured Free Range Chicken. We work closely with our supplying farms to ensure our strict animal welfare standards are adhered to. These close relationships are key to allowing us to deliver on our welfare commitments for our customers and member owners.

We're proud to support British farming and all our chicken is 100% British. We have maintained this commitment to supporting British farmers across the UK and will continue to do so into the future.

Whilst we're proud to have now launched our Space to Thrive chicken, we're not stopping here. We plan to launch phase two of our journey, which will see all our British chicken used in 'added value' poultry products such as breaded chicken lines also move to the Space to Thrive standards. Animal Welfare is important to Co-op customers and our member owners. That's why we're proud that our chickens are reared with care, with 20% more space in naturally lit barns from farms we know and trust. All of our Free-Range chickens have a lower stocking density (27.5kg/m² or less, this represents 2.4% of our supply chain

All our birds are free to roam around the barn throughout the day with continual access to food and water. They are also able to play with straw bales and perch on objects throughout the barn. Key welfare indicators allow us to monitor the health and wellbeing of chicken across our British supplying farms.

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We capture key welfare indicators from across a range of areas. Our supplying farmers also regularly check the birds throughout the day to ensure they are happy and healthy. We continually check temperature and ventilation in the houses and ensure that all our chickens have a balanced diet with water that is always continuously available day and night.

Our standards ensure that chickens are:

- Provided with perches and pecking objects that encourages natural behaviour such as straw bales
- Have windows in the sheds to allow natural daylight into the sheds at 50Lux, which is measures at a bird's eye level
- A balanced diet that promotes good health
Periods of darkness to allow them to rest

In 2022 for our own label fresh protein (Primary, Bread & Cooked), we used around 10,312,360 birds. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a chicken and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of the on-pack weight. The Co-op own label fresh chicken products (Primary, Bread & Cooked) make up 80% of our supply chain and makes up 95% of sales. Branded lines being 20% of our range but only 5% of sales, based on our calculations this would equate to 123,722 birds being used for branded products.

Our Free-Range chicken is sourced from farms across the South-West areas of England. All Co-op Free Range chickens are grown on RSPCA-approved farms which make up around 2.4% of our own label chicken supply. They are slower-growing breeds stocked at a lower stocking density which meets scheme standards (27.5Kg/sqm + 1sqm range). Per 1000 birds they have 1.5 standard-sized, long chopped straw bales for pecking or sitting on, 2m of perching space, and 1 pecking object; all these are provided to allow them to express their natural behaviour. Litter in the housing must be at least 5cm deep and there must be natural lighting. The birds must have access to the range for at least half their life and must consist of pasture mostly covered by living vegetation to allow them to show foraging behaviour. The range must also provide a minimum of 5% of shelter in the form of trees or shrubs and must provide dust bathing facilities in at least 2 areas with each area supporting 2,000 birds.

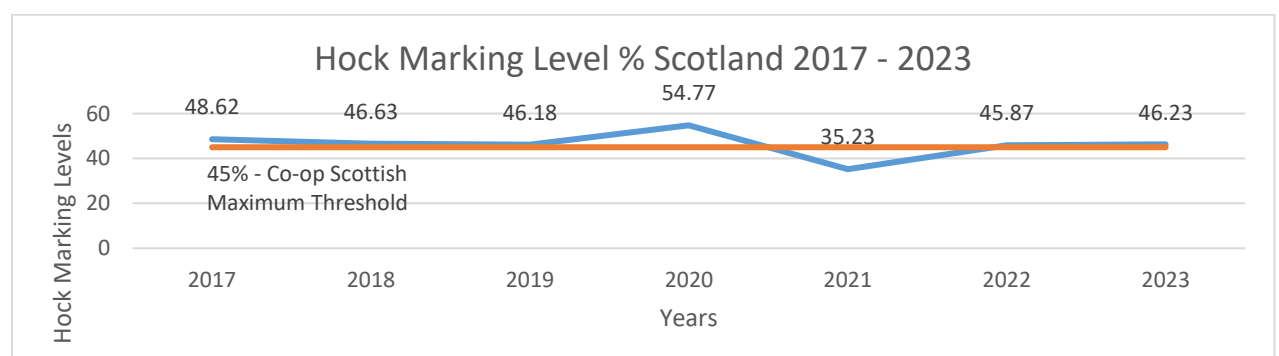
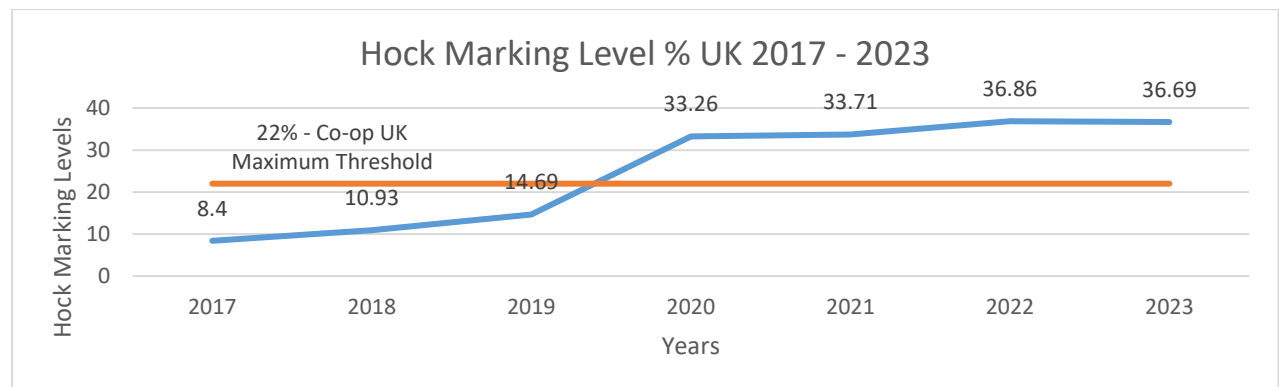
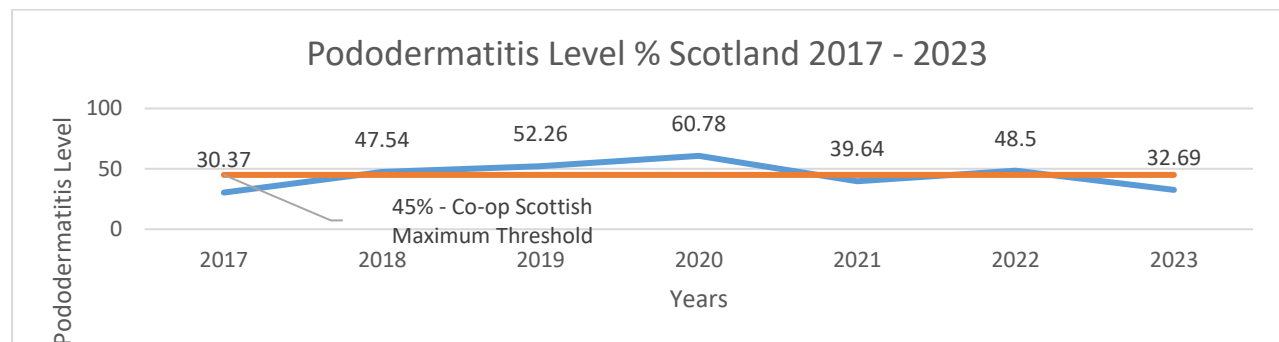
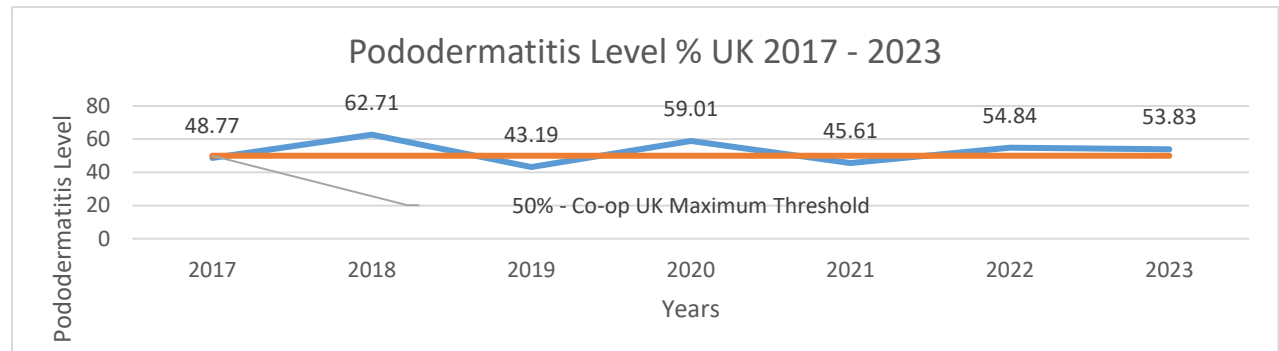
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Chicken Welfare Data

Hock marking and pododermatitis (podo) are two conditions of contact dermatitis that cause a significant challenge for the broiler industry. The development of hock marking, and footpad lesions can potentially cause discomfort for the bird. Hock marking and Pododermatitis are used as indicators for bird welfare on farms and are therefore recorded monthly.



Animal Welfare at the Co-op

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Confinement

100% of our broiler chickens are cage-free in line with the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme in all our own brand products in all fresh, frozen, chilled products and when used as an ingredient and because we are 100% British, we have no global chicken supply.

Pre-stunning and Ineffectively stunning

Co-op's chicken in all our fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient is 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor, and the Humane Slaughter Association it is pre stunned before slaughter in our own brand products. We use a Controlled Atmosphere Killing system (CAK) which kills the birds using Co2. Electric stunning is only used as an emergency backup. In 2023 this was used for less than 2 days which meant our ineffective stun was recorded at 0.2%.

Environmental Enrichment

100% of our broiler chickens in line with Red Tractor and RSPCA Assurance have access to species specific environmental enrichment which covers all our fresh, frozen, chilled and ingredients in our own brand products as we are 100% British, we have no global supply chain. Environmental enrichment covers straw bales, perches, windows, and manipulable material such as straw, hay, wood and sawdust.

2.4% of our broiler chickens are British Free Range & RSPCA Assured this means these birds have additional environmental enrichment in the form of access to outdoor range's which has trees, frames for outdoor shade and outdoor perching.

Mutilation

100% of our broiler chickens are free from beak trimming and tipping in line with the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme in all our own brand products in all fresh, frozen, chilled products and when used as an ingredient and because we are 100% British, we have no global chicken supply.

Antibiotics

Our desire is to grow birds without using antibiotics but there are times when not to treat birds would be deemed unacceptable as bird welfare would suffer. Antibiotics are only prescribed when authorised by the vet following farm visit. The use of antibiotics is monitored, and our aim is to decrease the use and stay below the RUMA (Responsible use of medicines in agriculture alliance) target for poultry of 25mg/PCU. The use of CIA's (Critical Important Antibiotics) is not allowed.

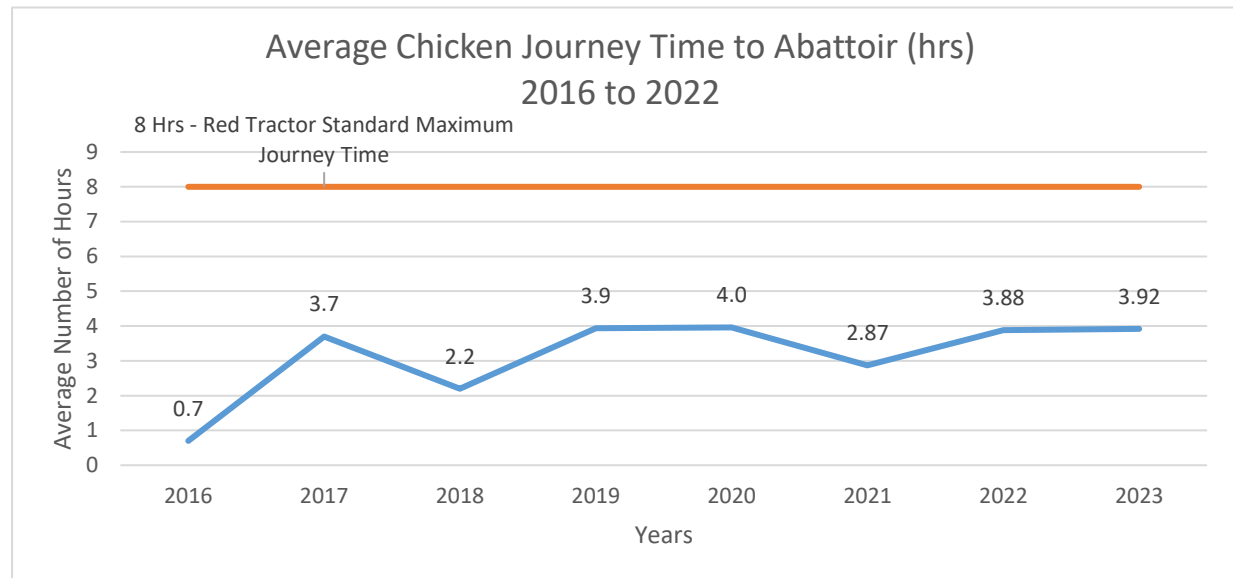
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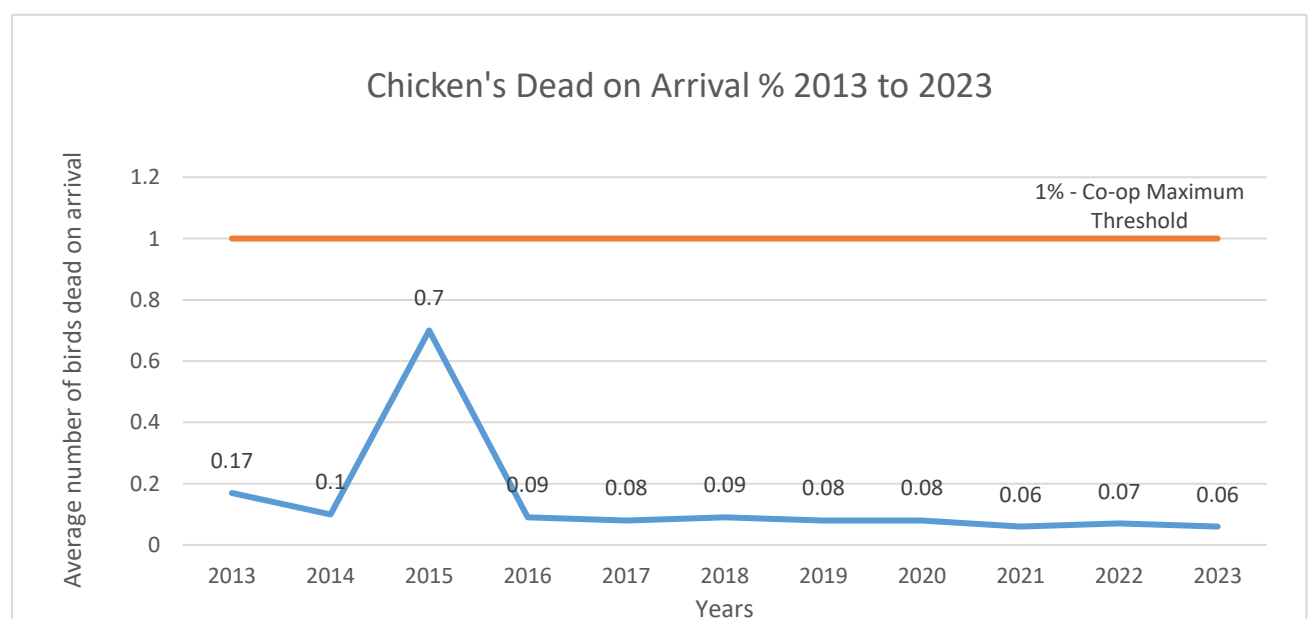


Chicken Transport Times

Co-op's chicken both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient is 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations and as per the Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association, it is transported in under 8 hours. Our Free-Range RSPCA Assured chickens are transported in under 4 hours as per the assurance schemes requirements. The journey times shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 3.14 Hours between 2016 and 2023 in our own brand products for our Red Tractor assured products.



D.O.A is a record of Dead on Arrival, this records the number of birds that have died during transport. We monitor these numbers so that we can assess the impact of live transport and ensure that stress on the animals is reduced as much as possible. In chicken this had been an area of focus for many years, and whilst we continue to monitor this, it is now at such a low level it is no longer an issue for the sector currently recording on average less than 0.14% for the past 8 years.



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Welfare Review

All our farmers are committed to providing the best welfare possible for the birds in their care. Outcome measures including welfare-related ones are monitored and discussed with senior management. The aim for Co-op and 2 Sister Food Group (2SFG) is that we show an improving trend on all outcome measures under normal conditions. 2SFG is working with the whole supply chain on various initiatives which will help support this both practically and through more proactive use of the outcome measures data.

We carry out KPI reviews bi-weekly with our suppliers and involve the farmers within our supply chain to discuss where we are seeing improvements and knowledge share success, but also create action plans where we are seeing challenges. The KPIs we collect are vital to allow us to understand what is happening within our supply chains and as part of these reviews, we also review the measurables of each KPI. Each KPI must give us data that we can action and measure success on and through the close relationship we have with our suppliers and farmers we can understand which KPIs are suitable and measurable, along with adding additional KPI's to provide more in-depth data.

Dairy

All our milk, fresh cream, and milk used for block butter, cheddar, and UK yoghurts are 100% British in Co-op own label products. In 2022, the Co-op had approximately 40,600 dairy cows producing our own label liquid milk and cream, and about 2,500 dairy cows producing branded liquid milk & cream. In calculating these figures, we used an average milk production per cow and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of on-pack weight. Co-op own label products makes up 39% of the range with 61% coming from branded products however Co-op own label products makes up 94% of sales in value. Based on our estimations the dairy cows used to provide milk for the branded lines will also be British.



Our dedicated Dairy Farming Group works with around 150 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 the 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 grazing should be subject to the advice of a vet or nutritionist and should consider the grazing and weather conditions.

All farms are required to participate in an annual Farm Assessment carried out by an Independent Auditor of 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 have mobility scores, and body condition scores for 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.

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Each regional farmer group within the Co-op Dairy Group meets on-farm three times per year to share best practices, 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. Online meetings are also now being conducted and cover ways in which to increase on farm efficiencies in order to improve carbon footprints on farm.

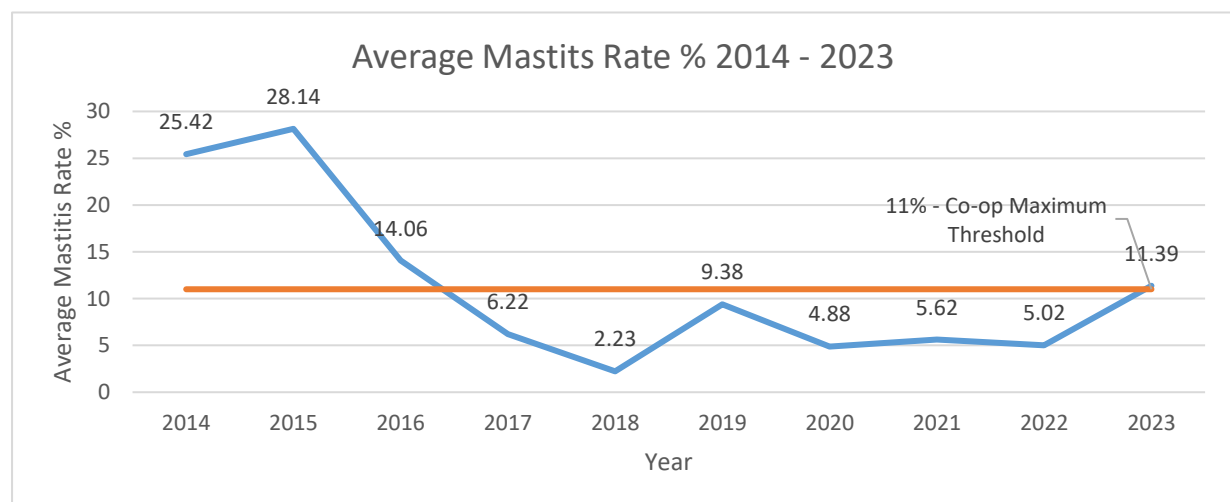
Integrated Calf Scheme

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 on our dairy farms can be retained within the Co-op supply chain. The scheme provides an outlet for all calves from dairy farms within the CDG, including continental, native, and 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. Dairy bull calves on Co-op farms now have a dedicated supply chain where all calves are reared to a strict protocol 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

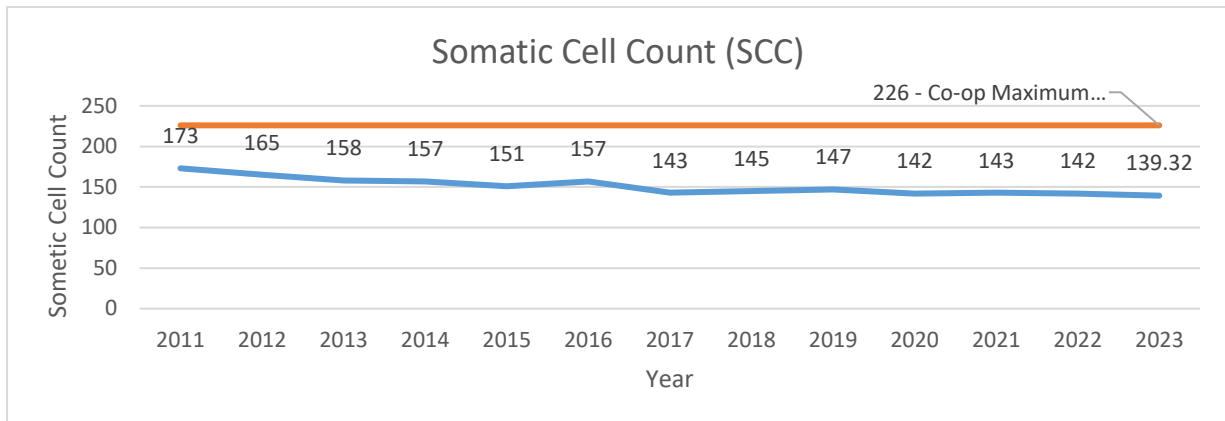
Dairy Welfare Data

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,



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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. We have seen positive improvements across SCC and mastitis within the group since the establishment in 2011. Next steps are to use the data to focus on individual members who may need further support in improving these levels, we have begun this process by offering online masterclasses on mastitis. We operate a continuous improvement model for our Co-op dairy group. Farmers are annually assessed to ensure they continuously progress their business in areas such as animal welfare and environment targets. Good progress has been made across key animal welfare areas, such as lameness, mastitis, SCC, and antibiotic usage. We have now reached a stage by using this model that the group are consistently performing well; we now want to take the opportunity to refine key areas.

Confinement

100% of the dairy cows in our own label products are free from tethering in line with the Red Tractor Dairy Standard, the Co-op is 100% British for all our milk, fresh cream, and milk used for block butter, cheddar, and UK yoghurts.

Grazing

We encourage our farmers to provide dairy cows access to pasture during the grazing season. During this period, the proportion of the milking herd which has access to pastures should have 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 consider grazing and weather conditions. The number of days and percentage of herds 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

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Environmental Enrichment

100% of the British dairy cows in our own label products have access to species-specific enrichment such as bedding that is made up of a mattress or matting including straw & hay. The Co-op supports its dairy farmers with better milk prices, which allows them to invest in their farms. Many of our farmers have added items such as cow brushes in their buildings and wider cubicle areas to improve the environment for their animals whilst indoors. Grazing is encouraged as a species-specific enrichment in our dairy group, and we track this through our KPIs in our farming groups. Dairy cows like all cattle are herd animals so all cows are kept together in herds to encourage social interactions, this is another form of species-specific enrichment.

Mutilation

100% of the dairy cows in our own label products are free from tail docking in line with the Red Tractor Dairy Standard, the Co-op is 100% British for all our milk, fresh cream, and milk used for block butter, cheddar, and UK yoghurts.

We source from [Red Tractor](#) assured farms which has clear rules and guidance that govern livestock husbandry procedures such as castration, disbudding and dehorning.

Dairy Transport Times

As Co-op is 100% British for all our milk, fresh cream, and milk used for block butter, cheddar, and UK yoghurts, as such we have no global supply chain in these sectors. Therefore, in line with UK regulations and as per the Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association which we adhere to, cull dairy cows are transported in under 8 hours

Eggs & Laying Hens

We are very proud that all our whole 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 and British to be stocked in the Co-op. In 2022, the Co-op had approximately 863,014 laying hens producing our own label shell eggs, and about 155,222 laying hens producing branded shell eggs. In calculating these figures, we used an average of eggs laid per hen and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of on-pack weight. Based on our sourcing standards the laying hens used to provide all the branded eggs will be sourced from the United Kingdom as well.

We work with our suppliers to track key performance indicators across 100% of our supply chain. This allows us to work closely with our suppliers and have a continual improvement model in place regarding welfare.

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.

We continually work with producers to improve animal welfare across the supply chain and is reviewed bi-weekly by our Farming & Fisheries team alongside our suppliers. On-farm visits are also completed by our team throughout the year.



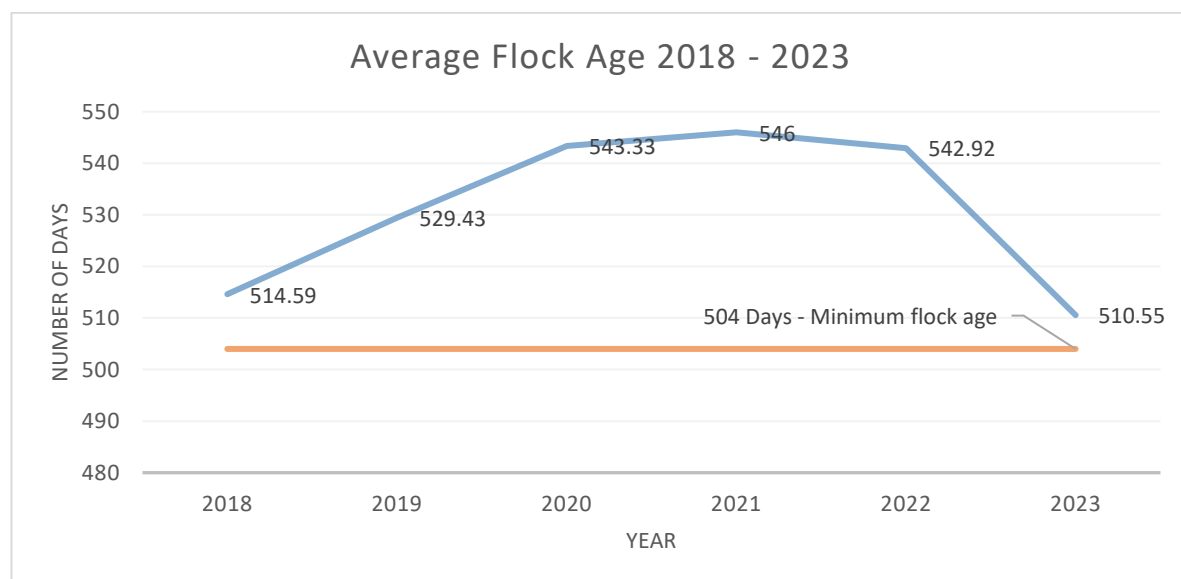
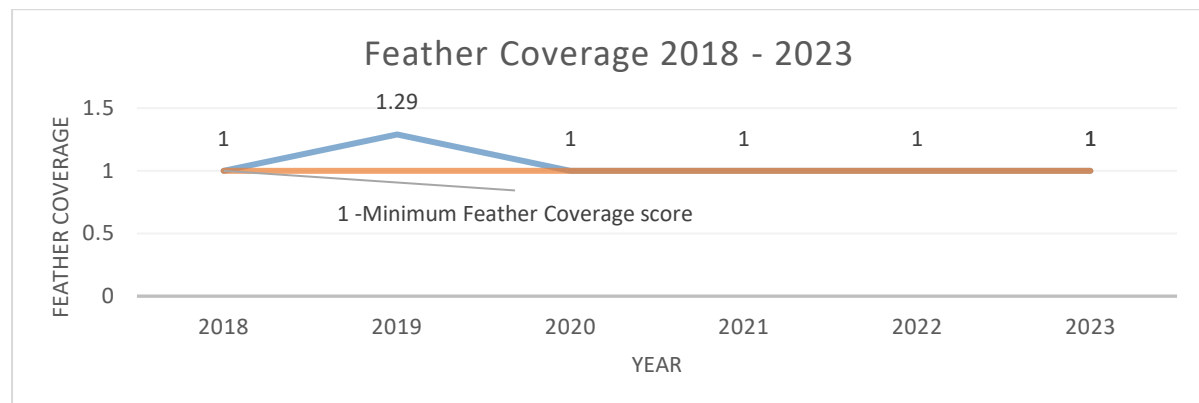
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Laying Hens Welfare Data

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. The scale for feather coverage works on a 0 – 2 rating with 0 being no feathers and 2 being completely covered. 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 a farm as well as understanding reasons for a drop in supply. Increases in average flock age mean a longer life for the birds in our supply base. Higher welfare systems allow the birds to live longer healthier more enriched lives so is a good indication of progress.



Confinement

We only source eggs from farms which are RSPCA Assured for our own label and branded lines, this covers 100% of our supply chain as well as ingredients when used in our own brand product, so all laying hens have access to outdoor ranges and have stocking densities that must not exceed 38kg/m².

Pre-stunning and Ineffectively stunning

Since 2015 100% of our birds have been subject to pre-slaughter stunning. No birds within our supply chain are subject to repeat or backup stunning, as 100% of the birds are stunned as part of the process of using either single or multi-phase-controlled atmosphere gassing systems. This covers 100% of our supply chain as we cover our own label and branded shell eggs with our free range, [RSPCA Assured](#) requirements.

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Environmental Enrichment

100% of Laying Hens have access to species-specific environmental enrichment in our own brand and branded shell eggs supply, this covers straw bales, perches, and manipulable material such as straw, hay, wood, and sawdust. As we are 100% Free Range, laying hens also have access to the outdoor range which has trees, frames for outdoor shade, and outdoor perching, our shell egg supply chain is completely British and as such we have no global supply chain.

Mutilations

100% of Laying Hens in Free Range Eggs including branded are not beak tipped after the age of 24 hours, this covers 96.57% of our supply chain.

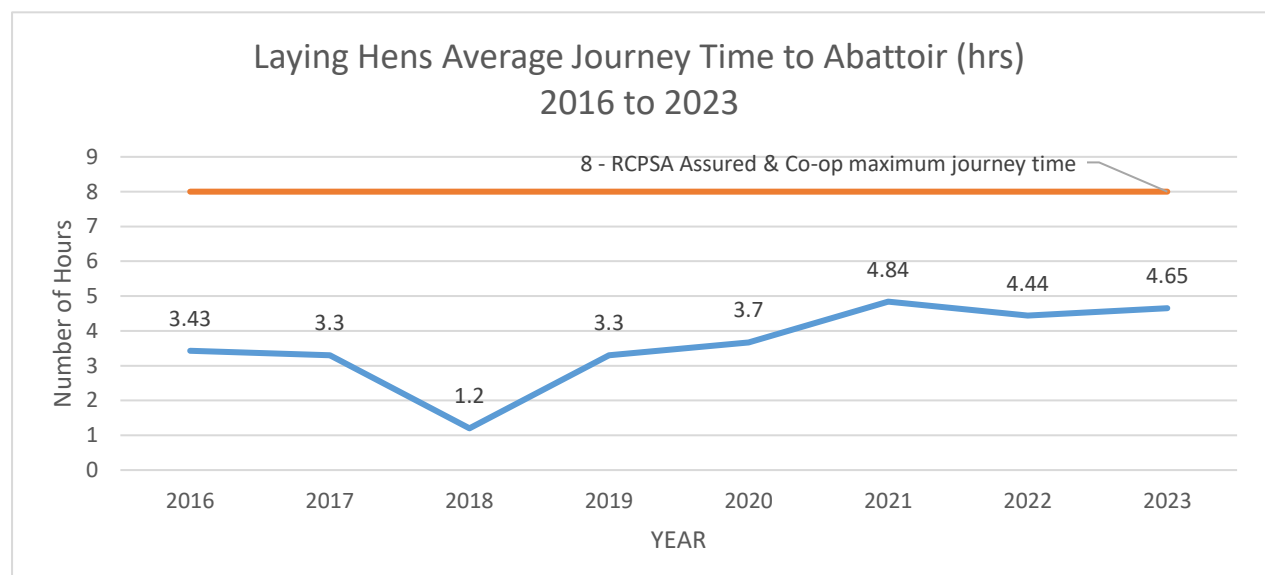
100% of Laying Hens in all Organic Eggs are free from beak trimming and are not beak trimmed this covers 3.43% of our supply chain.

100% of Shell Eggs across own label and branded are British so as such we have no global supply chain

Working in partnership with our suppliers and farmers will look to reduce the reliance on infrared beak trimming through a combination of management techniques, genetic improvement, and breed selection. Our target is to move away from beak trimming completely but need to ensure it is carried out in line with best practices and industry standards.

Laying Hens Transport Times

Co-op's shell eggs are 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor, RSPCA assurance schemes and the Humane Slaughter Association, the laying hens are transported in under 8 hours, as shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 3.6 Hours between 2016 and 2023 in our own brand products which makes up 45% of our total supply. However, the remaining 55% of branded eggs sold in Co-op are British and sourced to the RSPCA assurance scheme as a minimum so we have no global supply chain and journey times will be under 8 hours.

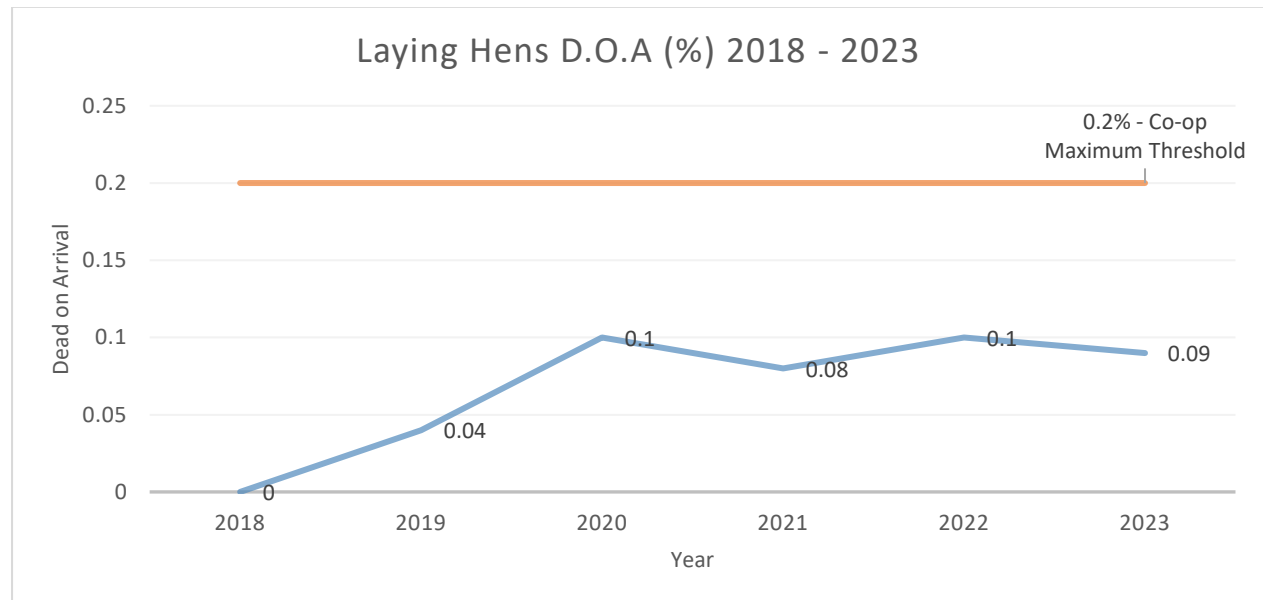


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D.O.A is a record of Dead on Arrival, this records the number of birds that have died during transport. We monitor these numbers so that we can assess the impact of live transport and ensure that stress on the animals is reduced as much as possible. In laying hens this had been an area of focus for many years, it is now at such a low level it is no longer an issue for the sector currently recording less than 0.06% for the past 6 years. (Scope: Own Label Shell Eggs)



Welfare Review

All our farmers are committed to providing the best welfare possible for the birds in their care. Outcome measures including welfare-related ones are monitored and discussed with senior management. The aim for Co-op and Noble Foods is that we show an improving trend on all outcome measures under normal conditions. Noble Foods is working with the whole supply chain on various initiatives which will help support this both practically and through more proactive use of the outcome measures data.

We carry out KPI reviews bi-weekly with our suppliers and involve the farmers within our supply chain to discuss where we are seeing improvements and knowledge share success, but also create action plans where we are seeing challenges. The KPIs we collect are vital to allow us to understand what is happening within our supply chains and as part of these reviews, we also review the measurables of each KPI. Each KPI must give us data that we can action and measure success on and through the close relationship we have with our suppliers and farmers we can understand which KPIs are suitable and measurable, along with adding additional KPI's to provide more in-depth data.

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

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Lamb



We are the only major retailer to sell 100% fresh British lamb all year round. 100% of our Lamb is sourced in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient. In 2022 for our own label fresh protein, we used around 99000 lambs. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a lamb and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of on-pack weight. Co-op own label fresh lamb makes up 94% of our fresh lamb products with 6% coming from branded lines and based on

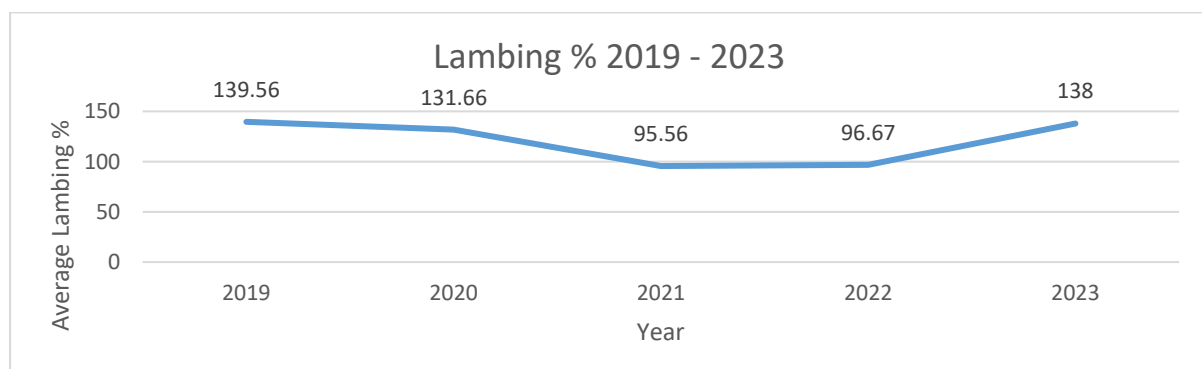
our calculations this is around 23 lambs being used in branded products, our estimation is that these lambs will also be from British sources. Branded lines make up a small percentage of our products the volume in which they sell is therefore considerably lower due to many the lines being regional and in lower distribution. Based on our estimations the lamb used to provide the branded products will have been sourced from the United Kingdom. We work with beef & lamb farmers from across Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England to ensure the availability of high-quality British lamb 365 days of the year. The beef & lamb group was formed in 2013 and reviewed in 2023.

The 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.

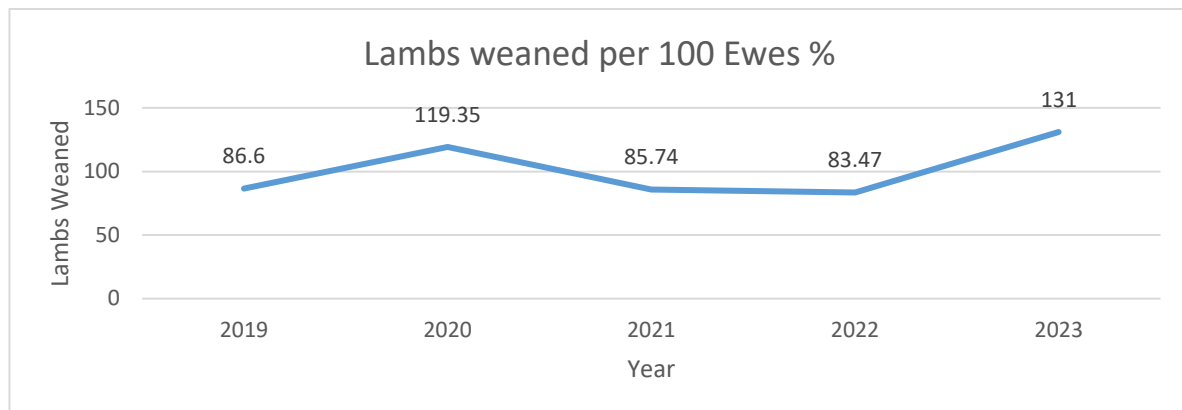
Lamb Welfare Data

Lambing percentage and Lambs Weaned is used to show the number of ewes lambled and number of lambs born (including dead). These two percentages have increased this year due to a mix of upland and lowland production systems



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Confinement

100% of our Lambs are free from confinement, this covers 100% of our total supply chain as we have no branded lamb products in the Co-op and we source 100% British lamb in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient.

Grazing

Co-op's fresh and frozen lamb is 100% British sourced. The mainstay of British lamb is grass based production and grass makes up the majority of an animal's diet over its lifetime. We continuously look at ways to improve the quality of lamb even further and work with a number of farmers across all four nations of the UK. A particular focus of ours is looking at how farmers manage their pasture for both the animal and the environment. 100% of our Lambs are grazed this cover 100% of our own label supply chain in the Co-op and as we source 100% British lamb in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient.

Pre-stunning and ineffective stunning

Co-op source's 100% British lamb in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient, we also do not stock any branded lamb products. Therefore, in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor Assurance, and the Humane Slaughter Association it is required that all lamb is pre stunned before slaughter and in 2023 Ineffective stuns made up 0.035% in our British supply.

Environmental Enrichment

Co-op source's 100% British lamb in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient, we also do not stock any branded lamb products. As we have no global supply chain all lambs have access to species specific enrichment such as pastoral grazing, sheep are herd animals, so all sheep are kept together in flocks, this encourages social interactions.

Mutilations

Co-op source's 100% British lamb in line with the Red Tractor assurance scheme in all our own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient, we also do not stock any branded lamb products, so all lambs are free from mulesing.

We source from [Red Tractor](#) assured farms which has clear rules and guidance that govern livestock husbandry procedures such as castration, disbudding and dehorning.

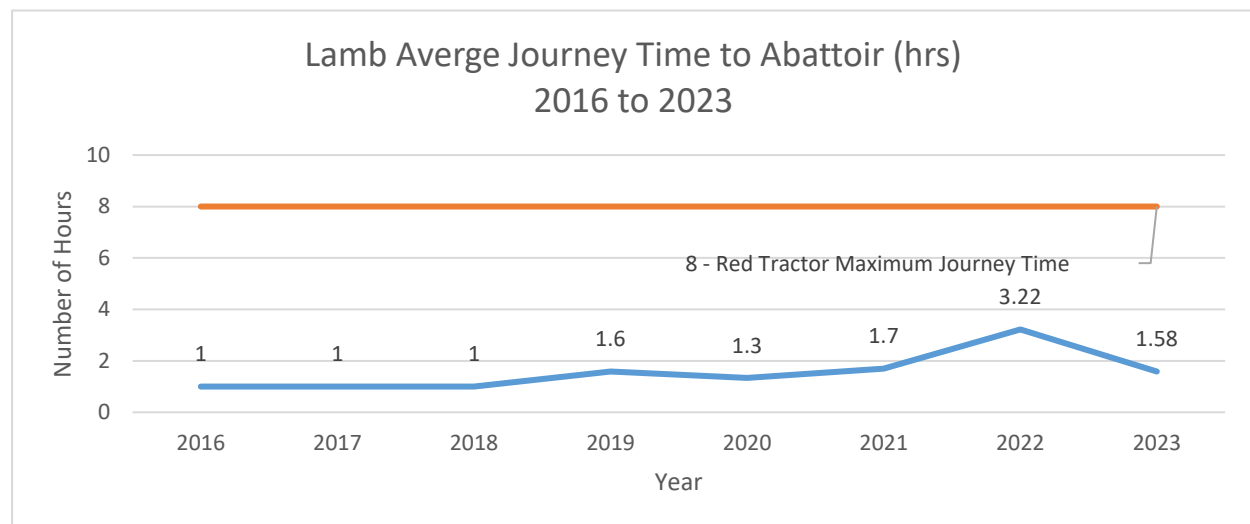
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Lamb Transport Times

Lamb in Co-op's own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient is 100% British, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association, it is transported in under 8 hours, as shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 1.55 Hours between 2016 and 2023.



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 along with a small percentage of Red Tractor products. We work closely with [Red Tractor](#) and RSPCA Assured to ensure our pigs are reared to the highest welfare standards. Both breeding and finishing pigs have access to full environmental manipulable enrichment such as straw, so they can express natural behaviours such as rooting and toys in the form of rope and balls so they can play.

We work with our suppliers to track key performance indicators across 100% of our supply chain. This allows us to work closely with our suppliers and have a continual improvement model in place regarding welfare. 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 British pork farmers is a fantastic position to be in, and farmers within our supply chain feel that our commitment to them and their businesses has cemented the Co-op values that we all share throughout the supply chain. In 2022 for our own label fresh protein, we used around 16,668 pigs. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a pig and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of the on-pack weight. The Co-op own label fresh pork products (Bacon, Ham, Sausage, Pork) makes up 43% of our supply chain with branded lines being 57%. Based on our calculations this would equate to only 1500 pigs being used in branded product. Although branded lines make up a higher percentage of our products the value and volume in which they sell is considerably lower at 13% due to many the lines being regional and therefore in lower distribution, Co-op own labels products make up 88% of the sales value.

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In 2020 The Co-op was proud to receive [Compassion In World Farming](#) (CIWF) [Cage Free Award](#) for our work on Outdoor Bred Pork, Free-Range Eggs and Free-Range Chicken, we have worked closely with CIWF to achieve this award, and moving forward, we are going to be making further improvements to our pork supply chains.

All our primary pork including Bacon, Gammon, Sausage In 2021 we identified the need to bring in a value pork range to support our customers, we have called it [Honest Value](#). We made sure that the quality in this range did not suffer due to the cheaper price point, that's why almost all the pork products in this range remained Outdoor Bred & RSPCA Assured. At this time our bacon, ham & gammon in this range could not be sourced in line with the existing outdoor bred standards, therefore it is being produced to standard indoor British Red Tractor temporarily, whilst we transition back to higher welfare by 2023 or earlier in line with our CIWF [Good Pig Award](#). The bacon, gammon & ham products make up around 3% of our own label supply whilst the remaining 97% is Outdoor Bred & RSPCA Assured

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 the UK certification body and verification protocols. In 2022 for our own label continental pork products, we used around 80,000 pigs. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a pig and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of the on-pack weight. The Co-op own label continental pork products make up 71% of our supply chain with branded lines being 29%. We work closely with our continental meat supplier, [Compleat Food Group](#) and their farmers to ensure that animal welfare is constantly monitored and improved.

Compleat Food Group has developed and launched a [UKAS](#)-accredited standard [EFP European Farm Partnership – Pig Module](#) which is the first pan-European accredited standard for welfare. The standard comprises three tiers of bronze, silver, and gold and addresses the main challenges of pig production (mutilations, confinement, and environmental enrichment). What is unique about the pig module is that it covers the entire element of the supply chain; breeding (freedom farrowing, extra space, bedding, and natural environmental enrichment), rearing, finishing, transport, and slaughter. It also considers health & welfare (space, light no / reducing 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 of KPIs are collated to ensure the 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.

Pig Welfare Data

Tail biting in pigs can occur from aspects related to manipulable materials (or lack of), instances of poor health, genotype (including gender), competition within the herd, as well as herd size. Changes in the pig environment (temperature and feed) can also impact tail biting. Environmental enrichment such as straw and toys can help divert the pig's attention away from tail biting. Providing environmental enrichment is fundamental and an absolute requirement in the RSPCA and Red Tractor Standard. We monitor tail biting instances in our pork supply chain to identify trends and encourage improvements. We are working with our pork supplier on projects that aim to reduce or eliminate tail biting instances.

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Throughout 2018 to 2020 there have been various projects carried out relating to pig behaviour and the prevention of tail biting.

- Fixed Cameras Trials -The use of CCTV allows us to look closely at pig behaviour. The footage has provided us with knowledge to advise famers on management factors, including avoidance of tail biting.
- Feed Additives – Utilization of feed additives when pigs begin to show aggressive behaviour to prevent a tail biting outbreak.
- Genetics Trials – Wean to finish trials have been conducted to evaluate the physical and behavioural performance and carcass characteristics of various sire lines. Positive behavioural and performance data was collected which led to a decision to roll out a change in genetic lines onto our breeding herds. This roll out continues to be monitored.
- Piglet Health – Various projects are ongoing seeking to improve piglet health and quality. Such as improving gut health of piglets.
- Fibre levels – A trial was conducted to investigate varying fibre levels on pig performance and behaviour, higher fibre level diets are now available as option to prevent tail biting.

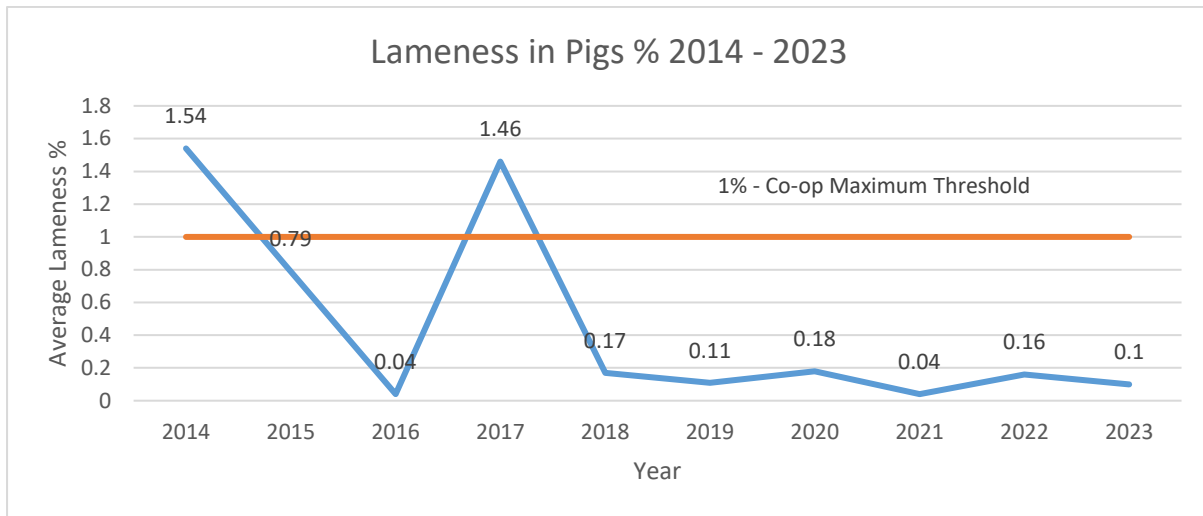


Lameness in pigs can be caused through the pig's environment or through infection, we thoroughly inspect the pigs in our farming group and since the move to Outdoor Bred the cases have dropped. The continual reduction in lameness % is due to two contributing factors:

1. Technological advances within the supply chain have led to improved accuracy of data submission which has shown a welcomed reduction of lameness in pigs.
2. The move to ODB pork comes with changes in pig management and Welfare Standards such as the requirements of manipulable material (i.e. straw) and increased stocking densities. This means the pigs have more space to roam freely and with added materials to play with and root in, pigs become less likely to tail bite. As tail biting can consequently lead to lameness, this has had a positive impact of the reduction of lameness with the move to 97% ODB pork.

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Confinement

Gestation / Farrowing crates are not permitted in RSPCA Higher Welfare systems. Instead, sows live outdoors and are provided with their own individual paddock approximately a week prior to farrowing. Sows are also provided with individual shelters within their paddocks, commonly known as 'arcs'. These arcs provide a warm and sheltered area. The arcs are bedded with straw, allowing extra comfort and warmth. Sows will farrow their young in the arcs, however, always have totally free movement around the paddock area. The piglets will stay with their mother for 4 to 5 weeks before they are weaned and transported to finisher accommodation.

100% (96.5% RSPCA / 3.5% Red Tractor) of the UK farrowing Pigs are free from confinement in our own brand products. Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

100% (96.5% RSPCA / 3.5% Red Tractor) of the UK fattening pigs are free from confinement in our own brand products. Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

Pre stunning and ineffective stunning

All pigs are currently stunned using CO₂. The effectiveness of pre-slaughter stunning is monitored for all processed pigs. It is essential that all pigs are treated humanely throughout their lives and welfare is at the forefront of this. 100% of the pigs Co-op source receive appropriate pre-stunning treatment prior to processing.

100% (97% RSPCA / 3% Red Tractor) of the UK Pigs are stunned before slaughter in our own brand products Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

Environmental Enrichment

100% of the UK Pigs have access to species specific environmental enrichment including straw, hay, wood, sawdust, peat in our own brand and branded products Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

As all our UK pigs are RSPCA Assured or Red Tractor assured this means that they all have access to enriched environments and manipulable material such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, peat. RSPCA Assurance Outdoor Bred pigs allows more space.

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Mutilations

Within our British, out-door bred pork supply chain, routine mutilations are not permissible or legal. In order to carry out mutilations such as tail docking, evidence must be provided to identify that there has been a tail biting problem in the herd. Derogations to tail dock can be granted following veterinary advice and on the grounds of promoting animal welfare. A minimum of 6cm must be left, as per RSPCA standards.

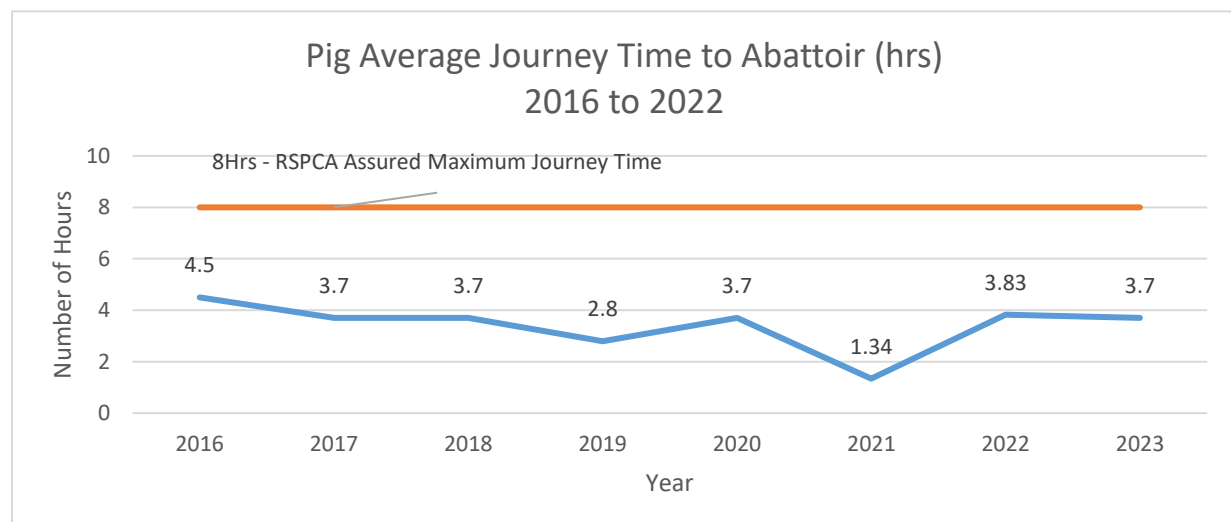
100% (96.5% RSPCA / 3.5% Red Tractor) of our UK Pigs in our fresh/frozen supply of pork are free from castration, Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

100% (96.5% RSPCA / 3.5% Red Tractor) of UK Pigs in our fresh/frozen supply of pork are free from teeth reduction, Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

100% (96.5% RSPCA / 3.5% Red Tractor) of Pigs free from short tail docking in our fresh/frozen supply of pork are from short tail docking, Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.

Pig Transport Times

Co-op's fresh and frozen pork is 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor, RSPCA assurance schemes and the Humane Slaughter Association, it is transported in under 8 hours, as shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 3.4 Hours between 2016 and 2023 in our Co-op British supply chain makes up 77% of our products with the remaining 23% being from our European supply chain.



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Turkey

We launched the Co-op Turkey Farming Group in 2016 to help build relationships with farmers. All our own-brand turkey is reared to [Red Tractor](#) Turkey standards. In addition, we require farmers to submit KPI data quarterly. In 2022 for our own label fresh protein, we used around 55,000 turkeys'. In calculating this figure, we used an average weight of a turkey and if the product was of a variable weight, we used an average of the on-pack weight. The Co-op own label fresh turkey products (Mince, Bacon, Birds & Crown) make up 82% of our supply chain with branded lines being 18%. Based on our calculations this would equate to only 10,600 being used in branded product.

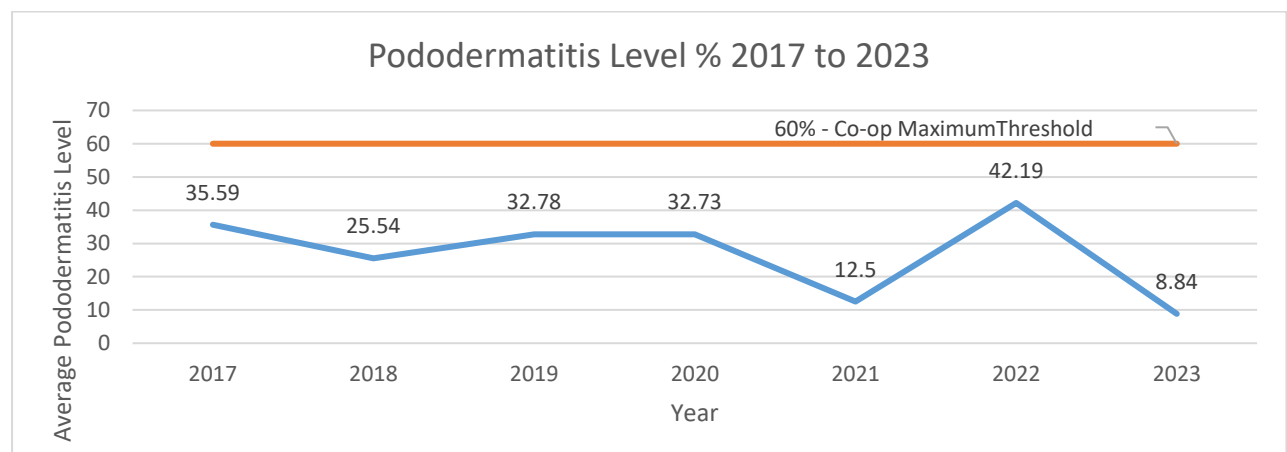


We work with our farmers and supplier to provide animal welfare improvements for our supply chain and is reviewed quarterly by our dedicated agricultural manager alongside our suppliers, such as providing environmental enrichment for the birds, so they can exhibit natural behaviours.

The farmers in our supply chain 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 meetings with our supplier we will review the KPIs and discuss any areas for improvement

Turkey Welfare Data

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. Since 2019 both welfare measures had seen an improvement, this was due to changes to the litter and warmer weather which has driven increased ventilation, unfortunately due to wet weather during 2022 both Pododermatitis and Breast Blisters saw an increase but both have now returned to a lower level with the improved weather of 2023 and are still tracking well under the Co-op agreed levels. The nutrition of the birds is also important which is why feed changes have been made to improve efficiency, reduce soya but still ensuring the bird is fed a balanced diet which in turn improves welfare.

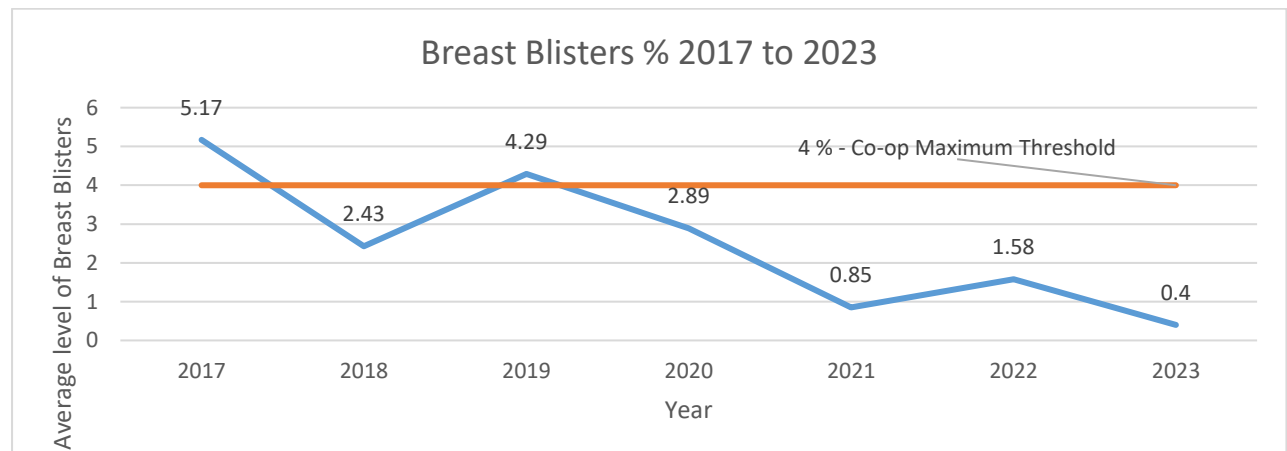


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Breast Blisters are caused by a Turkey sitting on the floor or from an irritant, Breast Blisters do not have a clinical effect on the turkey



Confinement

100% of our Turkeys in Co-op's own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient are 100% British, therefore in line with UK regulations and Red Tractor assurance scheme it is cage free. We have no global supply within our own brand turkey supply chain

Pre stunning and ineffective stunning

100% of our Turkeys in Co-op's own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient are 100% British, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association it is subject to a pre stunning treatment prior to processing.

All turkeys are currently stunned using controlled atmosphere stunning (CAS) system. The effectiveness of pre-slaughter stunning is monitored for all processed turkey. It is essential that all turkeys are treated humanely throughout their lives and welfare is at the forefront of this. 100% of the turkey Co-op source receive appropriate pre-stunning treatment prior to processing.

Environmental Enrichment

100% of our Turkeys in Co-op's own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient are 100% British, therefore in line with UK regulations and Red Tractor assurance scheme have access to environmental enrichment, we have no global supply within our own brand turkey supply chain.

We currently exceed the Red Tractor recommendations and have 3 times the number of pecking objects recommended in the shed and have perches available in the form of shavings bales.

Mutilations

100% of our Turkeys in Co-op's own brand products both fresh, frozen, chilled and when used as an ingredient are 100% British, therefore in line with UK regulations, Red Tractor assurance scheme it is free from desnooding. We have no global supply within our own brand turkey supply chain

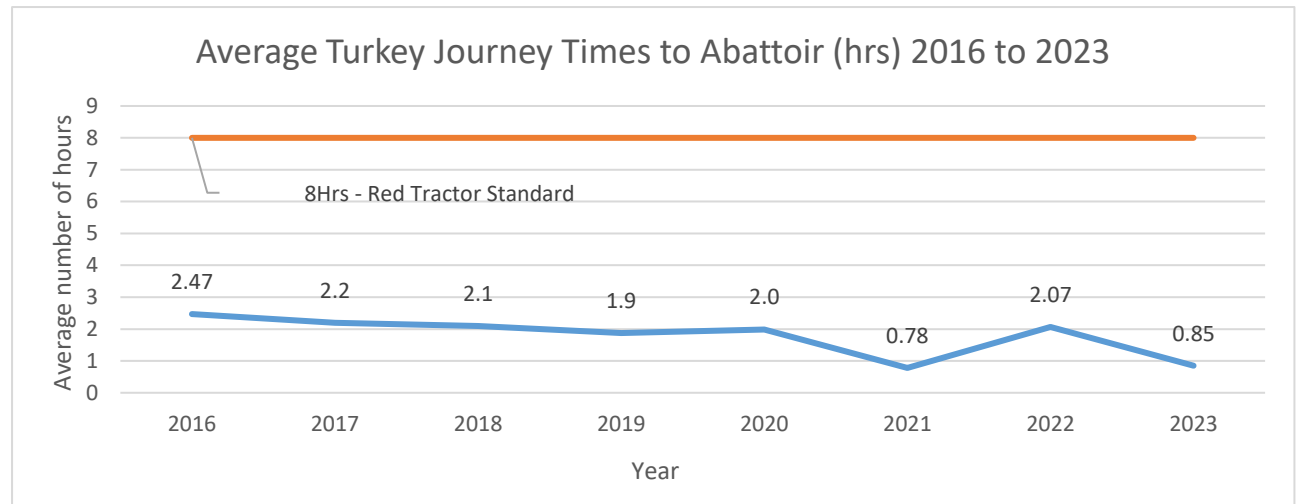
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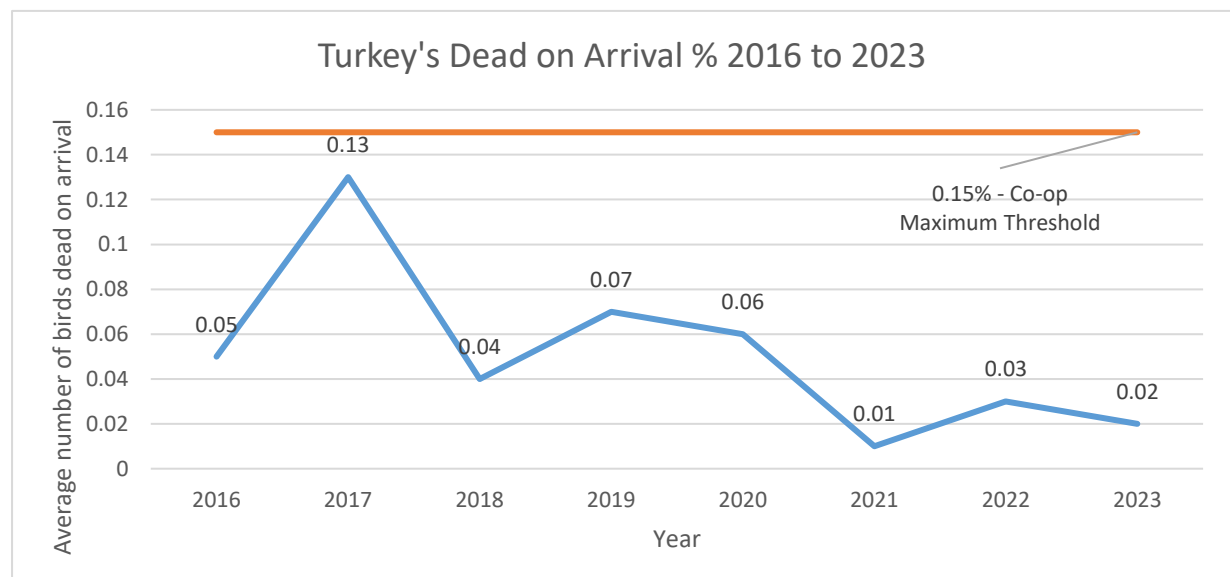


Turkey Transport Times

Co-op's fresh and frozen turkey is 100% British sourced, therefore in line with UK regulations and as per the Red Tractor assurance scheme and the Humane Slaughter Association therefore it is transported in under 8 hours. As shown by the graph below within our supply chain this averaged 1.79 Hours between 2016 and 2023 in our own brand products.



D.O.A is a record of Dead on Arrival, this records the number of birds that have died during transport. In turkey this had been an area of focus for a number of years, it is now at such a low level it is no longer an issue for the sector currently recording on average less than 0.05% for the past 8 years.



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Welfare Review

All our farmers are committed to providing the best welfare possible for the birds in their care. Outcome measures including welfare related ones are monitored and discussed with senior management. The aim for Co-op and 2SFG is that we show an improving trend on all outcome measures under normal conditions. 2SFG is working with the whole supply chain on various initiatives which will help support this both practically and through a more pro-active use of the outcome measures data.

We regularly carry out KPI reviews throughout the year with our suppliers and involve the farmers within our supply chain to discuss where we are seeing improvements and knowledge share success, but also create action plans where we are seeing challenges. The KPI's we collect are vital to allow us to understand what is happening within our supply chains and as part of these reviews we also review the measurables of each KPI. Each KPI must give us data that we can action and measure success on and through the close relationship we have with our suppliers and farmers we can understand which KPIs are suitable and measurable, along with adding additional KPI's to provide more in-depth data.

Fish and seafood

We know that our customers and members value our in-depth approach to the responsible sourcing of fish and seafood. All Co-op branded seafood (including decapod crustaceans) is sourced in accordance with the Co-op Responsible Fish Sourcing Policy, which aligns with the Sustainable Seafood Coalition Code of Conduct on Environmentally Responsible Seafood Sourcing. The policy applies to fresh, frozen, and ambient seafood products and where fish is used as an ingredient.

Fish used in Co-op brand products come from sources that are risk assessed and reviewed by independent experts. These holistic reviews cover the health of the stock for wild capture fisheries and health and welfare of farmed fish species, as well as all relevant 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 with the [Ocean Disclosure Project](#).

2023				
Number of wild-caught species used	% volume from certified fisheries	% volume from a FIP	Number of farmed species used	% volume from certified farms
19	68	35	4	100
Production Methods Used				
• Midwater trawl • Bottom trawl	• Purse seine • Seine nets • Gillnets and entangling nets	• Hook and line • Longlines • Handlines and pole-lines	• Miscellaneous	• Farmed

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In 2011 we became members of the [Sustainable Seafood Coalition](#) (SSC) to work collaboratively towards the vision that all fish and seafood sold in the UK is from sustainable sources. Our approach to responsible seafood sourcing draws on the expertise of a variety of external stakeholders, including:

- [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership](#)
- [Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\)](#)
- [Marine Conservation Society](#)
- [Seafish Industry Authority](#)
- [WWF](#)

We are working to ensure all our wild-capture seafood sources are either Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified or working towards improving sustainability. In 2024, 56% of our wild-capture seafood products were labelled as MSC certified. In 2022 Co-op was recognised in the [MSC Annual Market Report](#) as the retailer with second most labelled pet food products. To support developing fisheries on their journey towards the MSC standard, we actively fund and participate in a selection of [Fishery Improvement Projects](#) (FIPs). These include [Project UK](#) and the [North Atlantic Pelagic Advocacy Group](#) (NAPA).

In 2023 we sourced 19 wild-caught species, and 4 farmed species from 15 suppliers and 26 countries. All our farmed fish sources must comply with national regulations, act in a socially responsible way, and be certified by one or more of the following third party certification schemes: [Aquaculture Stewardship Council](#) (ASC), [Global Seafood Alliance Best Aquaculture Practice](#) (GAA BAP 4*), [Global Gap](#), [RSPCA Assured](#), and [Marine Stewardship Council](#) (MSC) in relation to mussels.

Welfare and handling

All Co-op farmed fish 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. These standards have been in place since 2008 to ensure that all seafood is sourced from well-managed farms and fisheries and minimise our impact on the marine environment. Our standards are based on the promotion of best welfare practice, and we use the best available technology within the industry to drive forward improvements in farmed animal husbandry. 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. We work with our suppliers to ensure we have data on any injuries and damage, presence of sea lice and other welfare measures to ensure we can work to reduce any occurrence of these over time. We work with our suppliers for all farmed seafood to ensure handling is kept to minimum to ensure good health and welfare.

Fish feed

As part of the Co-op internal risk assessment process, we ensure marine sources of farmed fish feed are also reviewed. We prefer marine ingredients to come from by-products, trimmings and responsibly sourced fish not used for direct human consumption rather than whole fish. Our preferred status for the marine ingredients component of farmed fish feed is from trimmings or by-products, and any whole fish to be [Marin Trust](#) 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. Genetically modified (GM) ingredients must not be included in the feed for finfish. We have signed up to the [UK Soy Manifesto](#) working towards 100% verified deforestation and conversion free soya by 2025.

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Finfish

For farmed finfish, most of our sales are Atlantic salmon, which we source from Scotland and Norway, we also source farmed seabass from Turkey. We work closely with our suppliers and farmers to ensure we support them to produce high-quality salmon farmed to strict welfare standards. We collect key performance indicators (KPIs) that incorporate welfare outcome measures from Scottish and Norwegian salmon suppliers. In 2022 we worked with our entire aquaculture supply base to expand the range of KPIs that we collect covering warm water prawns and seabass. We use these KPIs to monitor, manage and mitigate risk in our supply chains.

More details about our farmed finfish can be found below:

Species	Third-party certification	Maximum marine stocking density *	Transport times (harvest to slaughter) **	Pre-slaughter stunning
Atlantic salmon from Scotland and Norway (standard tier) <i>Salmo salar</i>	Global GAP, GSA BAP, ASC	Scotland: 22kg/m ³ Norway: 25kg/m ³	48 hours maximum	100% pre-slaughter stunned followed by immediate exsanguination
Atlantic salmon from Scotland (Irresistible tier) <i>Salmo salar</i>	RSPCA Assured, Global GAP	15kg/m ³	48 hours maximum	100% pre-slaughter stunned followed by immediate exsanguination
Seabass (Turkey) <i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	Global GAP, ASC	13kg/m ³	Slaughtered at pen site and immediately stunned	100% electrically stunned pre-slaughter
* Sites are not all stocked at maximum density and density criteria vary throughout the life cycle ** In Scotland transport times are typically <24hours; in Norway “waiting pens” are usually located next to the slaughter facility for the salmon to rest and reduce stress levels prior to slaughter.				

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Salmon

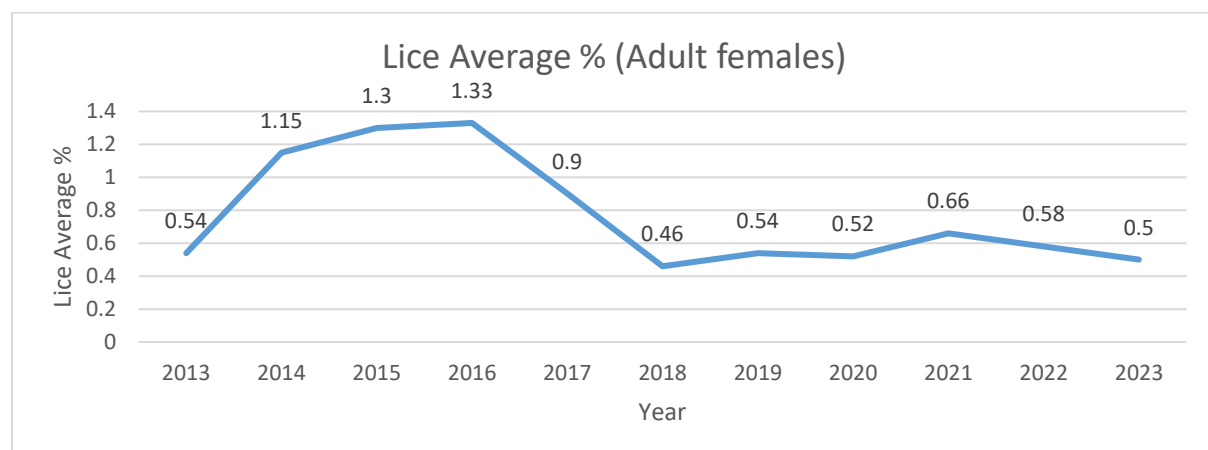
At Co-op, our main sales come from farmed Atlantic salmon, this is sourced from both Scotland and Norway, we use third-party certifications to ensure our salmon is responsibly sourced. Co-op has always been committed to sourcing 100% of our Irresistible salmon from Scottish RSPCA Assured farms. However, in 2024, due to increased demand and availability, we introduced ASC-certified Norwegian-sourced salmon into our Irresistible range. This marked the launch of our first ASC-labelled product and is a significant step towards expanding the availability of ASC labels across more Co-op own-label products in the future. With certified farms complying with RSPCA starvation requirements for pre harvest fasting of <72 hours. We allow Norwegian Salmon in our Pioneer brand, and the certifications recommend pre harvest fasting of <72 hours, but it can be >72 hours but veterinary surgeon concession is required. Co-op does not source from suppliers with production systems based on “High Stocking Density Grow Out RAS Systems” All our salmon is sourced from farmers with the marine grow out phase based on traditional open net pen production.

Sea lice and Management

The levels of reporting requirements have become more stringent in the last few years. In recent years the salmon industry has moved to a transparent approach to reporting sea lice and mortality levels. Co-op supports this approach as it enables us to work with our suppliers in reviewing the potential effect of treatments and other issues and focus on these within our salmon farming groups. If any adverse trends become apparent, we work closely with our suppliers to discuss and agree improvements.

Scottish salmon: In Scotland a farmer is legally required to report any sea lice levels of average two adult female lice per fish to the relevant authorities and this will result in increased surveillance of the site. Further to that any further increase beyond six adult female lice per fish results in an enforcement notice for a time limited action requirement (i.e. treatment or harvest of the fish).

Annual figures used to be published the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation ([SSPO](#)) until 2021 and then the responsibility was handed over to the [Scottish Government](#). The data shows that sea lice dropped dramatically in 2018 and has remained at a low level since this point.



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The Scottish salmon sector is committed to successfully pursuing its 'prevention over cure' strategy with regards to controlling the naturally occurring parasite through innovations such as the use of mechanical treatments and cleaner fish.

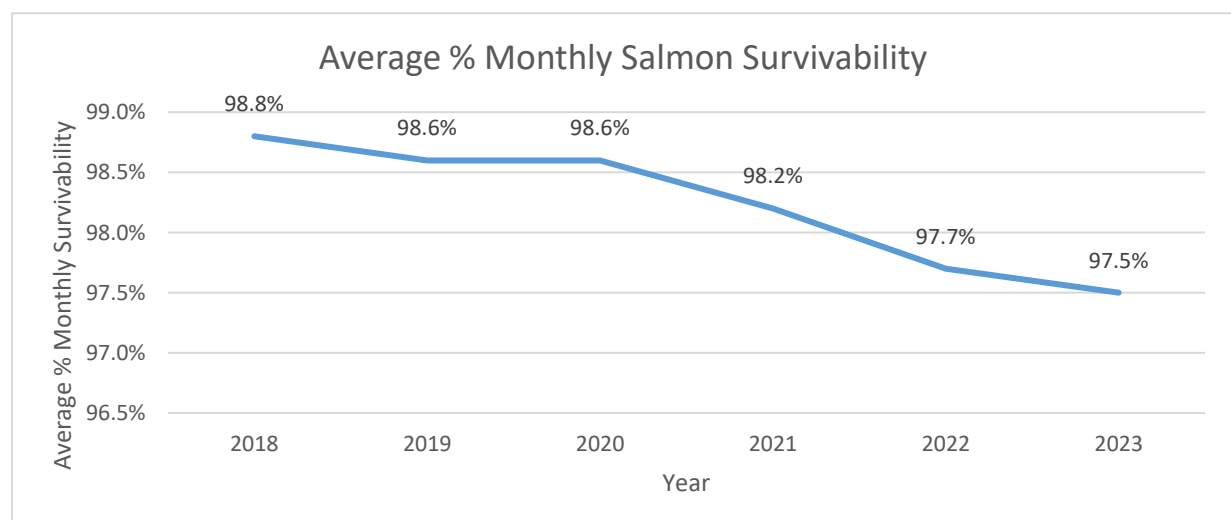
We recognise the critical role that cleaner fish play in maintaining the health of farmed salmon and ensure their well-being by using third part certification who manage this through the following practices:

- **Humane Handling and Care:** We ensure that all cleaner fish are handled with care to minimise stress and injury. This includes gentle handling during capture, transport, and deployment into salmon pens.
- **Environmental Enrichment:** We provide environments that cater to the natural behaviours of cleaner fish. This includes offering appropriate shelter and substrates within the pens to promote their well-being.
- **Health Monitoring:** Regular health assessments are conducted to monitor the condition of cleaner fish. Any signs of disease or distress are addressed promptly with appropriate veterinary care.
- **Supplementary Feeding:** Recognising that natural food sources may be insufficient, we provide supplementary feeding to meet the nutritional needs of cleaner fish, ensuring their health and effectiveness in controlling parasites.
- **Humane Slaughter:** At the end of their use, cleaner fish are humanely euthanised following established protocols to prevent unnecessary suffering.

We will continue to work with our suppliers to identify opportunities to help reduce the occurrence of sea lice and best treatments that will help improve the survivability of the fish.

Mortality

Salmon mortality is recorded through the percentage of fish lost on each farm within each month. This is the measure of mortality used by the Scottish Government's Fish Health Inspectorate when assessing the health of the fish on the farm. National data shows there has been a reduction in survivability between 2018-2023. As these adverse trends have become apparent, we continually work closely with our suppliers to discuss and agree improvements.



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Enrichment

We recognise that environmental and behavioural enrichment can have an important impact on animal welfare. For fish, which are acutely affected by stress in their environment, we work with our suppliers to ensure any enrichment enables the fish to exhibit natural behaviours and does not add stress. Research and development for our salmon supply chain is focussed on optimal fish health such as in nutrition, allowing for fish to exhibit natural behaviours, and reduced stocking densities. We support reducing any human interactions where possible (such as monitoring with the use of underwater cameras) and trials of integrated multitrophic aquaculture or novel sustainable feeds that do not compromise fish health.

Shellfish

At the Co-op our sourcing standards and policies apply to all species of decapods sold under Co-op brand but currently we only source the following in our own label products: *Nephrops norvegicus* (Norway Lobster) sold as Scampi, *Pandalus borealis* (Cold-water prawn), *Penaeus monodon* (Giant Tiger Prawn), *Mytilus edulis* (Blue Mussel) and *Penaeus vannamei* (White leg shrimp).

Volumes are dominated by farmed warm water prawns (48%) and wild-capture cold water prawns (45%). Co-op does not sell any live decapod crustaceans and all farmed decapods must be slaughtered before transport. We are working with the Project UK FIP on the impact of gear on habitats and bycatch for *Nephrops* fisheries and support the aim to be more selective and reduce bycatch. All our farmed seafood comes from farms that operate to GSSI benchmarked certification standards.

Farmed Species	Third-party certification	Transport times (harvest to slaughter)	Country of origin
Giant tiger prawn <i>Penaeus monodon</i>	ASC, GSA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site prior to transportation to factory. Shrimp must be slaughtered using a method that renders shrimp quickly insensible with no recovery.	Vietnam
Whiteleg shrimp <i>Penaeus vannamei</i>	ASC, GSA BAP 4*	Slaughtered on site prior to transportation to factory. Shrimp must be slaughtered using a method that renders shrimp quickly insensible with no recovery.	Ecuador, Honduras, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Thailand, Vietnam

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Wild capture species	Third-party certification	Country of origin
Cold water prawn <i>Pandalus borealis</i>	MSC	Canada, Iceland, Barents Sea, Greenland
Norway lobster (scampi) <i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	Fishery Improvement Project	UK and Ireland
Blue mussel <i>Mytilus edulis</i>	MSC	UK

Warm water prawns

Antibiotics

All our suppliers are carefully selected to ensure they meet our very strict farming policies. Prawns sourced from ASC certified farms (Aquaculture Stewardship Council) are 100% antibiotic free. This standard has the highest requirements in terms of husbandry and does not authorise the use of any antibiotics at any stage of the breeding process. The prophylactic use of all veterinary drugs is prohibited.

Health and Welfare

All farms must have a documented Shrimp Health and Welfare (H&W) plan developed with a suitably competent Shrimp/Aquaculture health expert (and other experts where required). The review must be carried out on at least an annual basis, or where performance is poor, and must include a farm inspection to allow assessment of performance and risks.

We work with our suppliers to ensure all health and welfare plans are carried out on farms, and since 2022 have collected data on KPIs including stocking density, mortality levels and feed conversion rates. Eyestalk ablation used to be commonplace in certain regions, Co-op has been working with our suppliers to remove the practice of ablation from our supply chains and we are proud to say that in 2024 Co-op's prawn supply chain was 100% eye stalk ablation free. By the end of 2025 all the administration, written policy updates and official supplier confirmation with the correct technical and official certification will be in place to ensure that we will remain ablation free.

We recognise that electrical stunning followed by mechanical killing is the most humane method of slaughter, although we acknowledge this is not currently standard practice across the international prawn supply chain, and we are actively exploring the use of electric stunning and working with companies who are identifying how this can be rolled out onto prawn farms. We will set out a roadmap in 2025 to introduce electrical stunning in our supply chain by 2027, but we do have the intention of implementing electrical stunning earlier, if possible, all our farmed prawns in fresh and frozen and where used as an ingredient.

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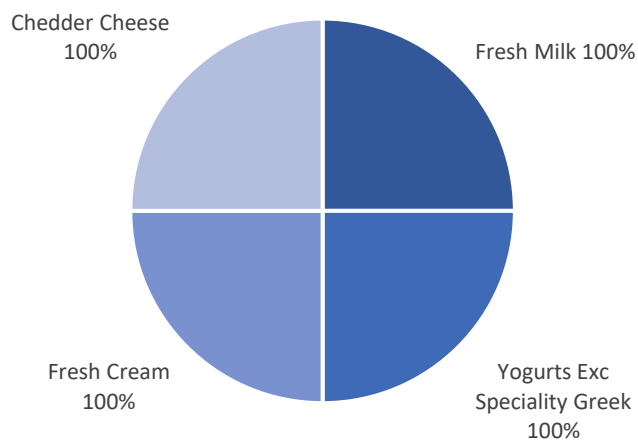
Co-op Supply Chain Sourcing

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.

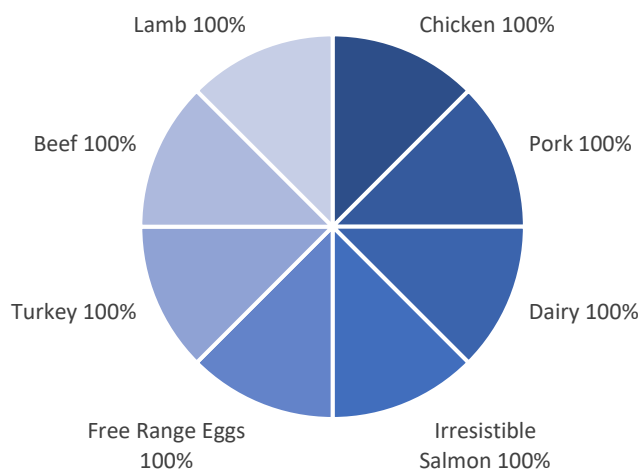
Dairy sourcing origins

Co-op Own Label British Dairy Origin %



Proteins sourcing origins

Co-op Own Label British Origin %

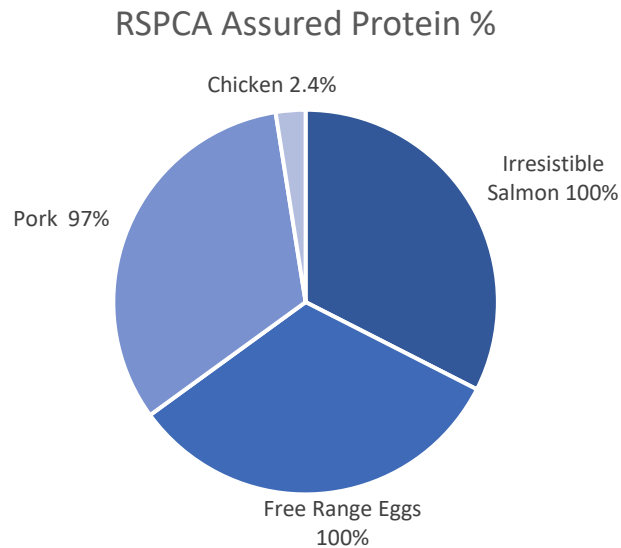


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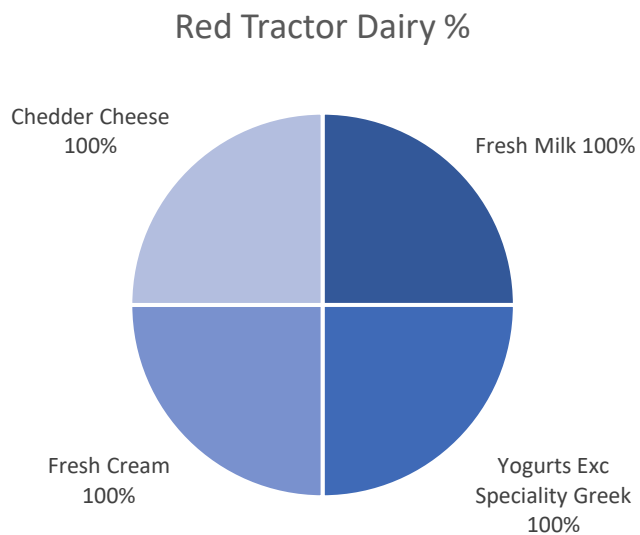


Percentage of Product RSPCA Assured



This details the livestock that is RSPCA Assured within our supply chain,

Percentage of Livestock Red Tractor Assured (or equivalent)

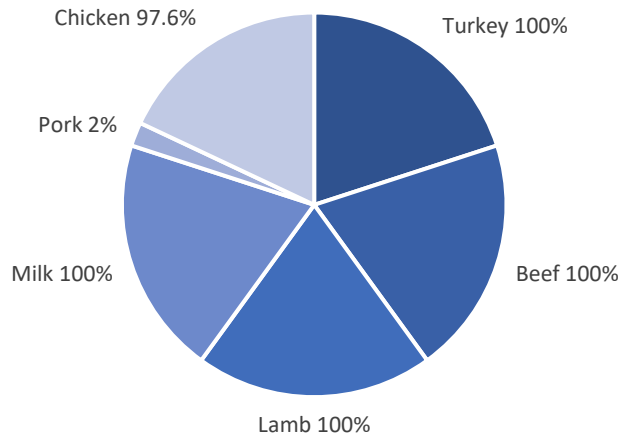


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Red Tractor Protein %



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.

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.

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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.

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 to understand what particular configurations and management constitute best practice.

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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.

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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.

We have developed an Environmental Strategy for the Co-op. The initial work has been centred around reducing the carbon footprint of our beef and dairy supply chains. Why beef and dairy? Well, the methane emissions associated with ruminant animals account for a large proportion of the carbon footprint of these farms and we have been looking at methods by which farmers can reduce these emissions. Many of the strategies for reduction revolve around increasing efficiencies of the production cycle and these efficiencies are strongly linked to animal health and welfare, in combination with excellent management of the cattle. The Co-op farmers have demonstrated fantastic engagement around the topic and key performance indicators have been set in order to measure their improvements which, incidentally, also deliver financial improvements – a genuine win-win situation.

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).



Co-op Antibiotics Report



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Introduction

Antimicrobials are substances that kill or stop the growth of pathogens. Within this family, antibiotics, which specifically target bacteria, are valuable tools in safeguarding human and animal health and welfare against infection. However, their efficacy is under threat thanks to growing levels of antibiotic resistance within a range of diseases affecting humans in particular. It is incumbent on everyone who uses antibiotics, whether medical or veterinary, to do so with great care as the more these products are used, the greater the risk of resistance developing. Antibiotic resistance has the potential to leave us unable to treat bacterial diseases in the future – not just in humans, but in animals too.

At the Co-op, all antibiotics used to treat animals in our fresh own brand food supply chains are administered according to strict protocols. They are used responsibly when deemed necessary to safeguard animal welfare, and always under veterinary supervision. 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 collate antibiotic usage data for all livestock and aquaculture, which is reviewed by our veterinary advisers on an ongoing basis, and they have active plans in place to ensure evolving responsible antibiotic use across all livestock species. This policy explains these areas in more detail and lays out the Co-op's plans to continue supporting responsible use of these valuable medicines.

Industry Background

Co-op is a member of [RUMA \(Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance\)](#) through the [BRC \(British Retail Consortium\)](#) 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 and comprises a wide range of organisations spanning all key livestock sectors from farm to fork.

Co-op strives to achieve the outputs from RUMA's [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 in a coordinated and integrated way to share best practice in this area in a pre-competitive manner. Through this approach, sales of prescribed veterinary antibiotics to the UK livestock farming industry as a whole [more than halved](#) between 2014 and 2023, and the UK now has among the lowest sales in Europe. Co-op, in line with RUMA guidelines and working in conjunction with its suppliers, farmers and industry experts, have also developed programmes and policies that have reduced the total use of antibiotics across its supply chains whilst keeping animal welfare at the forefront of any decisions.

Co-op is part of the [FIIA \(Food Industry initiative on Antimicrobials\)](#) which has the stated vision of 'Retailers, manufacturers, processors and food service companies coming together to promote and support responsible antibiotic use and action on antimicrobial resistance.' The intention of this initiative is to support and engage with existing industry groups working in this area, ensuring work is aligned and avoiding duplication of effort.

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Our Approach

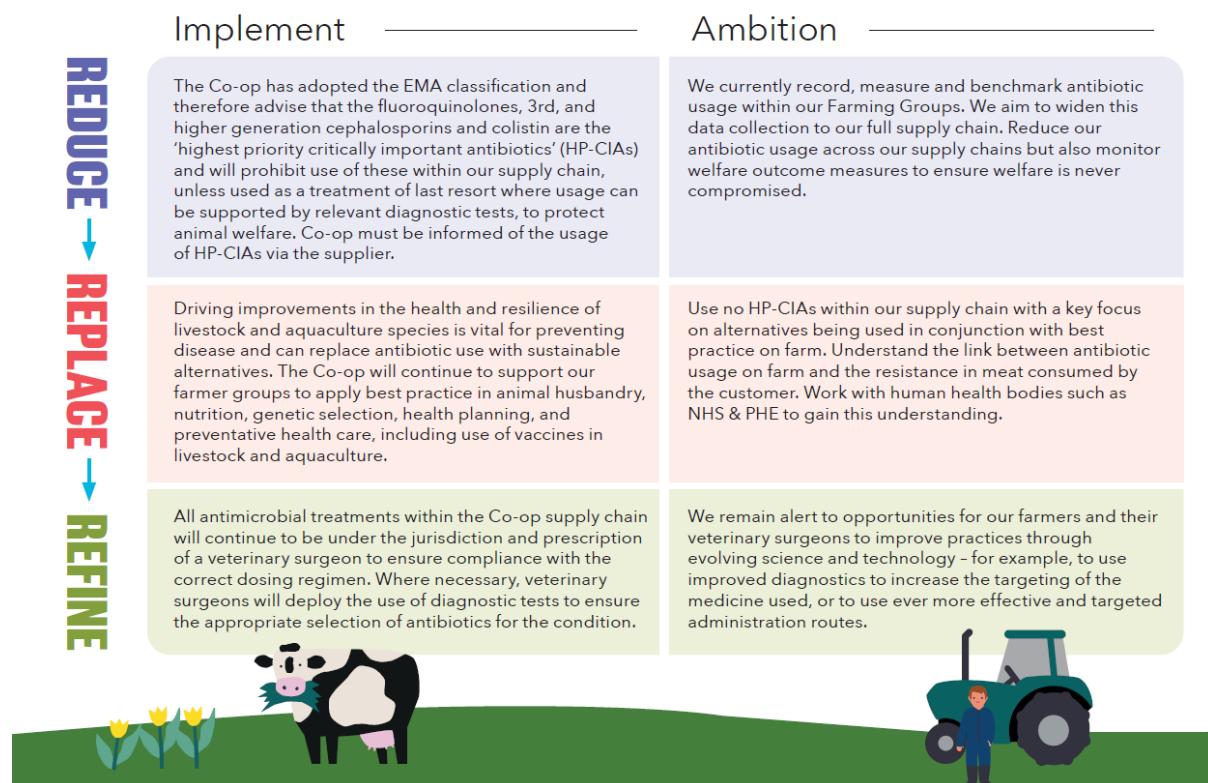
Our Antibiotics Strategy, in line with the industry approach, is based on the '3Rs' framework to Reduce, Replace and Refine the use of medicines. This involves:

Reducing the annual usage of antibiotics in animal agriculture, per unit of livestock at the time of treatment, whilst preserving animal health and welfare.

Replacing the use of antibiotics 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 CO-OP APPROACH



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Our Antibiotic Policy

Scope

We care about the welfare of animals used to produce our products. 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. Where possible, we will seek ways to extend this policy to other product areas such as branded 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 veterinary surgeon to address a specific clinical health issue. Antibiotic treatments are expected to be minimised where possible, with alternatives such as pain relief and anti-inflammatory products (NSAIDs) explored as frontline treatments where appropriate.

First principles

Our policy is broadly aligned with that of [FIIA](#), and of [Government regulation](#), and the methodology for measuring antibiotic use is consistent with [RUMA](#) and [FIIA](#) guidance. In line with the latest [Veterinary Medicine Regulations](#) in the UK, we do not permit the prescribing of any antibiotics in the following ways:

- routinely;
- to compensate for poor hygiene, inadequate animal husbandry, or poor farm management practices;
- or to promote growth or increase yield.

Prophylaxis

Also, in line with the new [Veterinary Medicine Regulations](#), the veterinary surgeons working with our suppliers must not prescribe an antibiotic for prophylactic (disease prevention) purposes except in exceptional circumstances where the risk of an infection is very high, and where the consequences to the animal of not prescribing the product are likely to be severe. Absolutely no routine prophylaxis is permitted. Where treatment is justified, the antibiotic should be administered to individual animals only. However, if a group of animals must be treated prophylactically, the prescribing veterinary surgeon must clearly record the reason why and carry out a management review as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards to identify factors and implement measures to avoid a recurring need for group treatment. Any case of prophylactic treatment, whether to an individual or group, must be reported to our Agriculture team along with supporting evidence so they are aware and can monitor the situation.

HP-CIAs

Highest priority critically important antibiotics (HP-CIAs), also known as Category B products by the European Medicine Agency (fluoroquinolones, 3rd and higher generation cephalosporins and colistin), will only be used as a last resort when no other antibiotics are proven to work, sensitivity testing has taken place to show the HP-CIA will be effective, they are being used therapeutically to treat present disease in an individual animal, and the animal's health and welfare is at severe risk. Any case of HP-CIA use must be notified to the Co-op Agriculture team so they are aware and can monitor the situation.

Administration

All our suppliers are expected to work with their veterinary surgeons to minimise administration of antibiotic treatments in feed, moving to in-water administration if possible, or further to infusion, injectable or topical applications where practicable. These routes are increasingly targeted towards individual animals and specific sites of infection, and therefore minimise risk of resistance developing.

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RUMA targets

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 meet the RUMA Targets in a holistic and sustainable way. The most recent RUMA targets focus on increasing the amount of usage data collated for cattle and sheep nationally, improved farmer-veterinary surgeon engagement, and the development of health plans. Nationally, usage in pigs still needs to reduce due to disease challenge and lack of vaccine availability, and other sectors which have already achieved significant reductions must maintain this amid changing environmental and market forces. We will support these sectors in their journeys.

Data

To monitor progress, we collate antibiotic usage data for all livestock and aquaculture species on a quarterly basis (dairy – biannually). We use this data to benchmark the performance within our Farming Groups and against RUMA targets. Furthermore, suppliers are expected to participate in national data collation initiatives for their sector – for example the Medicine Hub for cattle and sheep, the British Poultry Council's antibiotics stewardship programme for poultry meat birds, and so on.

The Co-op respects the need for the responsible handling of any farmer-owned antibiotic data it holds, in line with the FIIA Code of Conduct on Access to & Use of Industry Antibiotic Data. It is also aware that a report on best practice in data safeguarding and optimisation related to antibiotic stewardship has been released by FIIA and the Veterinary Schools Council, and opportunities will be sought to follow its recommendations.

Farming Groups

The Co-op will continue to support our Farming 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.

While this policy applies only to own brand fresh products irrespective of tier, geography or species, the Co-op will continue to look at opportunities to expand where possible – for example, to other UK-supplied products or ingredients.

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. Antibiotic stewardship 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 on the Medicine Hub.

We will continue to be members of RUMA through the BRC 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.

Our Farming Groups, which were set up from 2011, include over 400 farmers of meat, poultry and dairy. They were formed to make it easier for farmers to collaborate, both with us and other farmers, and to also protect animal welfare as well as progress responsible sourcing practices – which includes topics such as antibiotic usage. 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 to meet the RUMA Targets by the set deadlines and to improve best practice and knowledge of antimicrobial medicines, but especially antibiotics, across our supply chains to protect our future.

Finally, we will continue to be members of FIIA and work with processors and other retailers to support best practice and drive insights and better use of data.

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Industry Endorsements

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 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 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 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

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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, Pilgrim's Pride**

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

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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

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

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“The Coop is a valued long-term supporter of the Red Tractor Food and Farming 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 the standards that are set to ensure that food produced on assured farms is grown and reared to world-class standards which include animal welfare and high levels of food safety while protecting the environment.

The Coop’s involvement in Red Tractor’s consumer campaigns, helps to raise the profile of the logo to consumers and demonstrates its commitment to backing farm assured food in the UK. Shopper recognition of Red Tractor continues to grow with over 75% of UK primary shoppers recognising the logo which now appears on almost £15bn of food and drink. The Red Tractor symbol is an easy signpost for shoppers looking for responsibly sourced food, produced on British farms.”

Red Tractor Assurance

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

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

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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 marketplaces 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;

2021

- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'
- Co-op 10 Year Anniversary of Farming Groups

2020

- Compassion in World Farming – Cage Free Award
- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'

2019

- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'
- Winner of best trade stand at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show

2018

- Compassion in World Farming -Good Pig Award
- Shortlisted for Antibiotic Guardian Award – Food & Farming
- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'

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'

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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

2014

- Greenpeace Tuna Sustainability League Table – achieved top tier as one of the market leaders
- Business Benchmark Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) – awarded Tier 2 status, 'Integral to Business Strategy'

2013

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

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)

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Animal Welfare Promotion

We have worked with LEAF and our farming members for numerous Open Farm Sunday events, both virtual and in person where hundreds of families attended to learn all about their food and how it is produced. Also, we have put our farming group members in contact with The Country Trust charity to provide farm visits for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Similarly, we have brought the farm to our Co-op Academies through our Farmer Time Live programme, engaging our farming members with students to teach them about animal welfare and why it is our farmers top priority.

In addition, we have written a number of Co-op blogs including 'Meet the producers: our meat, fish and dairy farmers' which features informative videos of our farming members out on their farms telling customers their story. We have also published content in the Co-op Love Local campaigns, the articles had stories from some of our farming group members and explained how they always strive to improve their livestock's health and comfort.

We have also created a 'Where to buy higher welfare products' webpage that sits on the RSPCA website, the page promotes higher welfare standards to our customers and the RSPCA Assured products they can find in our stores. Our 'X' (Twitter page) [@CoopAgriMatters](#) has gained new followers in the last year, we use the social media platform to communicate important and informative messages to our customers. We have tweeted to our wide audience weekly by posting videos and pictures from our farming group members, farm visits and virtual events.

Co-op Farming & Fisheries Blogs

- [Our Future of Food 2030 Ambition](#)
- [Females in Farming](#)
- [Meet our producers](#)
- [Purchasing Sustainable Seafood](#)
- [Why it's important to buy British](#)
- [Supporting British Dairy Farmers](#)

Meet the producer videos

- We headed to Dumfries to visit Keith who supplies Scottish Co-op stores with [Aberdeen Angus beef](#)
- We meet Robert, one of the many farmers who provide the Co-op with [Chicken](#)
- 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](#)
- We meet Rob and Sian, one of the many farmers who provide the Co-op with [free-range eggs](#)
- We visit a family farm that supplies Co-op with tasty [Hereford beef](#)
- We are really proud of our British lamb, meet one of the farmers who produce [lamb](#) for the Co-op
- We headed to Oxfordshire to show you how our [British pork](#) products are produced
- We headed to the beautiful landscape of the Outer Hebrides to find out why Co-op [Scottish salmon](#) tastes so great

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

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- Head back to the Outer Hebrides for another look into [Scottish salmon](#)
- We headed to Norfolk to find out why our British [turkey](#) tastes so good
- A day in the life of a [dairy farmer](#), an insight created by one of our dairy farmers
- Meet Andy and some members of our [Dairy farming group](#) who produce milk for the Co-op
- The [Co-op Farming & Fisheries team](#) work with lots of people in the industry
- Co-op reduces stocking density in chickens as part of a project to improve animal welfare called [space to thrive](#)

Animal Welfare at the Co-op

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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)

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Co-op Farming Group Pillars

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

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Additional Resources

Sourcing Standards

- [Red Tractor Pigs](#)
- [Red Tractor Laying Hens](#)
- [Red Tractor Turkey](#)
- [Red Tractor Chicken](#)
- [Red Tractor Beef & Lamb](#)
- [Red Tractor Dairy](#)
- [RSPCA Laying Hens](#)
- [RSPCA Pigs](#)
- [RSPCA Chicken](#)
- [RSPCA Salmon](#)

Co-op Reporting

- [The Future of Food](#)
- [Future of Food 2019](#)
- [Future of Food 2020](#)
- [Co-operate: It's What We Do 2021](#)
- [Co-operate: It's What We Do 2022](#)
- [Co-op's Climate Plan 2023](#)
- [Co-op Best of British](#)
- [Co-op Health and Wellbeing 2023](#)
- [Plating Up Progress](#)
- [Co-op Healthy Living](#)

Co-op Websites

- [Reporting](#)
- [Our Farmers](#)
- [Co-op Animal Welfare](#)

Co-op in the news

- [Beef Sustainability Pilot](#)
- [Beef and Lamb Farming Groups](#)
- [Co-op AGM and Chicken Welfare](#)
- [Berry Growers: Retailer of the year](#)
- [Climate Leader of the year](#)
- [Space to thrive](#)