

Animal welfare is important to us: Migros' animal welfare policy

Our responsibility

Animal welfare is an important issue for us, and one that we are committed to.

The welfare of the animals that form the basis for our meat, fish, dairy and egg products is of great concern to us. That's why we actively work to ensure the highest possible animal-welfare standards for all animals. Specifically, our animal-welfare efforts span cattle (meat and milk), pigs, sheep, goats, broiler chickens, turkeys, egg-laying hens, rabbits and horses. Migros has also recently begun addressing animal-welfare concerns with regard to fish and seafood.

Animal welfare is important to us, but so is the environment

In addition to animal welfare, Migros takes the environmental impact of animal raw materials seriously, and it is aware of the connection between climate protection and meat consumption. Migros shows the carbon footprint of products using the M-Check climate category. Migros is honest with its customers in this respect: meat is often given a poor climate rating, and Migros recommends consuming such products consciously and only in small quantities. <https://www.migros.ch/en/content/m-check-climate>

Diversifying protein sources: V-Love is good for animals

Migros [actively promotes the development, production and sale of vegan meat substitutes](#) and thus indirectly promotes animal welfare through substitution. No animals need to be slaughtered to produce a vegan steak. By steadily expanding the V-Love range through innovative plant-based alternatives to meat, fish, egg and dairy products, as well as snacks, confectionery and frozen products, Migros is assuming its responsibility to diversify protein sources. Migros' commitment to cultured meat is also pioneering. Here it is collaborating with Aleph Farm to drive forward the development and launch of lab-grown meat.

Our sphere of influence

- As a matter of principle, we promote the welfare of all animals that form the basis of our meat, fish, milk and egg products.
- The vast majority of our meat and fish products are made by Micarna, while most of our dairy products are produced at ELSA, both Migros-owned companies, which enables us to have a direct influence on them. What's more, most of Migros' shell eggs are purchased through Micarna.
- Depending on the value chain, Migros and its industrials can exert varying degrees of influence. Our aim is to make the best possible use of our influence at all times.
 - Domestic broiler chickens: we have a direct influence over our Swiss poultry products through the Migros industrial Micarna, which has its own integrated supply chain for broilers, including a slaughterhouse.
 - Imported broilers, turkeys and eggs: where possible, we try to source imported chicken and turkey meat as well as imported eggs from responsible production systems.
 - For Swiss cattle, pigs, lambs and rabbits, we work closely and in a binding manner with partners whose programmes guarantee these beasts verified animal-welfare standards during both rearing and transportation. Pigs are slaughtered with the utmost of care at the Migros

Industrie business Micarna. Other pigs and other species are slaughtered at partner slaughterhouses with which we are in close contact.

- For our imported beef, pork, horse, rabbit and lamb meat, we have defined minimum requirements in Migros raw-material strategies as well as added-value criteria for suppliers for individual programmes.
- Up to now, little has been recorded regarding animal welfare for fish, especially non-farmed fish. That's why we deliberately choose labels and countries of origin that have defined at least some requirements for fish welfare.
- Non-food: we have defined binding procurement principles for products such as leather, down and pelts. These apply to both our own brands and third-party brands.

Our guiding principles

How does Migros define animal welfare?

For us, animal welfare means that the animal raw materials for our meat, fish, dairy and egg products come from healthy animals kept in species-appropriate conditions and provided with adequate feed. Vertebrates and birds are slaughtered gently at the end of their lives after short transportation. Fish should be caught gently and stunned if possible.

Migros bases its activities on the internationally accepted animal-welfare concept known as the "Five provisions for promoting farm animal welfare," a further development of the Five Freedoms concept. This demands not only good housing conditions, good health, good feed and the ability to engage in species-appropriate behaviour, but also positive mental experiences for farm animals.

Clear bans: Our animal welfare policy includes clear exclusion criteria for all products of animal origin

- No cloning
- No genetically-modified animals (genetic engineering)
- No hormonal/antibiotic performance enhancers (for products originating in Switzerland or elsewhere in Europe)
- No prophylactic use of antibiotics (for products originating in Switzerland or elsewhere in Europe)
- No slaughter without stunning

Further conditions:

- No cage-rearing of egg-laying hens (for products originating in Switzerland or elsewhere in Europe)
- No crate stalls for sows (for products originating in Switzerland or elsewhere in Europe)
- No enclosures without retreats for rabbits (for products originating in Switzerland or Hungary)
- No permanent tethering of dairy cows (for products originating in Switzerland)
- No beak-docking (for products originating in Switzerland)
- No docking of pig tails or clipping of teeth in piglets (for products originating in Switzerland or Italy)
- No killing of male chicks with imported eggs in accordance with the KAT standard (for Swiss eggs from conventional and IP-Suisse production from 2026, for organic products from 2026, gradual implementation from 2024 onwards).
- No killing of finfish or crustaceans without prior stunning (products originating in Switzerland).

Defined bans for non-food products:

- No live-plucked down, no plucking of force-fed animals.
- No leather products from endangered or illegally poached species.
- No products with hair from angora rabbits.
- No real fur as per the Fur Free Retailer programme. The only exceptions are sheepskins and lambskins of international origin as well as rabbit skins from Switzerland - on condition that the animals were not kept exclusively for fur production.

Our aims

Animal welfare is firmly enshrined in our sustainability strategy. The M-Check ratings introduced in 2021 and drawn up by independent institutes are an important goal-setting tool in this respect.

The '[M-Check Animal Welfare](#)' is particularly relevant for the welfare of our animal raw materials. This assesses animal welfare for the genera broilers, eggs (laying hens), turkeys, pigs, beef, lamb, rabbits, horses and, from 2024, ducks, geese and water buffalo using differentiated evaluation grids.

One of Migros' goals is to provide our customers with transparent information about the animal-welfare ratings for our products. The "[Cooperative retailing goals for responsible procurement](#)" state the following:

- All species: The M-Check rating must be shown on the packaging of all own-brand products by the end of 2025.

The criteria and assessments for the animal welfare M-Check are defined by the School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences (HAFL). As part of this, restrictive cages, housing without enhanced facilities, mutilations of all kinds, hormonal or antibiotic performance enhancers, long-distance transportation and other non-species-specific practices result in a low rating for all types of animals. Migros endorses and supports these assessments and pursues the following goal within the framework of its [sustainability strategy for cooperative retailing](#):

- All species (excluding fish/seafood): We will increase animal welfare in our product range to at least two stars for the animal welfare M-Check by 2025.

For fish (farmed and wild), the overall sustainability assessment in the "[fish from responsible sources](#)" [M-Check](#) developed by our partner Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) includes at least the animal-welfare aspects of fish-stock health, the bycatch rate and the fishing method. Migros has defined the following for sustainable fish use:

- For fish and seafood: 100% of the relevant raw materials for our own-brand products must meet the defined sustainability requirements by the end of 2025.

In addition, Migros sets itself the goal of maintaining close partnerships with label organisations that guarantee additional services relating to animal welfare. For example, animals raised in line with the IP-Suisse standard are always kept with more space, bedding and the potential to move about, as are animals raised in accordance with Bio Suisse guidelines. Every year, Migros agrees binding volumes with these partners, thus securing the basis for animal-friendly production.

On certain topics, Migros also promotes defined goals of its partners and integrates them into its own approach, e.g. phasing out the killing of chicks. For example, Migros has included and [promoted](#) "Respeggt" eggs (with in-ovo-sexing) and Demeter eggs raised with fellow cocks in its product range since 2020. Migros also supports the Bio Suisse goal of banning chick-killing for Bio Suisse eggs from 2026 onwards.

Our governance

All purchasers of products of animal origin are obliged to include the Migros goals on animal welfare and sustainability in all decisions on the product range.

Because a large proportion of our products come from our industrial companies Micarna and ELSA, we can implement a large part of our requirements directly. In so doing, we try to source raw materials domestically as far as possible, because Switzerland has significantly higher animal-welfare standards than abroad.

One special project is the construction of the [Micarna poultry slaughterhouse](#), where stunning will in future be conducted using the CO₂ stunning method known as Controlled Atmosphere Stunning (CAS). Together with the low densities at Swiss broiler farms (which comply with the European Chicken Commitment), this enables more animal-friendly production along the entire supply chain.

Migros benefits from the strict animal welfare controls on farm animal husbandry in Switzerland. In addition to the basic and risk-based inspections carried out by cantonal veterinary authorities (cf. [OCFI](#) and official [animal-welfare inspection manuals](#)), the IP-Suisse and organic products sold at Migros are inspected annually by accredited monitoring institutes, often unannounced. We commission the [Swiss Animal Protection Inspection Service](#) to audit all of our own slaughterhouses and those of our partners in Switzerland, as well as the transportation of label animals.

The Centre of Excellence for Meat + Egg Sustainability is available to the entire Migros-Group for questions relating to animal husbandry, animal welfare and sustainability. The specialists at the centre of excellence also represent animal welfare and sustainability aspects during the development of raw material strategies for Migros. Migros' agricultural partner associations can also benefit from the technical support provided by these specialists, for example when developing animal husbandry guidelines or for animal-welfare or sustainability expertise for specific supply chains.

The Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Seafood does also provide the entire Migros-Group internal and external advice on sustainability and animal welfare aspects of farmed and wild-caught Fish and Seafood.

Keep on improving - research on animal welfare: Migros wants to enhance animal welfare in the long term. It therefore also supports research projects on increasing animal welfare. For example, together with the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), it conducted a large-scale project to study the effect of medicinal plants on piglets and calves. Migros is also currently supporting the FiBL on worm control for egg-laying hens. Further information on Migros' commitment to animal welfare and sustainability research can be found [here](#).

Monitoring and reporting

All the strategic animal welfare and sustainability targets are part of a [Group-wide annual controlling system](#). Progress is incorporated into Migros Group's annual sustainability reports in line with the standards of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

In addition, Migros collects specific animal welfare KPIs on an annual basis. The figures for 2024 are shown in the following table:

Animal welfare KPI	Animal category	2024 value
Percentage of egg-laying hens (for shell eggs and fresh/frozen products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not housed in cages	Egg-laying hens	98%

Percentage of egg-laying hens (for shell eggs and fresh/frozen products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are held without beak clipping	Egg-laying hens	95%
Percentage of egg-laying hens (for shell eggs and fresh/frozen products and ingredients) from supply chains in which day-old male chicks are not killed.	Egg-laying hens	56%
Percentage of broiler chickens (for fresh/frozen chicken products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are raised at lower stocking densities (specifically 30kg/m ² or 6lbs/sq ft or less)	Broiler chickens	83%
Percentage of broiler chickens (for fresh/frozen chicken products and ingredients) in the global supply chain from approved breeds with improved animal-welfare outcomes or a lower growth potential	Broiler chickens	2%
Percentage of broiler chickens (for fresh/frozen chicken products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are stunned using controlled atmospheric stunning with an inert gas or multiphase systems, or using effective electrical stunning without live inversion	Broiler chickens	10%
Percentage of sows (for fresh/frozen pork products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not kept in gestation stalls	Pigs	85 - 95%
Percentage of sows (for fresh/frozen pork products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not kept in farrowing pens	Pigs	85 - 95%
Percentage of pigs (for fresh/frozen pork products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that do not undergo tail docking	Pigs	95%
Percentage of dairy cows (for fresh/frozen milk or dairy products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are kept untethered	Dairy cows	57%
Percentage of dairy cattle (for fresh/frozen milk or dairy products and ingredients) in the global supply chain with access to pasture land	Dairy cows	76%
Percentage of dairy cows (for fresh/frozen milk or dairy products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not dehorned	Dairy cows	15%
Percentage of beef cattle (for fresh/frozen beef products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not kept in CAFOs or fattening farms	Beef cattle	90%
Percentage of beef cattle (for fresh/frozen beef products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are kept in groups throughout the entire rearing period	Beef cattle	95%
Percentage of beef cattle (for fresh/frozen beef products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that are not dehorned	Beef cattle	80%
Percentage of farmed salmon (for fresh/frozen salmon products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that is raised at lower stocking densities (especially 10kg/m ³ or less)	Farmed salmon	16%

Percentage of farmed salmon (for fresh/frozen salmon products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that is not starved for more than 72 hours	Farmed salmon	90%
Percentage of farmed salmon (for fresh/frozen salmon products and ingredients) in the global supply chain that is either stunned using percussion or electric shocks, or stunned before slaughter using effective percussion or electric shocks and killed while unconscious	Farmed salmon	98 - 100%
Percentage of animals (excluding finfish) in the global supply chain that are transported within the specified maximum transport times	All species	98%
Percentage of animals (including finfish) in the global supply chain that are stunned prior to slaughter	All species	85%

In its annual [sustainability report](#) (last updated 2023), the Micarna Group reports on the label shares for meat, fish and eggs for Swiss raw materials and imported goods in accordance with the GRI standard. Other key figures such as the number of slaughtered animals (page 39) and animal welfare targets (page 24) are also shown here.

The [results of slaughterhouse audits by Swiss Animal Protection](#) are published on the website of the STS inspection service. Micarna receives the highest rating (A) in these.

Animal welfare and sustainability issues are discussed in an appealing yet also quite critical way in the podcast ["Chrut & Rüebli"](#). In this way, Migros encourages debate in society. Animal welfare and eco-friendly nutrition are also regularly addressed in communication, for instance in the [Migros magazine](#).