



Animal Welfare



Background

At Asda, we care about animal welfare, and we know our customers do as well. Animals used in the production of Asda products must be treated humanely and well. We recognise that the management of farm animals is integral to our customers, our business, and our stakeholders.

Approach

We are continually making improvements across our supply chain to make sure livestock is treated properly at every step of the process across all species and geographical regions in our Own Brand primal meat products.

Asda recognises animals as sentient beings and therefore use the framework of the “five freedoms” to define our animal welfare and sourcing policies (to find out more visit the FAWC website <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/farm-animal-welfare-committee-fawc>).

We assure that 100% of own brand primal meat sold in ASDA stores is assured to a minimum of the Red Tractor standard or an equivalent standard.

We are committed to improving animal health and welfare throughout the supply chain, supporting projects and research with suppliers, growers and producers, Vets and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). We are working closely with farmer groups and suppliers to share best practice and help them gain access to the knowledge and tools they need for efficient, sustainable farming. For more information visit: <https://www.asda.com/creating-change-for-better/better-planet/farming-and-nature>

Governing and Managing Animal Welfare

We have colleagues with specific responsibilities for animal production including welfare who work closely with suppliers and standard bodies to ensure high welfare standards are implemented and maintained across all species.

Our animal welfare policy is agreed through the Asda Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Steering Committee with participation from four members of our executive board. The Asda technical team have regular meetings with our supply base, where animal welfare is discussed and high on the agenda. On top of this, Asda actively encourage our supply base to continually improve animal welfare standards where possible. The Asda technical team carry out supplier audits to ensure adherence to our policies and also use third party audits, such as BRC & Red Tractor to provide further confidence to supplier adherence to policies.

Our animal welfare requirements are embedded within our meat standards and compliance with these standards is a fundamental condition of trade. All suppliers must adhere to our animal welfare standards and apply them throughout the entire production process, and we require traceability of their supply chain. Our suppliers must meet the requirements laid out in our policies, relevant legislation, and assurance schemes. Should any supplier be non-compliant, they must notify Asda immediately. Any non-compliance must be resolved by the supplier, with appropriate corrective action plans which address and resolve the non-compliance in question. It is a requirement for our suppliers to be able to complete a full traceability of all raw materials back to origin upon request.

Our suppliers must provide the necessary training required to all individuals who are directly involved with the handling of animals and records of such training should be available to review upon request. We provide support to our farmer groups to ensure animal welfare is a top priority. We encourage all suppliers and facilitators to support and advise employees on animal welfare. For example, in 2022 our beef development group, including all employees, undertook a refresher animal welfare course. We require our suppliers to report animal welfare outcome measures across all relevant species (covering all geographies) within the Asda own brand primal meat supply chain.

Educating our customers and the wider community

We believe it is important to educate the wider community on topics such as high animal welfare, which is why we attend different events across the country.

We have been a principal sponsor of Open Farm Sunday since 2010 and have supported LEAF closely. Open Farm Sunday is a great opportunity to talk to your local farmers and producers about how their products are made and produced to high animal welfare standards. Follow the link to find out more about Open Farm Sunday and which local farms you can visit: <https://farmsunday.org/>



We also attend agricultural shows to engage with the general public, schools, customers, NGO's and suppliers on higher welfare systems. These have included; The Balmoral Show, The Royal Highland Show, The Great Yorkshire Show and The Royal Welsh Show.



Animal slaughter

100% of our Own Brand primal meat and fish must be stunned pre-slaughter. 100% of Asda's fresh chicken is slaughtered using controlled atmospheric stunning with either inert gas or multiphase systems.

We continue to work with our suppliers to make the slaughter process better; our suppliers are investing in their facilities to deliver high standards of animal welfare to ensure animals are humanely treated prior to slaughter. We require all suppliers' sites to have animal welfare officers and ensure staff have the required Certificates of Competence including designated Animal Welfare Officers to work with the Official Veterinary Surgeon (OVS), ensuring compliance with regulations, safeguarding the welfare of animals.

CCTV

Where CCTV is used in slaughterhouses; footage is to be reviewed for animal welfare compliance on a weekly basis. This should be no less than 15 minutes of footage at random times of the day covering all shifts and shall be recorded.

Animal testing

We are opposed to testing on animals and do not conduct or commission such tests on our own brand beauty, toiletry, or household products. We do not commission our suppliers or any other third party to carry out such test. We operate a fixed cut-off for animal testing of ingredients of 31st December 2009 for cosmetic products and 31st December 2015 for cleaning products.

Antibiotics

ASDA does not allow the routine prophylactic use of antibiotics in livestock rearing and production. Where it is necessary to treat an animal with antibiotics, it must be done under veterinary supervision. All usage must be recorded appropriately and reviewed by both farmer and vet. We are actively working towards reducing antibiotics in our supply chain through our farmer groups, best practice, and supplier partnerships.

We prohibit products that use artificial or hormonal growth promoting substances when rearing animals. Feed for all species is designed specifically for them with additives and materials permitted by law and must meet Red Tractor scheme or equivalent standards.

ASDA is proud to be a member of the Food Industry Initiative on Antimicrobials (FIIA), and through the British Retail Consortium, the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance (RUMA), working across the food sector on this important topic.

Within our seafood supply chain, we aim for 100% certified fish or fish within a fishery improvement project. Within these certifications, there are third party standards such as ASC-certification which are only allowed to use antibiotics/medicines after a qualified veterinarian or fish health professional has diagnosed a disease. This includes medicines that are legally authorised. In addition to these rules, there are certain antibiotics that can never be used on any ASC certified farm. These are the antibiotics which have been designated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as "critically important". These are the antibiotics that WHO has determined are so important to human medicine that they must not be overused, to prevent the risk of bacteria developing resistance. That's why ASC certified farms can never use these treatments under any circumstances. ASC certified farms must put together a wider health plan for their fish, looking at things like good biodiversity beneath the fish farm, survival and health of farmed fish, water filtration, origin and condition of young fish. By encouraging this holistic approach to fish health, farms can become less reliant on the use of antibiotics. All of our own brand sea bass and sea bream are 100% ASC-Certified.

Routine Mutilations/confinement

We prohibit the use of routine mutilation including:

- tail docking
- teeth clipping/grinding on pigs
- beak trimming on poultry
- tail docking on cows
- Fin clipping of fin fish
- mulesing in lambs

in our own brand fresh fresh product supply chain unless permitted by a veterinary surgeon within a health plan We do not permit stall/and tethering in our pork supply chain. We have also committed to stop sourcing eggs from caged housing in both shell eggs and ingredient eggs by 2025. Asda is committed to ending the use of other inhumane practices such as not producing or selling foie gras within our own brand global supply chain. For more information on Asda's commitment to ending routine mutilations and confinement please visit our website on examples of species-specific welfare.

Enrichment

ASDA recognises the importance of enrichment for animals to perform natural behaviours, therefore we stipulate that 100% of all species within Asda's own brand primal meat must be provided with species specific enrichment through building designs, bedding and objects. For more information please visit: <https://www.asda.com/creating-change-for-better/better-planet/farming-and-nature>

Animal Cloning and Genetic Modification

No animals across ASDA's supply base are subject to any genetic modification. We specify to all our suppliers that across all our products we will not use any genetically modified or cloned livestock.

Transportation

100% of all our own brand fresh meat suppliers must keep transportation times to a minimum with a maximum permitted time of 8 hours. This is the same for all species imported from outside of the EU. Livestock hauliers must comply with all farm assurance schemes.

Textiles

Feathers

All relevant products that contain feathers must meet the legal requirements of EU/142/2011 and the UK Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2011 concerned with the use of animal by-products. Suppliers must only use feathers that are a by-product of the commercial food industry within our non-food products. Recovery of feather products must be from slaughtered birds, and live plucking is not accepted. We require all feathers to come from a source where no poultry has been subject to force-feeding. We will use risk assessment and testing programmes to make sure suppliers are compliant.

Fibres of Animal Origin

Wool

We require all suppliers to keep a copy of and or provide the following: Proof of country-of-origin documents for all wool products sourced. If virgin wool is sourced from Australia, the Australian wool testing authority (AWTA) test certificate must be submitted to the relevant department garment technologist pre-production, which states the wool is 'Non Mulesed' or 'Ceased Mulesed'. We do not accept products containing: Angora, Mohair, Alpaca Fur.

Faux fur

At Asda / George we do not allow animal fur in our products. Any product that looks like fur is clearly labelled with information stating that it is not real fur. Asda / George brand products do not allow cat or dog fur to be mixed with fake fur products. Any garments or other fashion items that are made from textiles that imitate animal skins or pelts must be labelled with the fibre content, clearly

stating faux fur on the care label. The use of Karakul lamb pelts (also known as broadtail, Persian lamb, Astrakhan or Krimmer) is strictly forbidden in any Asda / George products.

To find out more about ASDA's commitments and work:

<https://www.asda.com/creating-change-for-better/better-planet/farming-and-nature>

