



Annual review 2024

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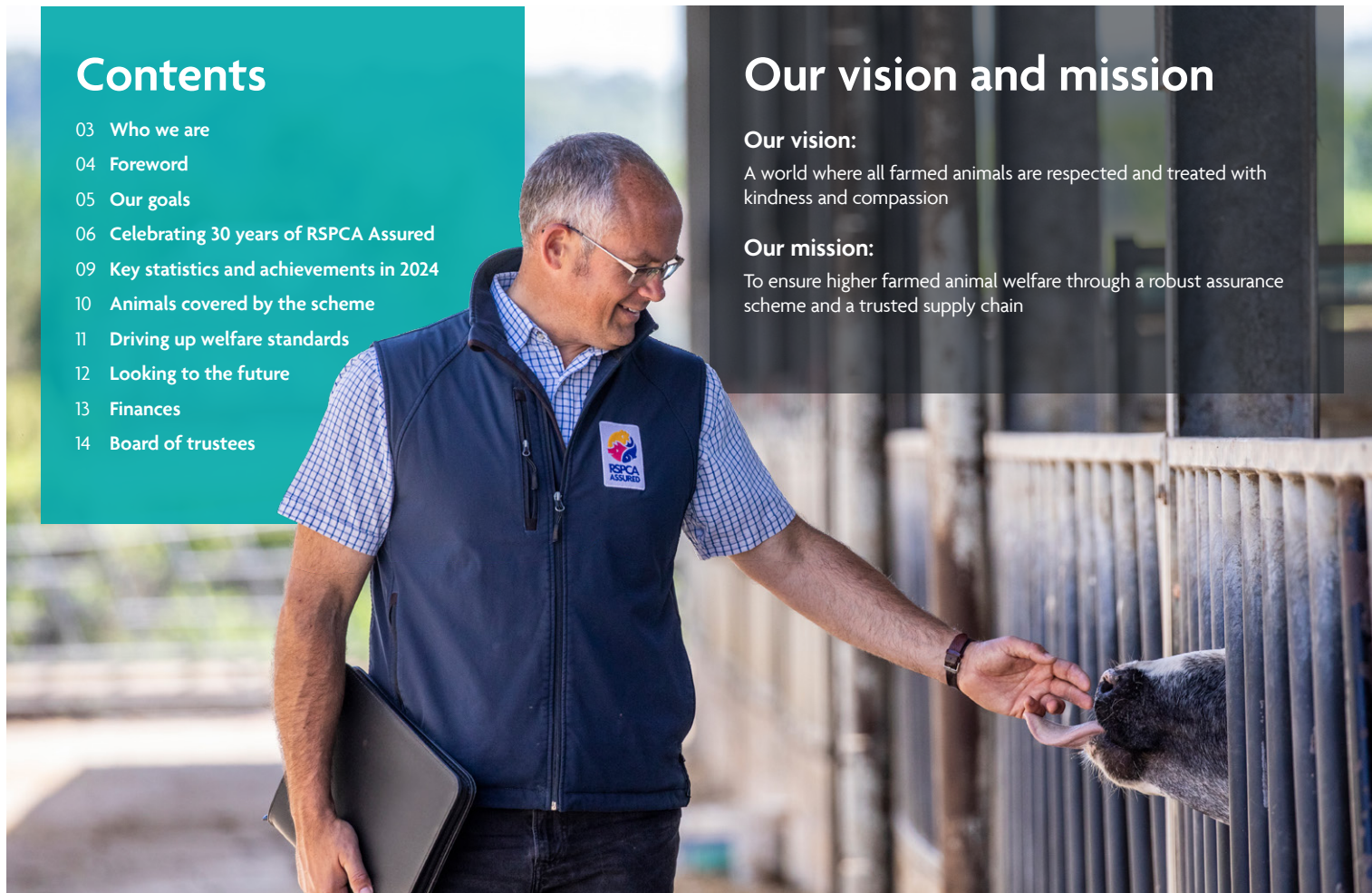
Our vision and mission

Our vision:

A world where all farmed animals are respected and treated with kindness and compassion

Our mission:

To ensure higher farmed animal welfare through a robust assurance scheme and a trusted supply chain



Who we are

RSPCA Assured is the RSPCA's not-for-profit farm animal welfare assurance scheme and ethical food label.

Set up in 1994 to help improve the lives of animals farmed for food and give consumers a higher welfare choice, it's the only UK farm assurance scheme solely dedicated to animal welfare.

It exceeds UK legislation, other industry schemes and retailer standards in key areas of animal welfare and acts as a catalyst for change throughout the farming industry.

When you see an RSPCA Assured label on meat, fish, eggs or dairy products, it means the farm, haulier and slaughterhouse have been assessed and confirmed by our team of experienced assessors to have met the RSPCA's higher farm animal welfare standards.

The welfare standards cover every aspect of the animals' lives, from their health and diet to environment and care.

RSPCA Assured approves free-range, organic, indoor and outdoor farming systems where the RSPCA's strict standards are being met.

We also promote awareness among consumers, and the RSPCA Assured label makes it easy for them to choose products from animals that have had a better life.

Our goal is for people to eat less animal products from low-welfare farms and – if they choose to eat meat, fish, eggs and dairy – to eat better by consciously choosing RSPCA Assured food because they trust the animals have had a better life.



Foreword

I've spent my entire career in the food industry, and one thing I've learned over the years is the importance of animal welfare in farming.

This, along with my drive to make a difference, led me to become the executive director of RSPCA Assured in 2024, the scheme's 30th anniversary year.

Over the last three decades, the combined work of RSPCA Assured and the RSPCA has undoubtedly significantly changed the landscape of farming and improved the welfare of many millions of farmed animals.

There are currently more than 4,000 RSPCA Assured members, and we have consistently increased our membership year after year. In 2024, we received more than 400 new applications for membership, which is almost 10% more compared to 2023.

RSPCA Assured remains the only assurance scheme solely dedicated to improving the lives of farmed animals, with our assessors regularly visiting farms, hauliers, and slaughterhouses to ensure the RSPCA's strict welfare standards are being met.

Thanks to the RSPCA welfare standards, hens on RSPCA Assured member farms don't spend their lives in cages, pigs don't give birth in farrowing crates, only slower-growing, healthier chicken breeds are used – and all animals are provided with comfortable bedding and plenty of enrichment.

On average, 760 standards must be met for each species, each and every one making a difference to farmed animals' lives.

I'm incredibly proud of these achievements, which wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and commitment of our RSPCA Assured members and retail partners.

In 2024 we began an ambitious modernisation programme of RSPCA Assured, which will help us accelerate our ambition of more than half of the UK's farmed animals being raised to RSPCA welfare standards by 2030.

So, if you choose to eat meat, fish, eggs, or dairy, always look for the RSPCA Assured logo.

You'll find it in Aldi, Co-op, Lidl, M&S, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco – and in restaurants including McDonald's and JD Wetherspoon.

Thank you for your support in driving up farmed animal welfare.

Toby Baker, RSPCA Assured executive director



Our goals:

- 1 Increase the number of farmed animals on the scheme
- 2 Increase assessment capability
- 3 Implement a tangible commercial framework
- 4 Improve member and partner experience
- 5 Increase organisational engagement and impact

These goals include an ambitious plan to see at least 50% of farmed animals reared according to the RSPCA's welfare standards.



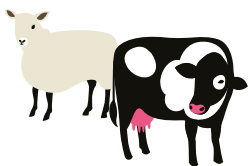
Celebrating 30 years of RSPCA Assured 1994 to 2011

In the **early 1990s**, RSPCA experts were concerned about the welfare of the millions of animals farmed for food in the UK. So they decided to develop new guidance on how to farm animals in a better way, prioritising their care and welfare.



In **1994**, Freedom Food was born – a certification scheme for farming businesses dedicated to better care for their animals.

Members of the scheme committed to work to strict welfare standards and agreed to be inspected by Freedom Food farm assessors.



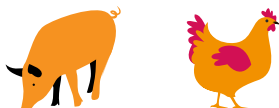
Throughout the **late 1990s and early 2000s**, the RSPCA continued to develop and publish welfare standards for **farmed sheep, dairy cows, chickens, turkeys, ducks and salmon**.



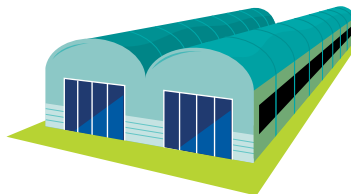
In **2011**, Freedom Food required CCTV to be installed in all its members' slaughterhouses to further improve animal welfare at every stage of the food system.

The RSPCA's welfare scientists published the first welfare standards for **pigs and laying hens**.

These focused on ensuring the animals had plenty of space and enrichment to let them express their natural behaviours.



By **2005**, more than 1,700 businesses had joined Freedom Food, promising to put the welfare of animals first.



Celebrating 30 years of RSPCA Assured 2012 to 2024



Sainsbury's

In 2012, Sainsbury's became the first retailer to use 100% Freedom Food eggs in its own-brand range. And in 2013, McDonald's switched to 100% Freedom Food pork.

M&S

By 2017, RSPCA Assured milk could be found on the high street at M&S stores nationwide.



And in 2019, RSPCA Assured celebrated a quarter of a century of improving the lives of farmed animals.



In 2015, Freedom Food had a makeover and became RSPCA Assured. More standards were introduced, and more commitments were made by big brands.



Co-op began sourcing 100% of its own-label pork from RSPCA Assured farms in 2018.



Restaurants and retailers have continued to commit to higher animal welfare – and in 2024, RSPCA Assured turned 30.



CELEBRATING
30 YEARS

Celebrating 30 years of improving farmed animal welfare

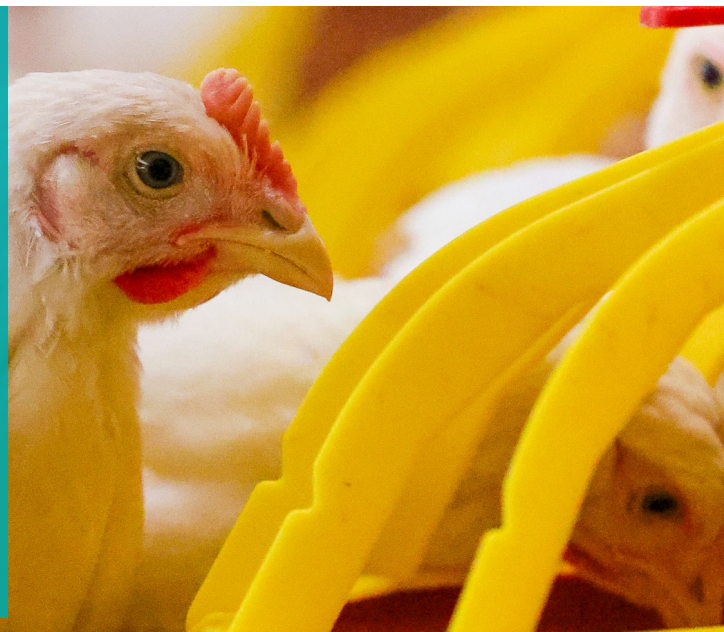


RSPCA Assured was revolutionary when it started 30 years ago.

It was the first scheme to focus solely on farmed animal welfare and require its members to meet the RSPCA's market-leading welfare standards covering every aspect of animals' lives.

The combined work of RSPCA Assured and the RSPCA has undoubtedly significantly changed the farming landscape and improved the welfare of millions of farmed animals.

It's our mission to continue to drive change throughout the farming industry and ensure millions more farmed animals have better lives.



Thirty years of working together

Thank you to all of our members – and our retailer and food service partners – for your valued support in our mission to improve farmed animal welfare.

You're helping us make a difference to the lives of millions of animals.



amazonfresh

ASDA

co op

THE JOLLY HOG



M&S
EST. 1884

Morrisons
Since 1899

ocado

Sainsbury's

TESCO

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS



WSH

Key statistics and achievements in 2024



More than
34 million
terrestrial animals were
covered by the scheme



70%
of laying hens in the
UK were RSPCA Assured

As were
24%
of pigs



There were also
30,530,252
salmon on the scheme

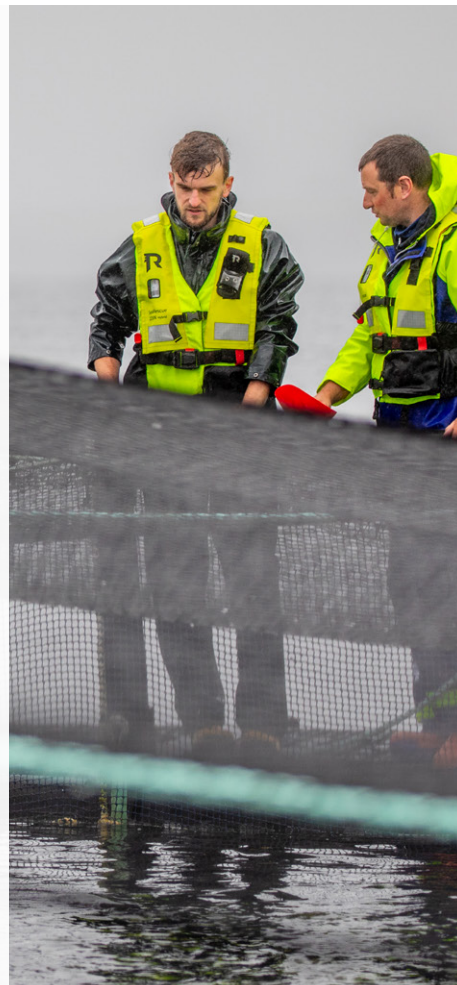


And
872,004
turkeys











In December
2024, we had
4,015
members

And our team
carried out
3,965
assessments



Animals covered by the scheme

	Species	RSPCA Assured 2024 animal numbers (2024)*	Defra 2024 animal numbers (1 June 2024)	Percentage
	Laying hens**	29,503,824	41,862,895	70.48%
	Chickens	2,632,116	112,374,225	2.34%
	Beef cattle	2,827	1,344,374	0.21%
	Dairy cattle	37,456	1,836,442	2.04%
	Pigs	1,118,840	4,715,669	23.73%
	Sheep	660	31,016,701	0.00%
	Turkeys	872,004	3,100,000	28.13%
	Salmon	30,530,232	37,041,400***	82.42%
	TOTAL	64,697,959	233,291,706	27.73%****

Notes on market penetration calculations

*The Defra and RSPCA Assured numbers are for animals kept in the UK, except turkeys (England only) and salmon (Scotland only).

**Both the Defra and RSPCA Assured figures include laying hens and pullets reared for eggs for eating.

***The number of farmed salmon is taken from the Scottish government's records. Defra does not collect this data.

**** The market penetration figure includes salmon for the first time this year.

Please note that a new methodology has been used to calculate the number of animals covered by the RSPCA Assured scheme in 2024. This means the way we collect and analyse the data is aligned with wider industry reporting on animal numbers, including Defra.



Driving up welfare standards

The RSPCA's farm animals department develops welfare standards for each of the major animal species farmed in the UK, aiming to deliver improved animal welfare above and beyond 'standard' or typical UK production.

The standards ensure animals have everything they need for a better quality of life, whether they're kept on large or small farms or indoor or outdoor production systems.

These standards must be met by all farms on the RSPCA Assured scheme.

The standards are continually improved and progressed using the latest scientific research, robust evidence and practical farming experience.

The RSPCA also regularly consults with other animal welfare and agricultural scientists, veterinary surgeons, retailers, and farming industry representatives to ensure that its standards remain at the forefront of farm animal care and welfare and are achievable on commercial farms.

Feedback on the development of standards is also taken into account from the specially trained RSPCA assessors who audit scheme members and from the scheme members themselves.

This thorough, evidence-based approach is one of the key strengths of the RSPCA welfare standards.

The RSPCA welfare standards for salmon

In 2024, the RSPCA welfare standards for salmon were updated.

Amendments included the introduction of regular welfare outcome assessments, which must now be carried out at fresh and seawater farms.

The process of measuring and recording fish welfare – known as welfare outcome assessment – is extremely important as it helps ensure that the resources we provide and the management practices implemented are effective in improving fish welfare.

The data collected will be used to identify any health and welfare challenges on the farm and will help inform future versions of the welfare standards.

Other changes included a new requirement that CCTV systems cover the whole slaughter process and standards relating to non-medicinal treatments for sea lice and gill disease.



Looking to the future

It's our mission to continue to drive change throughout the farming industry and ensure millions more farmed animals have better lives.

In 2024, we welcomed the conclusions of an independent review by Crowe auditors, which found that the RSPCA Assured scheme is operating effectively to assure animal welfare on our members' farms.

The Crowe review made some recommendations for how the scheme could achieve even more for farmed animal welfare.

We have committed to implementing these – and many were already underway in 2024 as part of a modernisation programme.

For example, we are implementing new strategies to increase the number of RSPCA Assured members, which will ensure that more farmed animals are cared for according to the RSPCA's welfare standards.

The programme's aims include:

- The implementation of new strategies to increase the number of RSPCA Assured members, ensuring more farmed animals are cared for according to the RSPCA's welfare standards
- Exploring the use of more technological aids, including additional CCTV and body-worn cameras to aid in the identification of issues so we can better support our members in meeting the standards
- Increasing the number of announced and unannounced visits to RSPCA Assured members
- Developing and applying a grading system for all non-compliances identified to prioritise actions by members.

We will publish an annual analysis of the scheme's impact, beginning in autumn 2025.



Finances

RSPCA Assured is a charity and not-for-profit organisation. Licensing and membership fees help cover the cost of assessments and operation of the scheme.

These fees are our sole source of income, and the money raised is reinvested into improving the lives of more farmed animals and promoting the scheme.

All amounts relate to continuing activities. The statement of financial activities incorporates the income and expenditure accounts, and all gains and losses from current and preceding years. All amounts stated are related to unrestricted funds.

Highlights from 2024 include the successful development of a strategy to increase the number of farmed animals covered by the scheme and the introduction of a new commercial plan.

This work established a framework for RSPCA Assured's growth from 2024 to 2030, resulting in an 11% increase in income from 2023 to 2024.

RSPCA Assured has also increased its operational capability, expanding its headcount by 36% and investing in the development of the RSPCA Assured brand.

2024 carried forward funds are expected to be drawn down in 2025 and 2026 to support growth plans.

Reserves remain at an acceptable level, striking a balance between long-term sustainability to ensure the charity can support future beneficiaries, whilst achieving a high level of impact on farmed animal welfare in the short term.

Macroeconomic factors included pressure from activists and ongoing economic uncertainty, with cost-of-living pressures still prevalent. Against this backdrop, RSPCA Assured

income showed growth that exceeded the overall market, suggesting increased awareness and demand for higher animal welfare products.

Although ongoing pressures from external influences persist – including the ability of producers to afford higher welfare standards – there are many reasons to be optimistic about the ongoing sustainability and growth of the RSPCA Assured scheme.

Year ended December 2024	2024	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Income from:				
Donations	0	80,000	0	0
Charitable activities	6,276,046	5,651,427	5,205,669	4,517,553
Other trading activities	0	0	10,720	7,003
Investments	20,178	12,482	2,242	182
Total income	6,296,224	5,663,999	5,298,631	4,524,738
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	6,406,874	5,977,180	4,285,932	3,710,340
Net movement in funds	(110,650)	(313,181)	1,012,699	814,398
Reconciliation of funds:				
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2024	3,137,177	3,450,358	2,437,659	1,623,261
Funds carried forward at 31 December 2024	3,026,527	3,137,177	3,450,358	2,437,659

Board of trustees

Name	Role	Date of appointment
David Smith	Chair	21 November 2019
Rene Olivieri	Vice Chair	21 November 2019
Gavin Chohan	Treasurer	7 December 2023
David Beardmore		24 June 2024
David North		24 June 2024
David Main		17 June 2021
Daniel Thiem		7 December 2023
Audrey Whycherley		7 December 2023

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

RSPCA Assured Ltd is a registered charitable trading company operating in the commercial field of food production from farmed animals. Its role is to promote and apply welfare standards drawn up by the RSPCA through marketing the RSPCA Assured labelling scheme.

RSPCA Assured encourages farmers, hauliers, abattoirs and other businesses in the food supply chain to participate, educate and promote awareness with end-users and consumers of food products bearing the RSPCA Assured certification mark.

Registered Office:

RSPCA Assured, Fourth Floor, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1GY

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Company no: 2723670. Charity registered in England & Wales: 1059879 and Scotland SC038199





RSPCA
ASSURED

