

Updated RSPCA rainbow trout welfare standards now available for RSPCA Assured members

Featuring 177 progressive new welfare standards

Wednesday 23 April 2025

RSPCA Assured announced today the publication of the RSPCA's updated welfare standards for farmed rainbow trout, which will help further improve fish welfare.

From **23 July 2025**, the new revision of the RSPCA's farmed rainbow trout welfare standards will come into effect, introducing 177 new standards.

Sean Black, Senior Scientific and Policy Officer and fish welfare specialist at the RSPCA, said: "This is a really positive step forward for fish welfare. The changes include the introduction of CCTV for the whole slaughter process - the first time any UK assurance scheme has required this for trout.

"We look forward to seeing the standards implemented and bringing the industry with us on another important welfare progression."



The updated standards include:

- Regular welfare outcome assessments must now be conducted in fresh and seawater farms.
- CCTV systems must cover the whole slaughter process, including initial system entry and exit, stunning, killing, and as fish pass through or into the post-stun assessment area.
- The prohibition of specific slaughter methods - such as asphyxiation and carbon dioxide narcosis - which the RSPCA doesn't consider to be humane.
- The introduction of a number of new standards relating to the use of non-medical

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treatments for sea lice and gill disease.

- Daily checks in all tanks and enclosures for moribund (sick or dying) fish with prompt, appropriate action.
- An increased focus on reducing the need for antibiotic use. *The use of antibiotics must now be reviewed annually or at the end of a production cycle. The RSPCA recognises the industry's previous and ongoing work to encourage responsible use of antibiotics, and it is hoped these standards will support this work.*

Kevin White, RSPCA Assured farming engagement lead, added: "All RSPCA Assured members want the best for the fish in their care and we hope these updated standards will help them to keep achieving their higher welfare goals.

"We really value all of our members, and we greatly appreciate their continued commitment to progressing trout welfare and the RSPCA Assured scheme."

To continually improve farmed animal welfare, the RSPCA regularly reviews and updates all of its standards for different species. This is done in consultation with the farming industry and a wide range of other stakeholders whilst taking account of the latest scientific, veterinary and industry knowledge and experience.

New, potential or existing RSPCA Assured members who are in need of support or advice about meeting the updated rainbow trout standards should [contact](#) RSPCA Assured's farming and technical engagement team via [membership services](#) online.

Find out more and view the updated farmed rainbow trout standards [here](#) and on the RSPCA website [here](#).

Ends

Notes to editors

- Visit RSPCA Assured's rainbow trout members hub for more info [here](#).

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