



MARKS & SPENCER POLICY FOR FARM ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

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FOR FARM ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE**

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1.0 Purpose:

This policy is to be used by farmers and suppliers supplying livestock-derived products into the Marks & Spencer food supply chain. It is designed to provide guidance on overarching Marks & Spencer Farm Animal Health and Welfare requirements and should be used in conjunction with the species-specific Marks & Spencer Code of Practice relating to livestock production (including farmed fish), which include animal health and welfare requirements that are relevant for that species.

2.0 Scope:

This policy is aimed as a reference point for all farmers and suppliers of livestock-derived products into the Marks & Spencer food business as well as auditors undertaking *Marks & Spencer Select Farm* audits. For the purpose of clarity, the term 'livestock' covers terrestrial land based livestock production and aquaculture production but does not include wild-caught fish.

3.0 Responsibilities

Marks & Spencer takes farm animal health and welfare very seriously and is committed to delivering leading standards. This policy has been prepared to ensure producers and suppliers supplying us adopt and implement the highest practical and commercially viable standards of farm animal health and welfare across our supply chains (UK and globally) – at all stages of the animal's life – on the farm, during transportation and at the place of slaughter. These are global commitments and apply wherever we source.

Day to day management of this policy and its implementation is the responsibility of our team of agriculture and aquaculture specialists. All our agriculture and aquaculture managers are externally trained in animal welfare by Bristol University and re-certified every 3 years and we have a requirement that our suppliers also undertake the same rigorous certification.

Adherence to these policy requirements forms part of our terms of trade with our suppliers and is reviewed as part of our *Marks & Spencer Select Farm Assurance* programme, Welfare Audit programme and annual Supplier Scorecard assessment.

4.0 Background

In developing our animal health and welfare policies and production specifications we have used the internationally-recognised 'Five Freedoms', recommended by the UK Farm Animal Welfare Committee, as a framework and for guidance. These freedoms are:

1. **Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** - by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour

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2. **Freedom from Discomfort** - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. **Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease** - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
4. **Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind
5. **Freedom from Fear and Distress** - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

Section 5.0 of this policy outlines our minimum requirements for farm animal health and welfare.

We have developed our own detailed standards and were the first retailer to pioneer a farm assurance scheme – *M&S Select Farm Assurance* – to address our customers' concerns on food safety, animal welfare and animal health. Our Marks & Spencer Select Farm Assurance standards are set out in our Codes of Practice and go beyond the requirements of current legislation and industry farm assurance standards (e.g. UK Red Tractor). Our Codes of Practice set out our species specific animal welfare requirements on training and competencies, housing, shelter and handling, health and nutrition, medication, feed and water, lairage and transport, and humane stunning and slaughter. They are a fundamental link in an integrated chain of assurance from farm to store.

We work with our suppliers and a number of leading organisations (e.g. RSCPA, Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), the Humane Slaughter Association and FAI Farms) to further research and progress our animal welfare standards and will update this policy in line with independent advice to ensure that leading standards are met and maintained.

5.0 Requirements

This section outlines the requirements of our Farm Animal Health & Welfare Policy.

5.1 General principles

- Direct suppliers are required to have effective and verifiable traceability systems in place from farm to store, both forwards and backwards.
- As a minimum all our producers must adhere to current legislative requirements and meet at least one National or Industry Farm Assurance Scheme standard (e.g. UK Red Tractor).
- Animal welfare or husbandry systems that are prohibited in UK legislation must not be used. This also applies to livestock-derived products sourced from outside of the UK.
- All the meat and poultry we sell must, without exception, come from animals that have been humanely slaughtered and animals must be pre-slaughter stunned.

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- Live animal transportation must not exceed 8 hours and suppliers should target a time less than 4 hours (inclusive of loading/unloading)¹.
- Suppliers must comply with our requirement to monitor animal welfare compliance through the use of Welfare Outcome Measures by providing appropriate data as required.
- All abattoirs used in our supply chain must have CCTV, with footage kept for a minimum of 90 days.
- All farmers and those involved in the handling of livestock must be appropriately trained and competent to care for them.

5.2 Key requirements

- All livestock used for the production of our foods must be produced according to Marks & Spencer livestock specifications and species-specific Codes of Practice that detail specific animal welfare requirements. For instance:
 - All shell eggs and eggs used as ingredient must be 100% free range.
 - All fresh whole turkey and ducks must be produced to higher welfare standards as outlined in species-specific Codes of Practice.
 - All geese must be 100% free range.
 - All fresh pork must be from outdoor-bred, free range or indoor free-farrow systems. We are currently working to remove all confinement farrowing from our ingredient and continental supply by April 2020.
 - All our fresh chicken must be given increased space, natural daylight and environmental enrichment, as outlined in species-specific Codes of Practice.
- Animal and aquafeed feed must be sourced from the most sustainable sources available.
- The use of production systems and confinement systems that can never fulfil an animal's welfare needs are banned. This includes:
 - Caged systems for laying hens and poultry;
 - The forced feeding of geese and ducks for foie gras;
 - The rearing of calves for white veal;
 - The use of the sow stalls for pigs and tether systems for dairy cows.
- Specific breeds of animal that, due to their genetics, inherently cause welfare issues are not permitted to be supplied, including Barbary duck.
- Genetic engineering or cloning of livestock is prohibited.
- The use of growth promoters is not permitted.
- The selling of meat and by-products from certain exotic species such as crocodile, kangaroo, and frogs legs is not permitted.

¹ **Note:** the only exception to this is the transportation of farmed Atlantic salmon and farmed scallops and mussels, which are covered within species-specific Codes of Practice

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5.3 Livestock health

- All livestock used for the production of our foods must be maintained in good health and veterinary medicine use must only be used for the treatment of sick or injured animals.
- All farms in the Marks & Spencer supply chain must have written Veterinary Health Plans that are regularly reviewed and updated.
- Any sick or injured animals must be treated promptly.
- The routine behavioural mutilation of farm animals and farmed fish is not permitted (including tail docking and teeth clipping in pigs) unless veterinary advice deems it strictly necessary in order to protect the animals from subsequent loss of welfare due to injury. Where certain practices are currently unavoidable within the industry (e.g. castration or disbudding of male cattle or sheep and beak tipping of chicks in brown-feathered layer flocks²) suppliers must utilise early intervention and best practice procedures with appropriate use of anaesthetic and analgesic for pain relief.
- Veterinary medicines must only be used according to veterinary advice.
- Antibiotics must always be prescribed by a veterinarian for metaphylaxis and treatment of specific diseases.
- All antimicrobial use for all animals must be recorded through documentation in a manual or electronic medicine book.
- Antimicrobials deemed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as highest priority critically important for use in human medicine, including 3rd and 4th generation Cephalosporins, Fluoroquinolones, Macrolides or colistin are not permitted for use in our supply chains, other than as a last resort supported by diagnostic testing to protect animal welfare. All treatments of this type must be notified to M&S Agricultural team.
- Prophylactic treatment and routine use of antibiotics is not permitted.
- No medicines or substances are permitted to be employed to artificially promote animal growth.

5.4 Audit and corrective action

Marks & Spencer Select Farm Audits

- Direct supplier (usually the primary processor) must undertake *Marks & Spencer Select Farm Assurance* audits to our standards to the minimum specified frequency (typically every 12 to 18 months depending on species).
 - Supplying farmers must pass this audit in order to be part of our supply chain.
 - The *Marks & Spencer Select Farm* auditor (employed or contracted to the supplier) must be trained to our requirements by SAI Global and must be re-trained every three years.

² Beak tipping must only be performed in day old chicks in the hatchery using infrared beak treatment (IRBT) by trained and supervised staff.

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- Suppliers must provide updated details (in the prescribed format) of farms which have passed and failed and latest audit dates to SAI Global each month.
- Direct suppliers must also facilitate SAI Global performing a minimum of two shadow audits and spot checks of *Marks & Spencer Select Farms* per primary processing site each year to ensure consistency with our standards. Farms must also pass these audits to remain part of our supply chain.

Welfare Audits

- Direct suppliers must permit SAI Global to undertake a Welfare Audit of primary processing facilities each year to ensure transport, lairage and slaughter all meet our requirements.
- Based on the results of the audit, primary processing facilities are assigned a rating of Red, Bronze, Silver or Gold based on the number and type of non-conformances and how they are progressing with addressing non-conformances from previous audits.
- Welfare Audit findings and corrective actions are stored on Connect – our online Quality Management System. The supplier must sign off all audit actions within agreed timescales to remain part of the Marks & Spencer supply base.

6.0 Continuous improvement

- Direct suppliers are required to commit to continuous improvement and complete the Agricultural Scorecard on an annual basis as part of the Food Group Supplier Scorecard process.
- Direct suppliers are encouraged to progress towards achieving at least Silver level on the Scorecard and in consultation with their Marks & Spencer representative must:
 - Have action plans to improve performance where required and submit when required a KPI document to the agreed level of detail and frequency.
 - Commit to taking the recommended actions agreed as a result of the Scorecard review.

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