

RSPCA APPROVED FARMING SCHEME

IMPACT REPORT 2018





**MORE THAN
2 BILLION ANIMALS**

HAVE BENEFITTED FROM
BETTER CONDITIONS SINCE 1996

DELIVERING BETTER WELFARE FOR FARM ANIMALS



475 FARMS

PARTICIPATED IN THE
RSPCA APPROVED
FARMING SCHEME IN 2018



**507 MILLION
ANIMALS**

FARMED TO RSPCA APPROVED
STANDARDS IN 2018



**1081 FARM
ASSESSMENTS**

CONDUCTED IN 2018



**800+
PRODUCTS**

BY 25 BRANDS



**MORE
AUSTRALIANS**

SAY THE RSPCA APPROVED LOGO
INFLUENCES THEIR PURCHASE DECISIONS
MORE THAN ANY OTHER LABEL

McCrindle consumer research

As Australia's leading independent animal welfare certification program, the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme works closely with farmers to make a positive impact on the lives of farm animals. Since the Scheme was established over two decades ago, more than 2 billion animals have benefitted from better conditions on farm, during transport and at slaughter, including hundreds of millions of animals in 2018 alone. Focused on improving the lives of as many farm animals as possible *today*, the RSPCA is proud that the Scheme has had a significant and positive impact on the nation's most intensively farmed animals.

Year on year, the Scheme is seeing significant growth and, with RSPCA Approved products in major and independent retailers and many popular restaurant chains, it's never been easier for Australians to purchase higher-welfare food. This achievement is thanks to committed farmers, brand owners and retailers who have chosen to put animal welfare at the forefront of their business decisions, as well as everyday Australians who make animal welfare a priority in their purchasing.

Recent studies such as '*Australia's shifting mindset on farm animal welfare*' commissioned by the federal Department of Agriculture are showing high levels of consumer concern for farm animal welfare. This particular study found that 95% of Australians view farm animal welfare to be a concern, and 91% want at least some reform to address this.

The study also found concerns around animal welfare issues are spread relatively evenly across states and territories, and between rural and metropolitan areas, showing that farm animal welfare is a concern for all Australians.

This substantial consumer interest in humanely-farmed food has meant there is an increasing demand for higher welfare products, and independent assurance of welfare has become a valuable point of difference for brands.

Products bearing the RSPCA Approved logo are recognised by the consumer as indicative of good welfare, and provide that point of difference for brands seeking to demonstrate their animal welfare credentials. And, with tens of millions of animals on farm every day, consumers who choose humane food are supporting Australian farmers who are putting animal welfare first.

The RSPCA remains committed to helping make Australia a leader when it comes to delivering better welfare for farm animals.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

*“As a former chicken farmer
and now an Assessor with
the **RSPCA Approved
Farming Scheme**, there’s
nothing better than seeing
poultry farming done well
and with a **focus on welfare**
– it’s something I’m **proud to**
be part of.”*

Sue Barmos, RSPCA Approved Farming
Scheme Assessor

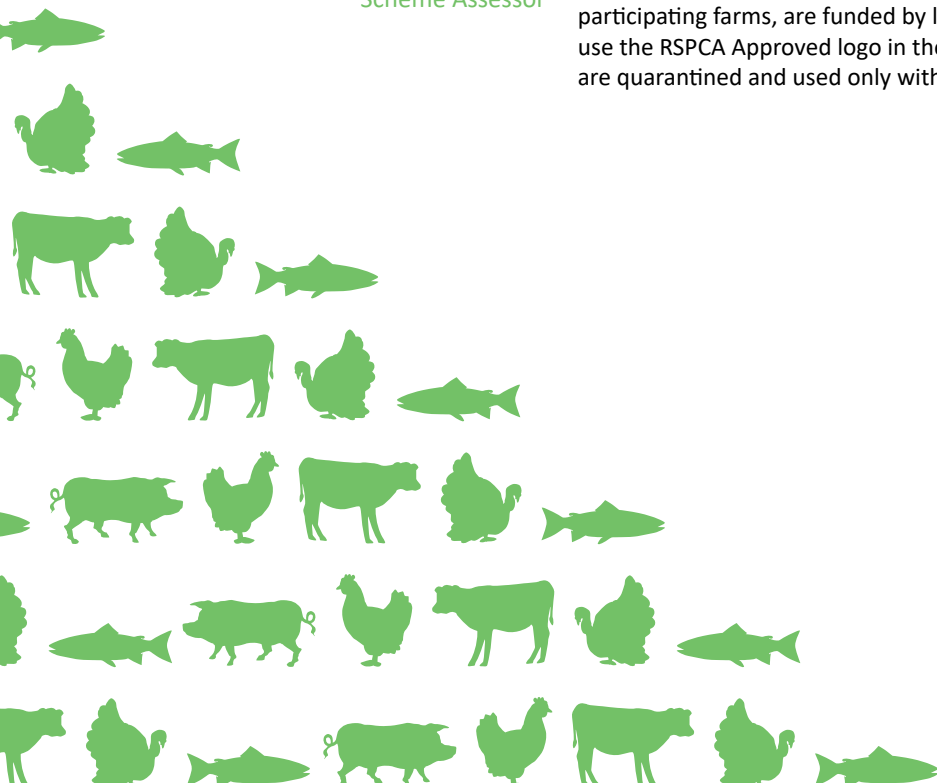
The RSPCA established the Approved Farming Scheme as part of its efforts to continuously improve the lives of Australia’s farmed animals. The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme is a not-for-profit program that works by:

- Establishing animal welfare Standards that go beyond regulatory requirements
- Enabling differentiation and marketing of products from RSPCA Approved farms
- Offering consumers a higher animal welfare alternative

To participate in the Scheme, eligible farms are assessed against the RSPCA’s detailed animal welfare Standards. These Standards take into consideration RSPCA Australia policy, available scientific research, current legislation in Australia, codes of practice, government standards and guidelines for animal welfare, veterinary, technical and producer advice, as well as current industry good practice. They set a high requirement for animal welfare while still being commercially viable, which is integral to the RSPCA’s objective to improve the lives of farm animals on a large scale.

The RSPCA takes conformance of farms with the Standards very seriously, with RSPCA Approved farms visited by an RSPCA Assessor to evaluate conformance with the Standards 2-4 times a year. During an assessment, the RSPCA Assessor will observe relevant areas where animals are kept as part of the Scheme.

The costs associated with the Scheme, including the ongoing assessments of participating farms, are funded by licensing fees. These fees are paid by brands that use the RSPCA Approved logo in the marketing of their RSPCA Approved product and are quarantined and used only within the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme.





**1,322,519
HENS**

HAVE BENEFITTED FROM
BETTER CONDITIONS SINCE 2009



**25 MILLION
EGGS**

PRODUCED ON RSPCA APPROVED
FARMS IN 2018



**222,550
HENS**

FARMED TO RSPCA
APPROVED STANDARDS IN
2018 (UP 62% FROM 2015)



**23 FARM
ASSESSMENTS**

DURING 2018 WITH
120 SHEDS ASSESSED



8 FARMS

IN THE SCHEME IN 2018

A GOOD LIFE FOR LAYER HENS

While there's growing awareness around the need to free layer hens from cages, there can still be some confusion about what the best cage-free environment should look like.

In reality, good hen welfare relies on many different factors, beyond outdoor access and stocking density.

The RSPCA first released animal welfare Standards for layer hens in 1996 and since then there has been steady growth in the number of hens farmed to the Standards. In 2018, more than 220,000 hens were farmed to the Standards, up 62% from 2015. This can be attributed to long-time RSPCA Approved brand Rohde's Free Range Eggs expanding their production to meet growing demand for independently accredited higher welfare eggs, as well as the launch of a new RSPCA Approved brand, Lucky Chicken Eggs, which is sold exclusively through Coles Supermarkets nationally.

As a nation, Australians eat over 16 million eggs a day and consumption is on the rise. The RSPCA is committed to working with egg farmers to provide good animal welfare while ensuring it remains possible to meet growing demand. Importantly, the RSPCA Approved logo provides a clear, reliable and trustworthy endorsement for their product which is invaluable in the current market.

With nearly 11 million layer hens still confined to battery cages, the welfare of hens remains one of the biggest animal welfare issues in Australia today. The ongoing commitment by Producers to farm hens to the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme Standards cannot be underestimated in the current market. While the RSPCA continues to encourage cage farmers to switch to cage free, we continue to point consumers to buy cage-free eggs that go above and beyond minimum farming requirements. RSPCA Approved eggs come from farms focused on giving hens a life worth living.

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR LAYER HENS

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's Standards for layer hens allow for indoor and outdoor systems that meet the needs of the birds. This includes farming systems that house birds in enriched indoor environments (barn laid / cage free), in a large shed with outdoor access (free range), or in systems that have birds living in paddocks with sheds providing protection from the weather (free range or pasture raised). Keeping hens in cages is not allowed under the Scheme.

The RSPCA believes that good animal welfare isn't just about outdoor access or outdoor stocking density. Therefore the Standards focus on a number of factors in order to provide layer hens with a better quality of life.



HENS ARE INQUISITIVE ANIMALS WHO ENJOY EXPLORING THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

"Their favourite structures are those where they can gather and play together in groups," says Morry. "Having an attractive range outside is vitally important in encouraging them to explore outdoors. And when they're indoors, they enjoy pecking, pushing and chasing balls around the place!"

Morry Wroby from Lucky Chicken Eggs



Providing safe and enclosed places means hens can fulfil their basic instinct to lay their eggs in a nest.



Providing perches helps hens feel safe from predators and allows them to rest properly.



Providing quality, well-managed litter allows hens to scratch, peck and dust bathe which helps clean and maintain their feathers.



Allowing hens space to move, stretch and flap their wings enables them to build stronger bones and muscles, as well as socialise with other hens.

ROHDE'S FREE RANGE EGGS FARMING TO THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS FOR MORE THAN A DECADE

Rohde's have been producing free range eggs for more than 50 years in the scenic Clare Valley of South Australia. As early adopters of the RSPCA Approved Standards, Rohde's have been part of the Scheme for over 13 years.

For John and Ange, becoming part of the Scheme was a smart and strategic move.

"The egg market has always been tough, but it's never been as tough as it is now," John says. "The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme can guarantee good hen welfare to consumers who realise there's a difference – and there is."

Today, there are 14 free range sheds on the farm and 60,000 hens producing RSPCA Approved Rohde's Free Range Eggs.

As well as supplying their eggs to independent supermarkets in Adelaide and surrounds, Rohde's also supply a number of cafes and restaurants, including Sydney's Three Beans – a café with more than 20 locations across the city and now also Brisbane.

THREE BEANS CAFÉ'S CO-DIRECTOR MATT HOWE

"We really looked at the claims the suppliers were making and whether any independent body actually checked these claims," Matt says.

"We needed to be sure that we were actually buying what we thought we were buying."

Matt wanted eggs from farms where hens are able to roam and do the things they like to do.

Not only did Rohde's Free Range Eggs meet this requirement, the fact that they are part of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme meant the Three Beans' team could be confident that the welfare standards they sought were being met.





136,120 PIGS

FARMED TO THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS
IN 2018 (UP 10% FROM 2015)



14 FARMS

RAISED RSPCA APPROVED PIGS IN 2018



**29 FARM
ASSESSMENTS**

CONDUCTED DURING 2018



**1,264,290
PIGS**

HAVE BENEFITTED FROM BETTER
CONDITIONS SINCE 2009



A GOOD LIFE FOR PIGS

The introduction of RSPCA Approved Standards for pigs in 2001 reflected a need to address serious welfare issues in intensive pig farming, including severe confinement, barren surroundings and painful husbandry procedures.

Consumer concern for pig welfare is growing, and with that comes demand for higher welfare pork. Labels like 'sow stall free' show a positive first step to improving welfare, but there's still more to do. The same consumers who have driven demand for higher welfare eggs and chicken, are likely to push for similar reforms of the pig industry. For this reason, a growing number of brands are looking to distinguish themselves in the market. By working with the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme, these brands are able to let their customers know the welfare of pigs is important to them, as is independent certification of higher welfare pig farming systems.

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR PIGS



Providing secluded places with quality bedding allows sows (mother pigs) the ability to comfortably rest and build a nest for their young.



Allowing space to move freely, and not confining them to sow stalls or farrowing crates, means sows are able to forage, socialise and wallow.



Providing sheltered housing with quality bedding gives weaned piglets a dry area to rest, play and maintain a comfortable temperature.



Painful husbandry procedures such as teeth clipping, tail docking and surgical castration are not performed on piglets.

WORKING WITH COLES TO MAKE IT EASY TO SHOP FOR HUMANE FOOD

Over the past decade, Coles Supermarkets has been working closely with the RSPCA to offer higher welfare options to their customers. Currently, Coles has the largest range of RSPCA Approved products and is the only retailer to offer RSPCA Approved pork nationally.

Since 2010, Coles has proudly sourced RSPCA Approved pork for its own brand of free-range pork products. The pig farmers supplying these Coles products, based in Western Australia, are all focused on achieving good animal welfare.

For their pigs, this means space to move, explore, play and socialise. Sows have access to paddocks, mud wallows and their own straw-filled huts to nest and care for their piglets. Growing pigs are raised in large straw-filled sheds with access to the outdoors.

"Our customers have told us they're keen to know how the products we sell are produced, which is why we've continuously introduced more RSPCA Approved options" explains Coles Head of Responsible Sourcing and Quality, James Whittaker.

"We believe it is the right thing to do for the animals and for our customers," says James. *"Animals in these farming systems are housed in an environment that meets their physical and behavioural needs."*

With more than 800 stores across Australia, the fact that RSPCA Approved pork is available nationally at Coles means higher welfare pork products have never been more easily accessible.



2.06 BILLION MEAT CHICKENS

HAVE BENEFITTED FROM BETTER
CONDITIONS UNDER THE RSPCA'S
STANDARDS SINCE 2010



505 MILLION MEAT CHICKENS

FARMED TO THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS
IN 2018 (UP 27% FROM 2015)



78% OF AUSTRALIA'S CHICKEN MEAT

FARMED TO THE RSPCA'S
STANDARDS IN 2018



442 FARMS

IN THE SCHEME IN 2018



998 FARM ASSESSMENTS

CONDUCTED IN 2018. ASSESSORS
VISITED 6002 INDIVIDUAL SHEDS



A GOOD LIFE FOR MEAT CHICKENS

The uptake of the RSPCA's Standards in the meat chicken industry is undoubtedly the biggest win for animal welfare within the Scheme. Since the RSPCA first released animal welfare Standards for meat chickens in 2010, there has been significant growth in the number of chickens farmed under the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme with more than 78% of Australia's production meeting the RSPCA's Standards in 2018. This is good news for the more than 505 million chickens every year that now live in an environment focused on their welfare.

Chicken is the most popular meat in Australia with Australians each eating an average of 47kg of chicken meat a year and predictions that this will rise to 49kg by 2020. With this high consumption rate comes increased pressure on farmers and the uptake of the RSPCA's Standards has therefore never been more important.

The commitment by both the meat chicken industry and Australian retailers to adopt the RSPCA meat chicken Standards, means that the Scheme is one of the most successful globally for market uptake. It also means that chicken from higher-welfare farming systems has never been more accessible for Australian consumers.

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR MEAT CHICKENS

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's Standards for meat chickens allow for indoor and outdoor systems that meet the needs of the birds. This includes farming systems that house birds in enriched indoor environments or systems where they are housed in a large shed with outdoor access (free range).

Most meat chickens are raised in large, environmentally-controlled sheds. This is the case for the majority of farms participating in the Scheme, although as consumer demand increases, a growing number of farms are meeting the RSPCA's outdoor Standards.

The RSPCA Approved Standards focus on a range of factors that provide meat chickens with a better quality of life.



Good lighting encourages chickens to be active while daily periods of full darkness allow proper rest.



Providing perches and environmental enrichment encourages activity which helps chickens build muscles and bone strength.



Providing quality, well-managed litter improves leg health and encourages birds to express natural foraging and dust bathing behaviours.

RSPCA APPROVED CHICKEN

USED IN:



SANDWICHES



VALUE-ADD MEALS



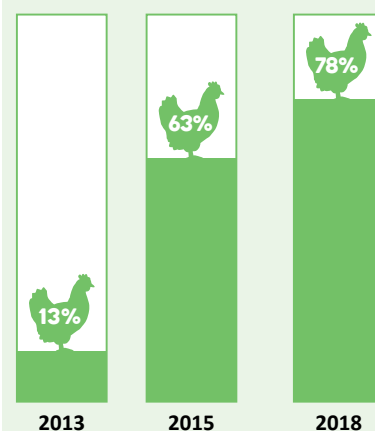
FRESH CHICKEN



FOOD SERVICE

MARKET SHARE

OF RSPCA APPROVED CHICKEN SINCE 2010:



RSPCA APPROVED OUTDOOR ON THE RISE



PRIOR TO 2018, THE ONLY PRODUCERS TO MEET RSPCA APPROVED OUTDOOR STANDARDS FOR MEAT CHICKENS WERE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA. 2018 SAW THE FIRST VICTORIAN AND QUEENSLAND OUTDOOR MEAT CHICKEN FARMS JOINING THE SCHEME, INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF FREE-RANGE CHICKEN FARMED TO RSPCA STANDARDS.

*“At Woolworths we take animal welfare very seriously and **we are proud** to work with the RSPCA. All our Woolworths fresh chicken is **RSPCA Approved** and we are working towards having all chicken used as an ingredient in Woolworths Own Brand products to be RSPCA Approved as well, an **initiative** we’re well underway with. We continue to work with our suppliers, farmers and the RSPCA to improve poultry meat Standards.”*

Woolworths

*“Zeus Street Greek decided that the focus of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme tied in well with the restaurant’s own **values**. We liked the idea of **supporting animal welfare**, working with local farmers and offering customers chicken that had been **humanely farmed**.”*

Helen Griffiths,
Zeus Street Greek

*“It’s not just about what we’re eating, but **where it has come from**,” says a representative from Grill’d. “With so much ‘fake news’ around **ethical sourcing**, the **trust** we have from our customers to source the **best quality produce** is an important responsibility.”*

Grill’d Healthy Burgers

MORE RESTAURANTS OFFERING RSPCA APPROVED CHICKEN ON THEIR MENU

As a growing number of Australians are choosing humane food when shopping, these choices are filtering through to the food service industry as well.

Over the past several years, more restaurant chains have embraced the opportunity to put humanely-farmed RSPCA Approved chicken on their menus. Grill’d Healthy Burgers and Zambrero have sourced RSPCA Approved chicken since 2016, and in 2017, popular restaurants Nando’s and Zeus Street Greek started offering RSPCA Approved chicken on their menus.

The uptake in food service hasn’t slowed, with 2018 seeing one of Australia’s fastest growing restaurant brands, Gami Chicken & Beer, embrace higher welfare with RSPCA Approved chicken, too. These restaurants all source 100% RSPCA Approved chicken for their venues, across the country.

With significant change in Australia’s dining out culture, it’s clear that animal welfare has become an important part of many businesses’ procurement policies because it’s important to their customers. This is good news for those Australian farmers who are dedicated to improving the welfare of meat chickens.





A GOOD LIFE FOR TURKEYS

Traditionally popular during the Christmas period, Australia's production of turkey meat is still relatively small compared to other poultry products.

The RSPCA first released animal welfare Standards for turkeys in 2010, and since then, there has been steady growth in the number of birds farmed to the Standards. Hundreds of thousands of turkeys were farmed to the Standards in 2018, and more than 2 million since the turkey Standards were introduced. Uptake of the turkey Standards can be attributed to the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's work with Coles Supermarkets and its suppliers to source RSPCA Approved turkey for both the Coles Finest Free Range turkey line of products and the Coles branded turkey line that are available during the Christmas period.

As the popularity of turkey products increases, farmers, brands and retailers have an opportunity to ensure higher welfare options are available. The RSPCA is committed to working with these brands and also increasing consumer understanding of what good animal welfare means for turkeys.



2.3 MILLION TURKEYS

HAVE BENEFITTED FROM BETTER CONDITIONS SINCE 2010



223,021 TURKEYS

FARMED TO THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS IN 2018



19 FARM ASSESSMENTS

CONDUCTED IN 2018

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR TURKEYS



Good lighting encourages turkeys to be active and move about, while daily periods of full darkness allow them to rest properly.



Providing perches and environmental enrichment encourages activity which helps turkeys build stronger bones and muscles.



Providing well-managed litter improves leg health and encourages turkeys to express natural foraging and dust bathing behaviours.



Painful husbandry procedures such as toe trimming are not performed on turkeys.



A GOOD LIFE FOR FARMED ATLANTIC SALMON



**1,697,941
ATLANTIC
SALMON**

FARMED TO THE RSPCA'S
STANDARDS IN 2018

The available scientific evidence demonstrates that fish are sentient animals capable of experiencing pain and suffering. With significant growth in the Tasmanian salmon industry and growing consumer demand, the RSPCA recognised that there was an opportunity to improve animal welfare for millions of farmed fish.

The RSPCA released Standards for farmed Atlantic salmon in 2016. Showing leadership within their industry, Huon Aquaculture became the first RSPCA Approved salmon producer in July 2018. Currently around 90% of Huon salmon is raised to the RSPCA's animal welfare Standards.

Through the Scheme, producers can offer their customers a higher-welfare salmon product. This will become even more important as consumer understanding of fish sentience and appreciation of good fish welfare grows.

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR FARMED ATLANTIC SALMON

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's Standards for farmed Atlantic salmon focus on providing good health and nutrition, low-stress handling and managing water quality throughout the salmon's three-year lifecycle.



Good management and husbandry to protect salmon from injury and disease provides an environment in which salmon can thrive.



Good stockpersonship with a focus on low-stress handling and animal welfare enhances fish wellbeing.



Managing water quality, including appropriate oxygen levels, temperature and stocking densities, ensures salmon can swim effortlessly and perform natural schooling behaviours.



HUON PUTTING ANIMAL WELFARE FOREMOST IN AQUACULTURE

As one of Australia's largest salmon producers, Huon Aquaculture are vocal in their commitment to humane farming, placing fish welfare and health at the centre of their farming operations. In 2018, Huon became the first brand to offer RSPCA Approved salmon to Australian consumers.

Peter and Frances Bender started farming fish in the 1980s and today farm 6 million fish annually and employ over 600 specialised staff. Over the past several years as salmon consumption has increased, so has the desire for consumers to know more about the salmon they are eating.

"We could not be more proud to be the first salmon farming company to be recognised by RSPCA Australia as a humane food producer," says Frances "Our farmers care about our fish. They care about the ocean and they care about its natural inhabitants."

Frances Bender

"Better education about where seafood comes from will continue to see more people making the decision to choose RSPCA Approved. We are proud to be leading the way in providing Australian consumers with an option to purchase humanely-produced, RSPCA Approved salmon," says Frances.

*"Our farmers care about **our fish**.*

They care about the ocean

and they care about its

natural inhabitants."





A GOOD LIFE FOR DAIRY VEAL CALVES

For a dairy cow to produce milk she must first give birth to a calf. In the dairy industry female calves are kept and reared as replacements for the milking herd, but male calves are surplus to the industry's needs.

In Australia, around 675,000 male dairy calves are born every year. Many of these calves are either killed on farm at birth or, in the case of around 450,000 male calves, destined for slaughter at five days old because there isn't currently a market for them. Calves as young as five days are not equipped to withstand the rigors of transport, and legislation allows calves to be off feed for 30 hours and transported for up to 12 hours.

Raising excess dairy calves for veal is one way to increase the value of an animal that would otherwise be destined for slaughter at five days old. By increasing their value and providing an alternative market, there is real potential to improve the welfare of bobby calves.

First released in 2017, the RSPCA Approved Standards for dairy veal calves are the most recent addition to the Scheme. By developing these Standards, the RSPCA's objective is to support dairy farmers in a dual purpose farming model by encouraging the rearing of these calves for veal, assuring they will be raised to better welfare standards.

While there currently isn't an RSPCA Approved dairy veal product in the market, the RSPCA has been talking to farmers and industry about increasing the value of an animal that would otherwise be considered a by-product of the dairy industry. There is significant interest in the opportunity of supplying a humanely-farmed veal or beef product to Australian consumers and food service.

WHAT THE RSPCA'S STANDARDS MEAN FOR DAIRY VEAL CALVES

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's Standards for dairy veal calves focus on low stress handling, health and nutrition, providing comfortable housing, room to move around and opportunity to express natural calf behaviours.



Providing a nutritious diet that includes good quality colostrum, prevents mineral and vitamin deficiencies and fed in a way that encourages suckling and chewing behaviours.



Providing space to move about freely in the company of other calves encourages positive experiences that come from socialising and playing.



Providing comfortable housing with quality bedding protects calves while they are young. Once weaned, allowing access to an outdoor area or paddock adds further enrichment.



Good stockpersonship with a focus on low-stress handling. Painful husbandry procedures, such as castration, disbudding, hot-iron branding are not performed on calves.

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF FARM ANIMALS IS A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

The RSPCA recognises that improving the welfare of Australia's farm animals is no small feat and relies on a collaborative effort amongst leaders in all areas of production, including farmers, brand owners and retailers. With growing consumer interest in humanely-farmed food, the hard work in making animal welfare a priority and a part of doing business has given billions of farm animals a life worth living, and everyday Australians the opportunity to support higher welfare for farm animals.

THIS IS SOMETHING WE SHOULD ALL FEEL PROUD OF.

RSPCA 





WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To find out more about the
RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme
– including information about the
RSPCA's Standards and where to
buy RSPCA Approved products
– visit rspcaapproved.org.au

RSPCA 
for all creatures **great & small**

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