

2021 & 2022



Published every two years, the RSPCA Approved Impact Report highlights the recent news from the RSPCA Approved team - some of the successes and challenges we face in achieving our mission of improving the quality of life for farmed animals.



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Introduction

Established 27 years ago, the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme works to improve the quality of life for Australia's farm animals.

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme is a certification program underpinned by animal-specific and publicly available standards and a rigorous certification process involving comprehensive assessments by trained RSPCA Assessors.

Every two years, we like to take the opportunity to share some of the recent news from the RSPCA Approved team – to communicate the impact we're having on farm animal welfare and to highlight some of our recent successes and challenges.

It's timely to start the 2021 and 2022 Impact Report by sharing the RSPCA Approved vision and mission, which has recently been refreshed and updated. It's a simple but clear and compelling overview of why the Scheme exists and why we do the work that we do.

VISION

A future of *higher welfare* farming.

MISSION

To improve the *quality of life* for farmed animals.

We hope this refreshed vision and mission helps to set the scene for what we have to share in this Impact Report - because since we released our last Impact Report, there's been a lot to share! This report gives a snapshot of what we've been up to in 2021 and 2022 – and paints a picture of where we're headed next with RSPCA Approved. It's an opportunity to highlight the work that our dedicated team has been doing, to say thank you to forward-thinking Licensees and Producers who make the Scheme possible, and to give you a greater insight into what motivates us – the real and tangible impact that we're having on farm animal welfare.

You can read more about the Scheme, and about our latest news, on our website:

rspcaapproved.org.au

News from 2021 & 2022

As was the case for many people and organisations, 2021 had a challenging start as we emerged from the first year of the pandemic and continued to adapt to various lockdowns and restrictions.

Despite the disruption to our regular operations, the RSPCA Certification Body managed to conduct over 1,200 assessments on site and remotely. This is a result that simply couldn't have been achieved without the cooperative efforts of our participating Producers, so for that we say thank you.



Encouraging a move to higher-welfare food

A big part of the RSPCA Approved team's work is to meet with retailers and the food industry to encourage a transition to higher welfare products and uptake of RSPCA Approved certification. In 2021 and 2022, the team had 223 meetings with various food companies to discuss what they can do to improve animal welfare in their supply chains and to offer consumers higher welfare choices – including by sourcing products with RSPCA Approved certification.

In some of the biggest brand news, 2021 saw McDonald's Australia transition to exclusively using RSPCA Approved chicken across their menu nationally. This has been something that McDonald's and our team have been working on for many, many years. With McDonald's purchasing over 17 million kilograms

of chicken a year, sourcing certified higher welfare chicken has meant a significant impact for meat chicken welfare as we had a number of farms supplying to McDonald's work to meet our Standard and achieve certification.

Well-known coffee chain **Starbucks** also launched RSPCA Approved chicken across their Australian menus for their salads, wraps and paninis, as did **The Coffee Club**. It's been fantastic to see more and more significant, national brands choosing to prioritise animal welfare by sourcing RSPCA Approved chicken.

In 2022, the range of RSPCA Approved products continued to grow.

Barossa Fine Foods launched a range of RSPCA Approved pork and chicken products for their high-quality smallgoods range.

Subway Meats, one of Adelaide's largest respected wholesalers, began sourcing RSPCA Approved chicken, and national brand Ingham's officially launched as an RSPCA Approved Licensee, having already been a Producer with RSPCA Approved certification for several years. We also saw Woolworths launch their own select range of fresh RSPCA Approved salmon products.

More than ever before, consumer awareness and demand is driving producers to demonstrate they are meeting higher animal welfare standards, the Scheme provides a trusted mechanism for brands to certify their products as higher welfare (You can read more about RSPCA Approved products on pages 14 and 15).

Setting the standards

The RSPCA Approved Farming
Scheme standards underpin the
Scheme. They are a detailed, evidencebased and animal-specific list of
requirements that Producers must
meet to retain the RSPCA Approved
certification, with an average of
370 requirements per standard –
developed by the RSPCA Australia
expert science and policy team after
a lengthy and comprehensive process
(more on that on page 17).

Because the standards are so integral to what RSPCA Approved expects of our Producers, it's no surprise that we take a lot of care in reviewing them. In doing this, we aim to push the bar as

high as possible for producers, while still ensuring that practices can be achieved by producers. The formal review process for each standard is conducted approximately every five years to make sure the standards are progressively evolving and continuing to incorporate relevant animal welfare science and innovations in farming, placing producers on a pathway of continuous improvement. Aligned with the RSPCA values, the review process relies on evidence, and we work collaboratively with the farming industry to strive for continuous improvement for farm animal welfare.

During this period, we've seen the introduction and implementation of a revised Standard for turkeys, updated and reviewed as part of our regular and ongoing review process. In January 2021, we also published a revised Standard for non-replacement dairy calves, and while we don't yet have any dairy calf producers with RSPCA Approved certification, we continue to engage with the dairy industry to see if there are any producers interested in leading the way. Next on the agenda is a revised layer hen Standard, which at the time of publication is in the final stages of review.

Assessment and certification processes

There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes when it comes to achieving and maintaining RSPCA Approved certification. This involves our specially trained RSPCA Assessors, who are based all over Australia, and our Certification Team, most of whom are based at the RSPCA Australia office in Canberra. We spend a lot of time not just on the assessment and certification process itself, but also reviewing and strengthening our processes as part of our commitment to being a robust certification program with quality processes that are aligned with ISO 17065.

Some specific process improvements we implemented or introduced in 2021 and 2022 include:

- ✓ Transitioned the process for reporting notifiable events to the RSPCA Certification Body to a completely digital process – something that has meant easier and more efficient tracking for everyone involved.
- Redesigning and developing new assessment protocols for meat chicken and turkey programs, with Assessors receiving further training
- ✓ Launching a program of witness audits for Certification Team
- ✓ Implementing conformance working groups to further understand and advise on certification decisions, as well as to develop consensus on non-standard certification decisions
- Formalising conformance performance reporting to Producers and introducing biannual meetings
- Rolling out a revised Producer Documentation Review assessment process
- ✓ Introducing tablets for Assessors to use on-site, in line with digitisation of the assessment processes
- ✓ Developing cross functionality in the Certification and Assessor roles, with Certification Team now able to conduct on-site assessments and Assessors having the ability to carry out certification responsibilities, allowing for a more productive and flexible approach within the team
- Formalising governance arrangements and processes for the Certification Body





Chain of Custody

In 2021, we introduced a new Chain of Custody assessment process to make sure that any RSPCA Approved ingredients can be traced from the point of sale right back to the Producer. This included publishing a Chain of Custody Standard and rolling out a revised Chain of Custody assessment program with all our Licensees.

RSPCA Approved ingredients are required to be clearly identifiable and not substituted in any way with non-RSPCA Approved products. Each business in the supply chain of RSPCA Approved products is assessed against the Chain of Custody Standard and makes annual declarations if there are any changes within their business.

This has been a big piece of work that has strengthened traceability within the Scheme – yet another step to help consumers have confidence that when they see the RSPCA Approved logo, this is a certified higher welfare product.



IMPACT REPORT 2021 & 2022

Marketing RSPCA Approved

Making sure the community knows and understands what the RSPCA Approved certification means is vital. As the RSPCA Approved logo is designed to let consumers know that a product has come from a producer with a focus on animal welfare, we always work hard to let consumers know not just what RSPCA Approved is, but also what better animal welfare is and what it means for animals to have a better quality of life.

Meeting the high bar set by RSPCA Policy isn't always possible due to the current realities of commercial farming; however, in the meantime, each version of the Standards brings us closer while continuously improving the lives of Australian farm animals in many ways.

We know that these topics can be confusing and sometimes confronting – so the more we can do to help unpack that, the better.

One of the Scheme's biggest marketing projects for 2021 was the **25 Years** of RSPCA Approved campaign, celebrating 25 years since the Scheme was first established in 1996. This included the 2020 Impact report, digital advertising, a Guardian Labs article and a dedicated impact web page.

The campaign highlighted 25 years of better welfare for farmed animals, documenting the Scheme's early days, from having standards for layer hens and pigs, to expanding to include meat chickens, turkey, salmon, and dairy calves. We took the opportunity to highlight that, over 25 years, we'd seen 3.1 billion animals reared to our animal-specific standards that benefited from higher-welfare conditions. We also highlighted the 38 forward-thinking brands as well as the people that make the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme possible. It was a chance to reflect on all we've managed to achieve for farm animal welfare as well as the important work still to do.

In the digital space, the refreshed RSPCA Approved website was launched, including revised brand guidelines, more business-specific information, new pages on becoming certified and the certification process, and an all-round new look and feel. We hope that the refreshed website and content will also help prospective Producers or Licensees understand how the Scheme works – and inspire them to join.

Looking forward

A big project for 2022 has been a review of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme's business plan for 2020-2025, which was written prior to the pandemic. Several key aspects of the Scheme were reviewed as part of this, including the program's governance structure, operating

model, and capacity to grow and develop for coming years. The revision of our business plan also resulted in the development of a new vision – a future of higher-welfare farming – and a new mission – to improve the quality of life for farmed animals. At the time of publication, the

RSPCA Approved team and the wider RSPCA Australia team is working on implementing the outcomes of the revised business plan – all to help us make sure that we're doing the best we can to achieve a better quality of life for farm animals.

2021 in Numbers

TOTAL

 $608,880,052 \stackrel{\text{animals}}{\text{farmed to the Standard}}$

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments

abattoir assessments

process assessments

MEAT CHICKENS

602,239,342

meat chickens

farmed to the Standard

86.9% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

including 16 remote & 9 onsite

1,107 farm assessments

including 977 remote & 130 onsite

process assessments (onsite)

abattoir assessments

* Note that market share is based on reported number of animals, using data sets such as from ABS, ABARES and industry-reported figures this does not reflect exactly the use of the RSPCA Approved logo in market

SALMON

6,225,887 salmon farmed to the Standard

41.0% market share *

SiteS included in scope of certification

farm assessments (onsite)

PIGS

86,843

pigs

farmed to the Standard

1.6% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

22 farm assessments

including 16 remote & 6 onsite

abattoir assessments (onsite)

LAYER HENS

92,348 layer hens

farmed to the Standard

0.5% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments

including 1 remote & 4 onsite

TURKEYS

235,632 turkeys

farmed to the Standard

9.4% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments (remote)

abattoir assessment (remote)

2022 in Numbers

TOTAL

653,199,598

animals

farmed to the Standard

1,075

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments

abattoir assessments

process assessments

MEAT CHICKENS

647,150,667 meat chickens

farmed to the Standard

92.3% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

including 7 remote & 16 onsite

1,021

farm assessments

including 547 remote & 474 onsite

process assessments (onsite)

abattoir assessments

* Note that market share is based on reported number of animals, using data sets such as from ABS, ABARES and industry-reported figures this does not reflect exactly the use of the RSPCA Approved logo in market.

SALMON

5,650,334 salmon

farmed to the Standard

37.2% market share *

sites included in scope of certification

farm assessments (onsite)

PIGS

92,084

pigs

farmed to the Standard

1.7% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

22 farm assessments (onsite)

process assessment (onsite)

LAYER HENS

97,079

layer hens

farmed to the Standard

0.6% market share *

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments (remote)

TURKEYS

209,434

turkeys

farmed to the Standard

farms included in scope of certification

farm assessments (onsite)

abattoir assessments (onsite)

process assessment (onsite)

2021

785

Average farm assessments processed by each Certification team member

19

Conformance working group meetings

15

ammonia meters calibrated

2022

715

Average farm assessments processed by each Certification team member

4

unscheduled assessments

Chain of Custody assessments

11

Producer Document Review assessments 3

Conformance working group meetings

18

ammonia meters



Understanding of RSPCA Approved

The RSPCA regularly seeks to understand public perceptions on a range of animal welfare issues and our work.

Every few years, market research is conducted by McCrindle, which helps to shape the goals of awareness and education that we set, as well as inform how we tailor our communications about the Scheme and farm animal welfare.

In our most recent survey, conducted in 2022, the research found that **73%** of Australians believe that animal welfare is an important consideration when purchasing food products, increasing five percentage points from 2018. This increase is on trend with the rise in conscious consumers and the growing demand for responsibly sourced animal-based products.

73%

Believe animal welfare is important to consider when purchasing products

The survey also found that more people than ever are seeking products with the RSPCA Approved certification, with 3 in 5 grocery buyers actively looking for the RSPCA Approved logo

 a 14 percentage point increase from 2018. This shows a steady increase in trust in RSPCA Approved, and the logo being an important factor in purchasing decisions.

3 in 5 triff



Chicken meat and egg products with RSPCA Approved certification have the highest awareness rate among those surveyed, with 55% and 46% respectively. There could be a number of reasons for this, but a key factor is major retailers using RSPCA Approved chicken for their own brand products across fresh, frozen and convenience ranges.



Chicken meat & egg products have highest awareness rate

It will be interesting to see what the next survey results will show, particularly with more fresh RSPCA Approved salmon products available and a growing awareness among Australians that fish are sentient and can feel pain, and therefore their welfare must be treated as a priority.

Cost, and the belief that higher welfare products are more expensive, continues to be a significant barrier among Australians of all the generations surveyed, listing it as the top reason they may choose not to purchase these products. This is not surprising given the current climate and steep rises in cost of living and will be a challenge that RSPCA Approved will continue to face in the near future. Providing everything that's needed for a higher welfare environment does require more investment, and this in turn impacts the market price.

Another notable and important finding was that more Australians are now interested in knowing how animals have been farmed, with 56% of respondents looking for this information on the packaging. With an increase of 12 percentage

points from 2018, these results show the growing number of Australians who value making informed decisions about their purchases when it comes to animal-based products. Those surveyed also noted seeking further information online (18%), via brand websites (14%), and social media (11%).



Overall, it's encouraging to see the proportion of Australians believing animal welfare is important, and actively making conscious choices to support higher-welfare farming, increase year on year since the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme began.

Forward-Thinking Brands

By having products with the RSPCA Approved certification, brands are helping to make verified higher-welfare options available and prompting customers to think about animal welfare in their purchasing decisions.

Brands are also responding to the keen and growing consumer interest in animal welfare at the supermarket (more on that on page 13). Here are just some of the brands that are making a difference, either by sourcing their products from Producers from RSPCA Approved certification.

CHICKEN

We're very proud of the significant uptake of the RSPCA Approved standard by the meat chicken industry in Australia. Meat chickens reared by Producers with RSPCA Approved certification are provided with space to move freely, quality litter, perches for enrichment and much more. It shows just how much of a substantial change we've been able to make through the Scheme. It's something producers can strive to achieve, and a certification that consumers know and trust. It's also a sign of the significant their consumers, and, by doing so, encouraging the meat chicken industry to move towards higher-welfare farming practices. So, whether barn raised or free range, consumers can be confident that meat chickens from producers with RSPCA Approved certification have been reared in a higher-welfare environment that provides for their physical and behavioural needs.

RSPCA Assessors).

The Free Ranger: The Free Ranger chicken comes from free-range farms across Southern Victoria who take pride in raising their birds to higher-welfare standards. Products are available at selected Woolworths stores in NSW and Victoria.

The Bare Bird: Better animal welfare is a high priority for The Bare Bird, whose chicken comes from free-range farms with RSPCA Approved certification in Central Victoria. Products are available at selected Coles, Woolworths and Harris Farm supermarkets as well as specialty butchers.

Mt Barker Free Range: Using chicken from free-range farms with RSPCA Approved certification in Western Australia,

RSPCA Approved chicken can also be found in manufactured products where chicken is an ingredient. For example, Campbell's Real Stock is made with RSPCA Approved chicken. Campbell's Real Stock was as an ingredient, it's the same RSPCA Approved birds have a **better quality of life**.

restaurants are doing the right thing for animal welfare by serving RSPCA Approved chicken to their customers.

Grill'd: Grill'd were the first restaurant chain in Australia to make the switch to RSPCA Approved chicken in 2016 – and they're proud to use 100% RSPCA Approved chicken at all their restaurants.

Nando's: Nando's uses 100% RSPCA Approved chicken across all of their Australian restaurant doing this, Nando's are helping to give meat chickens a better quality of life.

Oporto: Since 2019, Oporto have served 100% RSPCA Approved chicken at their restaurants fresh, flame-grilled chicken comes from a farm with a focus on welfare.

The Coffee Club: Since 2021, all of the chicken on the Coffee Club's menu comes from Producers with the RSPCA Approved certification. We know how big a deal it is to transition an entire menu to higher-welfare chicken – so to the Coffee Club, we say thank you!



PORK

Coles Free Range Pork

Coles sources free range RSPCA Approved pork from pig farms in Western Australia where pigs have year-round outdoor access with comfortable lying areas that are sheltered from the elements and have quality bedding. Sows have a secluded hut where they can build nests to give birth and rear their piglets until weaning. Pigs are not kept in crates or cages and are not subjected to husbandry procedures like teeth clipping or tail docking. Coles Free Range Pork remains the only nationally available fresh RSPCA Approved pork.

SALMON

Huon Aquaculture

One of Australia's largest and most well-known salmon producers, Huon Aquaculture, is firmly committed to higher-welfare farming, with fish health and welfare as the touchstone of its operations. Huon was the first salmon producer to achieve RSPCA Approved certification, meaning their farmed Atlantic salmon are reared with a focus on better welfare for the entire lifecycle of the fish, with requirements such as space to swim normally in oxygen-rich water, keeping fish free from injury and disease, and handling them in a manner that avoids stress, with regular

assessments to make sure these requirements continue to be met. Huon's RSPCA Approved salmon is available nationally.

PET FOOD

Highgate Pet Food

Illustrating their commitment to offer a breadth of higher welfare products, Woolworths' Highgate complementary pet food continues to be sold in stores nationally, for Australians looking to ensure the whole family including pets, consume higher-welfare foods. Highgate products feature barn-raised chicken ingredient sourced from producers with

RSPCA Approved certification. Meat chickens reared to the RSPCA's Standard have more space to move around and exhibit natural behaviours. This includes foraging, dustbathing, and perching, along with good lighting, which ultimately lead to better health and welfare for the birds.

TURKEY

products, including barn raised and free-range turkey, during the Christmas period. For its freerange turkey, Coles works closely with a select group of free-range farms in NSW's Hunter Valley. These farms are certified against our outdoor requirements, which provides access to a quality environment that meet the needs of the birds

Woolworths

After already having worked with us for several years to bring RSPCA Approved chicken to their customers, Woolworths took another big step in December Woolworths branded fresh whole turkey is from producers with the RSPCA Approved certification where turkeys are raised in quality stocking densities, with good lighting, nationally in the lead up to Christmas.

EGGS

Farmer Rod's Free-Range Eggs

Farmer Rod's Free-Range Eggs is New South Wales' only egg farm with RSPCA Approved certification and currently one of only two egg producers in the country with our certification. Egg farming has been a family affair from the beginning for Rod Pope and his wife Jane – and they're proud of achieving RSPCA Approved certification, a lengthy process that involved working closely with our team for over 12 months to ensure their farm met our detailed stores in NSW and the ACT.

animal welfare standards (and then ongoing regular assessments to make sure this continues to be the case). Farmer Rod's eggs are available at markets and in select Woolworths and Harris Farm



Assurance Checklist



Independent, third-party certification by the RSPCA - an organisation that you can trust.



Farms meet Standards, developed by the RSPCA, that give animals a better quality of life.



Animals have food, water, shelter as well as the opportunity to do the things they like to do.



Whether farmed indoors or outdoors or a combination of both, there is always a focus on providing animals with an enriched environment.



Frequent, comprehensive assessments conducted by specially trained RSPCA Assessors.



Assessment reports are reviewed and evaluated by the RSPCA Certification Body.



Products are traceable right through the supply chain from point of sale back to the farm.

Standards Development & Review

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme Standards underpin the Scheme.

Each Standard is a set of detailed, animal-specific requirements that focus on providing better housing conditions for animals on farm, encouraging them to be active and express natural behaviours, as well as better transport and slaughter conditions at end of life. With an average of 370 specific requirements within each Standard that need to be met, backed up regular and comprehensive assessments, the Standards are one of the most important parts of the Scheme.

An average of

370

specific requirements within each Standard

How we develop Standards

Standards are written by RSPCA Australia's expert science and policy team. This might be a new, animal-specific Standard where an opportunity has been identified, or an update to an existing Standard (which are periodically reviewed around every five years).

The Standards writing or reviewing process begins with a review of current relevant scientific literature to identify key animal welfare issues and ways to address them, as well as leading industry practices both

in Australia and abroad, and an understanding of the commercial feasibility and consumer demand within Australia.

Throughout the process, feedback is sought from a range of stakeholders, including current Scheme participants, producers, industry bodies, other animal welfare organisations and RSPCA member Societies. At the time of publication, an internal and external advisory group provide further robustness to the consultation process.

Once the Standards are finalised (which involves approval by the RSPCA Australia Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee and the RSPCA Australia Board), they are communicated to all interested stakeholders and published on the RSPCA Approved website, so that anyone who wants to know more about them – and get a deeper understanding of what is expected of RSPCA Approved Producers – can find information easily and at any time.

Our strategy

Our Standards are about raising the bar for farm animal welfare. They go well beyond legal requirements while still being commercially achievable.

These two aspects are crucial.
The reason that RSPCA Approved
Standards go well beyond legal
requirements is that, in general,
the the law only provides minimum
requirements and there is often
an opportunity to provide better
animal welfare in a commercially
viable way. Farm animal welfare
in Australia is governed by a

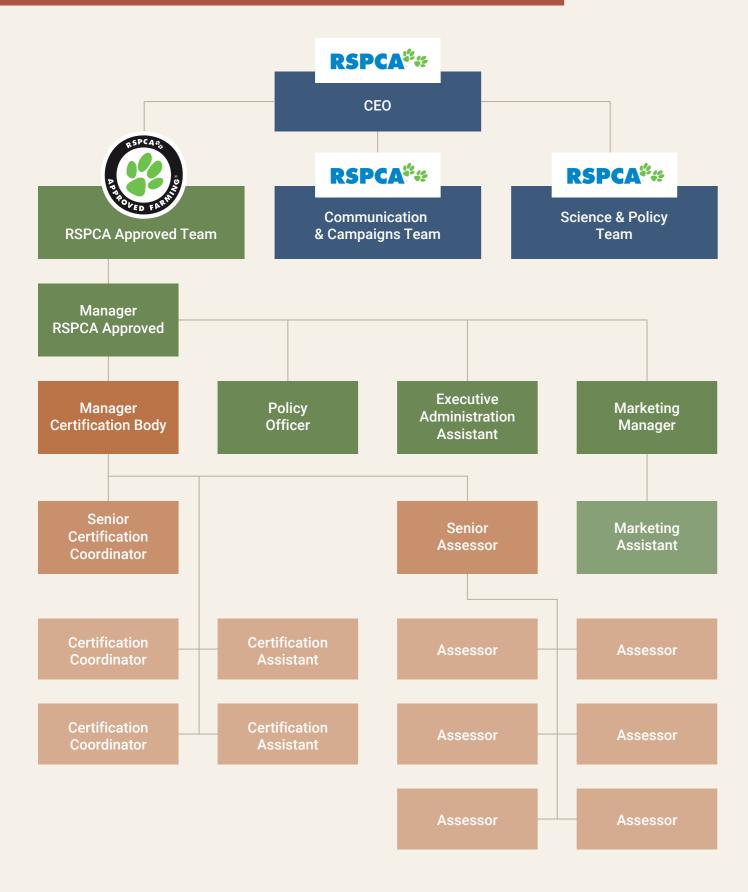
combination of Model Codes of Practice, Animal Welfare Standards, and state and territory legislation. These legislative requirements allow practices such as painful husbandry procedures which are not permitted under the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme.

It is crucial that the RSPCA's standards are achievable for producers, including at a large scale while setting the direction for future improvement. The simple fact is that a standard that can't be met does not benefit animals.

Our Standards aim to challenge producers to improve animal welfare as much as possible in a way that's commercially viable and able to be met with current available technology, and applicable to the Australian farming context. This is also one of the reasons why regular reviews of the Standards are so important – as new techniques and technology become available, we constantly look at what we can require, and what is achievable and will result in better animal welfare.

RSPCA APPROVED IMPACT REPORT 2021 & 2022

Organisation Chart

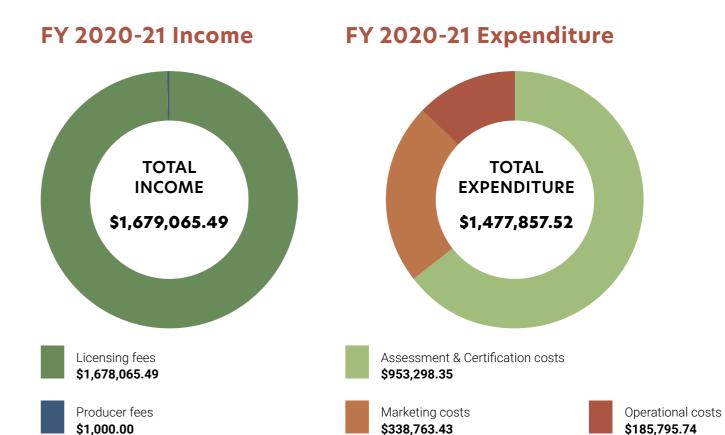


* This is the organisation chart at the time of print

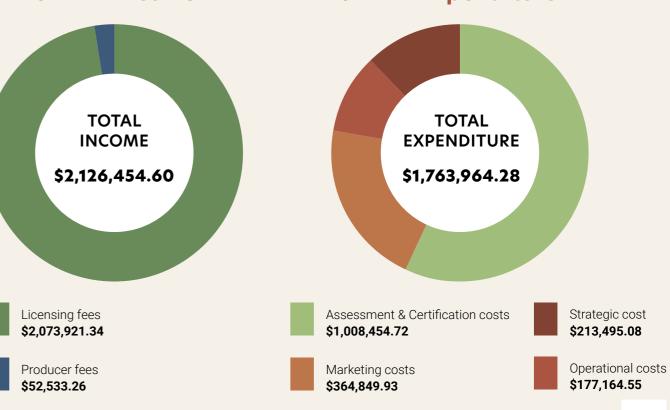
Financials

* Producers may pay for assessments

without a licensee lined up









PO Box 265 Deakin West ACT 2600

02 6282 8300

approvedfarming@rspca.org.au

rspcaapproved.org.au

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