



RSPCA Approved



IMPACT REPORT

2023-24

Every 2 years, the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme publishes their Impact Report. This impact report includes key updates including growth, market share, Standards development and review and financial transparency.



A FUTURE OF

**HIGHER-
WELFARE
FARMING**

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About the program

RSPCA Approved is Australia’s leading, independent farm animal welfare certification, driving a better quality of life for farmed animals. **It’s underpinned by science-informed, animal-specific standards that go beyond minimum legal requirements**, and a rigorous assessment and certification process.

In 1996, the RSPCA established a dedicated farm animal certification program as part of its work to drive **continuous improvements for farmed animal welfare**, which would later become the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme. During this time, more than 5 billion farmed animals have benefitted from higher-welfare conditions, leading to **a better quality of life**.

Today, the RSPCA Approved logo is recognised by Australians as meaning animals have been raised with consideration of their welfare. The Scheme is highly respected as a **driver of tangible improvements to animal welfare**.



News from 2023 & 2024

Every two years, the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme releases an Impact Report to outline our latest news and achievements, along with **continued progress toward our vision of a future of higher-welfare farming**. During 2023 and 2024, there were a myriad of achievements and significant progress made across a great number of areas.

But we know there’s still much work to be done to improve the welfare of Australia’s farmed animals. Importantly, as part of our continuous improvement, which includes regular reviews of the Standards that underpin the program, over the period covered by this Impact Report **we released revised Standards for layer hens**

and for farmed Atlantic salmon. Every time a Standard is reviewed the goal is to raise the level of welfare, working to improve the lives of farmed animals even further.

2023 saw the release of the **Know the Story campaign**, designed to provide further information about what RSPCA Approved means and to improve understanding among consumers. The campaign also acknowledged our history and the **many Licensees that have committed to sourcing higher-welfare products since the inception of the program**. It was the perfect opportunity to explain how the Scheme runs, what it means for farmed animals, and how producers and brands help us drive change and educate the

community about what better animal welfare looks like.

In 2024, avian influenza presented significant challenges for poultry producers and across the supply chain with, at the time of publication, ongoing impacts expected into the future. The Certification Body’s operations were only minimally affected and while there were temporary pauses in assessments in some instances. This did not substantially impact our work or assessment outcomes. We continue to work with industry to ensure **effective operation of our certification and important assessment functions**, while also remaining adaptable and adhering to strict biosecurity protocols.

Looking forward

We’re dedicated to a path of continuous improvement, meaning **we’re regularly reviewing our processes and practices**, giving us the opportunity to adapt and change our approach. In 2022, a review of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme’s business plan was conducted; one outcome of this review was a change program to support us in our continuous improvement. Leading us into the future, we commenced working through a **transformation program** which includes improving the operations and structure of multiple areas of the Scheme.

As part of this transformation program, we conducted a comprehensive brand review. Our aim was to gain valuable insights that would help us in addressing challenges and ensure our brand was reflective of the program’s vision while best positioning us into the future. **The outcome of this work is an exciting new brand identity, so keep a look out for our new name and logo!**

Additionally, our plan for the future includes **expanding the existing list of animal-specific welfare**

Standards. In 2024, we commenced work on the development of Standards that apply to farmed animals not currently covered by the program, and are anticipated to be released over the coming years.

Looking forward, we know that each incremental action from the RSPCA Approved team, and the wider RSPCA Australia team helps us make sure that **we’re doing the best we can to achieve better welfare outcomes for farmed animals now and into the future**.

Certification, Chain of Custody, Assessments and Conformance

Key to the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme is a multi-layered certification process, with the Certification Body and RSPCA Assessors playing a crucial role. **This process includes regular on-site assessment of every certified farm and abattoir by RSPCA Assessors**, to ensure conformance with the Standards through a combination of both scheduled and unannounced assessments. Depending on the size of the farm or abattoir, the duration of our assessments is typically between 2 – 8 hours. The reports from these assessments undergo technical review that verifies their technical soundness and factual accuracy and ensures the findings and conclusions are correct, complete, and properly documented to maintain the report’s credibility. Knowing that a team of dedicated

experts has rigorously evaluated conformance with the RSPCA’s Standards on certified farms can help give consumers confidence that the products they purchase align with their values.

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme works hard to make sure that **any product carrying the RSPCA Approved logo has only come from farms and abattoirs certified against the RSPCA Approved Standards**. To do this, in addition to farm and abattoir assessments, annual assessments of every business in the supply chain of RSPCA Approved products from farm to the point of sale are conducted against the RSPCA Approved Chain of Custody Standard.



Standards Review Process

The RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme focuses on improving the quality of life of farmed animals, with an aim of continual improvement. For this improvement to be ongoing, **approximately every five years, each of our animal-specific Standards undergoes an extensive formal review.** This review is conducted by RSPCA Australia's expert science and policy team and takes guidance from the best available contemporary animal welfare science, farming innovations, RSPCA policy and the practical application of welfare improvements.



Standard for Layer Hens

The RSPCA Approved Standard for Layer Hens was revised and published in December 2023. Revisions to the Standard include **improvements in housing and husbandry**, such as specific requirements around perches and ramps, floor litter, depopulation methods and requirements around outdoor stocking density and overhead cover to protect the birds from weather and predators and encourage greater use of the range. The farms currently certified to the RSPCA Approved Standard for Layer Hens continue to be dedicated to giving their hens a better quality of life by providing for their physical and mental needs including good nutrition, quality litter, enrichment, space to move freely, and the opportunity to express natural behaviours.

The RSPCA Approved team continues their work to encourage uptake of the revised Standard including **spreading the word via industry publications and a dedicated marketing campaign to explain what it means for layer hens to have a better life.** We look forward to more egg producers applying for RSPCA Approved certification.



Standard for Farmed Atlantic Salmon



Aquaculture is the fastest growing food production sector in the world, and when they're farmed for food, the welfare of fish must be front of mind. The revised Standard for farmed Atlantic salmon was released in December 2024, and includes **revisions to management procedures, wildlife management, health, handling, transport and slaughter.**

While, as of March 2025, there are no longer any producers certified to the RSPCA Approved Standard for Farmed Atlantic Salmon, the Standard exists because **salmon are one of the most intensively farmed animals and it's important we can demonstrate the measures needed to ensure their welfare is considered.**



2023 in Numbers

TOTAL			
713,063,585 animals farmed to the Standard			
533	farms included in scope of certification	23	abattoir assessments
1,026	farm assessments	24	process assessments

MEAT CHICKENS	
farmed to the Standard	706,450,167
market share*	97.5%
certified farms	490
farm assessments	971
abattoir assessments	19
process assessments	14

SALMON ¹	
farmed to the Standard	6,103,140
market share*	43.8%
certified sites	17
site assessments	11
abattoir assessments	1
process assessments	5

TURKEYS	
farmed to the Standard	201,208
market share*	4.5%
certified farms	12
farm assessments	22
abattoir assessments	2
process assessments	1

PIGS	
farmed to the Standard	111,901
market share*	1.9%
certified farms	12
farm assessments	19
abattoir assessments	1
process assessments	4

LAYER HENS	
farmed to the Standard	197,169
market share*	0.6%
certified farms	2
farm assessments	3

DAIRY CALVES	
Unfortunately, there are no producers currently certified to the RSPCA Approved Standard for Dairy Calves, but our team is actively engaging with industry to seek opportunities for more dairy calves to live a better quality of life.	

2024 in Numbers

TOTAL			
728,158,310 animals farmed to the Standard			
554	farms included in scope of certification	23	abattoir assessments
957	farm assessments	25	process assessments

MEAT CHICKENS	
farmed to the Standard	721,314,494
market share*	97.4%
certified farms	512
farm assessments	922
abattoir assessments	19
process assessments	14

SALMON ²	
farmed to the Standard	6,231,896
market share*	37.6%
certified sites	17
site assessments	9
abattoir assessments	1
process assessments	4

TURKEYS	
farmed to the Standard	281,909
market share*	6.3%
certified farms	12
farm assessments	12
abattoir assessments	2
process assessments	0

PIGS	
farmed to the Standard	112,745
market share*	2%
certified farms	11
farm assessments	11
abattoir assessments	1
process assessments	7

LAYER HENS	
farmed to the Standard	217,266
market share*	0.5%
certified farms	2
farm assessments	3

* 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 the exact use of the RSPCA Approved logo in market.

¹ Reporting period July 2022-July 2023

² Reporting period July 2023-July 2024

Licensees and Producers

Brands and retailers that source RSPCA Approved products are **championing higher-welfare conditions** for farmed animals. By offering **certified higher-welfare** food options, they encourage customers to consider animal welfare when purchasing meat, eggs and dairy. This in turn signals to producers that **Australians value higher-welfare practices**.

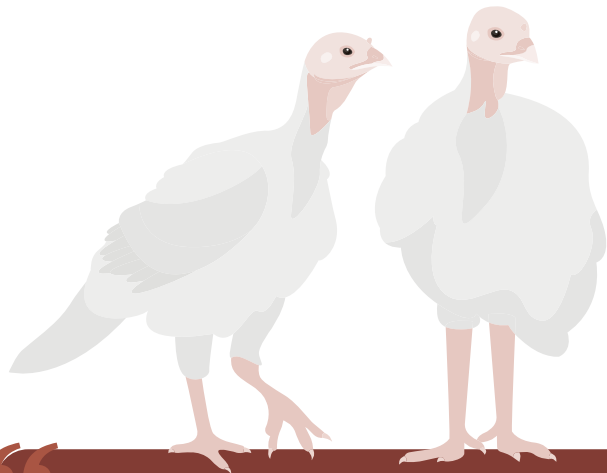
As interest grows in products sourced from animals farmed in better welfare conditions, **more producers, brands, retailers and restaurants are embracing and supporting higher-welfare practices**. Here are just some of the brands making a positive impact by sourcing products from producers with RSPCA Approved certification.



ALDI Turkey

RSPCA Approved chicken is one of ALDI's animal welfare certification requirements for their own brand fresh and frozen chicken products. In 2024, the retailer added RSPCA Approved whole turkey, as a part of their Christmas range.

With ALDI dedicated to continually enhancing animal welfare standards across their supply chains, now sourcing both RSPCA Approved chicken and whole turkey, it means more animals are farmed to a higher-welfare standard. For turkeys, this means more room to move, enrichment to occupy their curious minds, access to perches and appropriate lighting periods. For this we'd like to say THANK YOU ALDI, for prioritising the welfare of these inquisitive birds.



ALDI is committed to best practice industry standards of animal welfare across our supply chain, and we work closely with our business partners to ensure better treatment of animals. Prioritising animal welfare is an important part of being a responsible business.

– ALDI Australia

Primo

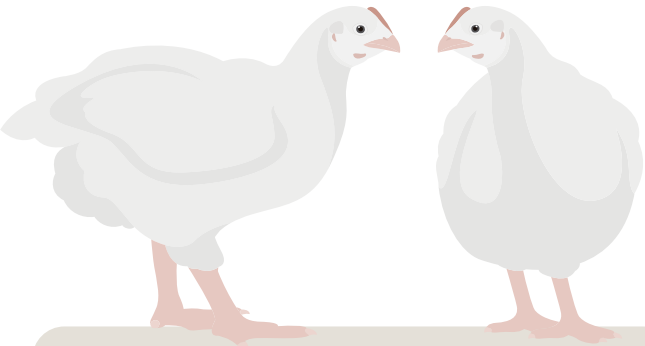
Primo Reserve chicken comes from farms certified by RSPCA Approved. These farms take pride in rearing their birds in enriched barns designed to encourage natural behaviours resulting in higher-welfare conditions for chickens. Primo Reserve sources its chicken from producers that meet the RSPCA's Standard for meat chickens, ensuring a commitment to better animal welfare throughout the process.

Starting as a humble butcher shop in 1957, Primo is now known as a market-leading and recognised brand for smallgoods nationwide, making the commitment to source RSPCA Approved chicken for their Primo Reserve chicken range a big deal. When customers see the RSPCA Approved logo on Primo Reserve chicken products, they can be confident that the chicken comes from Producers who have undergone a rigorous certification process, including traceability measures that ensure transparency from farm to point of sale.

Hazeldenes

Hazeldenes has proudly partnered with a leading supermarket group since 2011, becoming one of Australia's key suppliers of RSPCA Approved chicken. In 2024, Hazeldenes reached a significant milestone by rebranding its own Hazeldenes retail range, which features both free range and barn raised chicken, now available in independent supermarkets across eastern Australia.

Animal welfare remains central to Hazeldenes' farming. Every chicken, whether free range or barn raised, is raised to RSPCA Approved standards in enriched environments that encourage natural behaviours like perching, scratching and dust bathing. Farms are regularly assessed by specially trained RSPCA Assessors to ensure these standards are met. By embedding higher-welfare practices across every part of the business, Hazeldenes demonstrates its ongoing commitment to producing quality chicken while prioritising better animal welfare.



Elgin Valley Farms

Family-owned Elgin Valley Farms embrace better welfare for chickens farmed for meat and have proved this with RSPCA Approved certification since 2023. With farms spread across Southeast Queensland, from the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast through to the Toowoomba Range, they rear birds in free-range as well as using enriched indoor barn-raised systems, both with RSPCA Approved certification.

For Elgin Valley Farms to achieve RSPCA Approved certification they, like all RSPCA Approved Producers, must be assessed against over 350 unique requirements included in the RSPCA Approved Standard for chickens farmed for meat, with ongoing conformance across assessments conducted regularly to retain certification. The Standard goes beyond what is legally required to raise the level of animal welfare, by focusing on the behavioural and physiological needs of the birds, by improving housing, handling and husbandry.

Elgin Valley Farms is committed to farming our birds to a higher welfare standard and focusing on great supply chain partnerships, the quality and consistency of our products, and our dedication to excellence throughout every phase of production.

– Elgin Valley Farms

La Ionica

La Ionica started with humble beginnings and has always strived for better meat chicken welfare. With a commitment to continually find better, more innovative ways of doing things, becoming certified by RSPCA Approved in 2024 was another step in the right direction to improving practices for the welfare of chickens farmed for meat. These farms and abattoirs are regularly assessed as part of the RSPCA Approved certification by specially trained Assessors to make sure they meet RSPCA's Standard.

“The welfare of our meat chickens has always been at the heart of our operations, however with the guidance and support of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme, we have been able to enhance our farming practices, implementing a range of improvements to create a more enriching environment for our birds.”

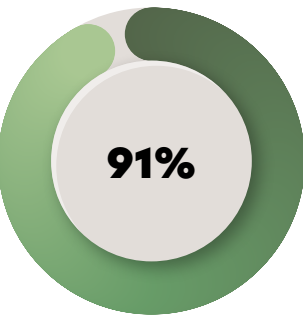
—La Ionica

Schnitz

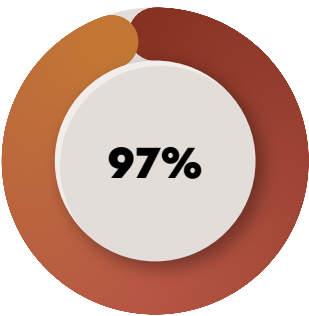
If you eat at Schnitz restaurants, you're supporting a brand that values prioritising farmed animal welfare and sources from meat chicken Producers certified to the detailed RSPCA Approved Standard. With nearly 80 stores nationwide and a menu centred around chicken, their transition to sourcing solely RSPCA Approved chicken is a big deal, and a big step in supporting higher-welfare farming practices. Congratulations Schnitz!

Public Perceptions

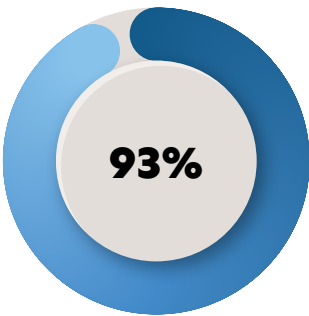
To understand how the public understands animal welfare issues and our work, the RSPCA frequently conducts research which helps to shape our goals related to awareness and education and inform our communications about the Scheme and farmed animal welfare.



Are familiar with the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme (McCrindle, Nov 2024)



Positive overall impression of RSPCA Approved (McCrindle, Nov 2024)

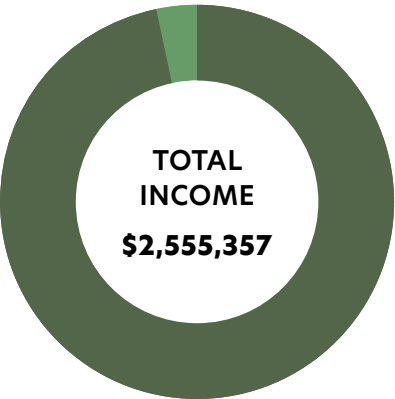


Trust RSPCA Approved when it comes to making decisions on what are suitable animal welfare conditions for animals (July 2023)

Financial Report

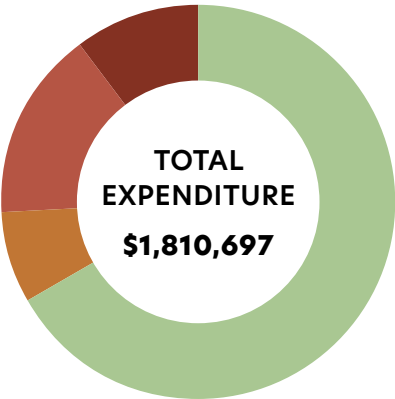
RSPCA Approved is not funded by donations to the RSPCA or general RSPCA revenue. The Scheme is self-funded, mostly by license fees from brands that source from RSPCA Approved Producers and market their products with RSPCA Approved certification, as well as Producers that wish to pay for assessments as part of their own commitments to animal welfare. All funds raised are used to support the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme and to implement our work, promote the Scheme and its participants which ultimately improve the lives of Australia's farmed animals.

FY 2022-23 Income



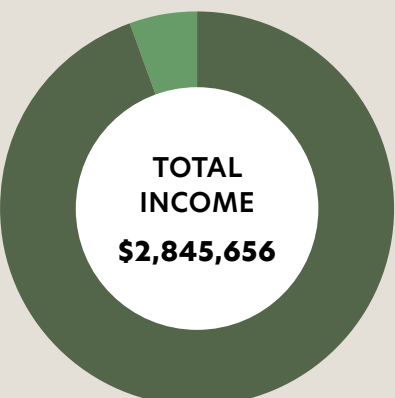
- Licensing fees \$2,476,047
- Producer fees \$79,310

FY 2022-23 Expenditure



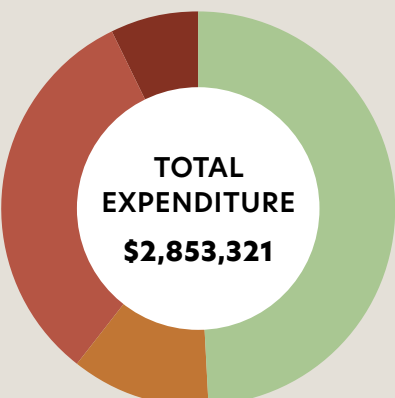
- Assessment & Certification costs \$1,208,561
- Operational costs \$285,095
- Marketing costs \$135,677
- Strategic cost \$181,364

FY 2023-24 Income



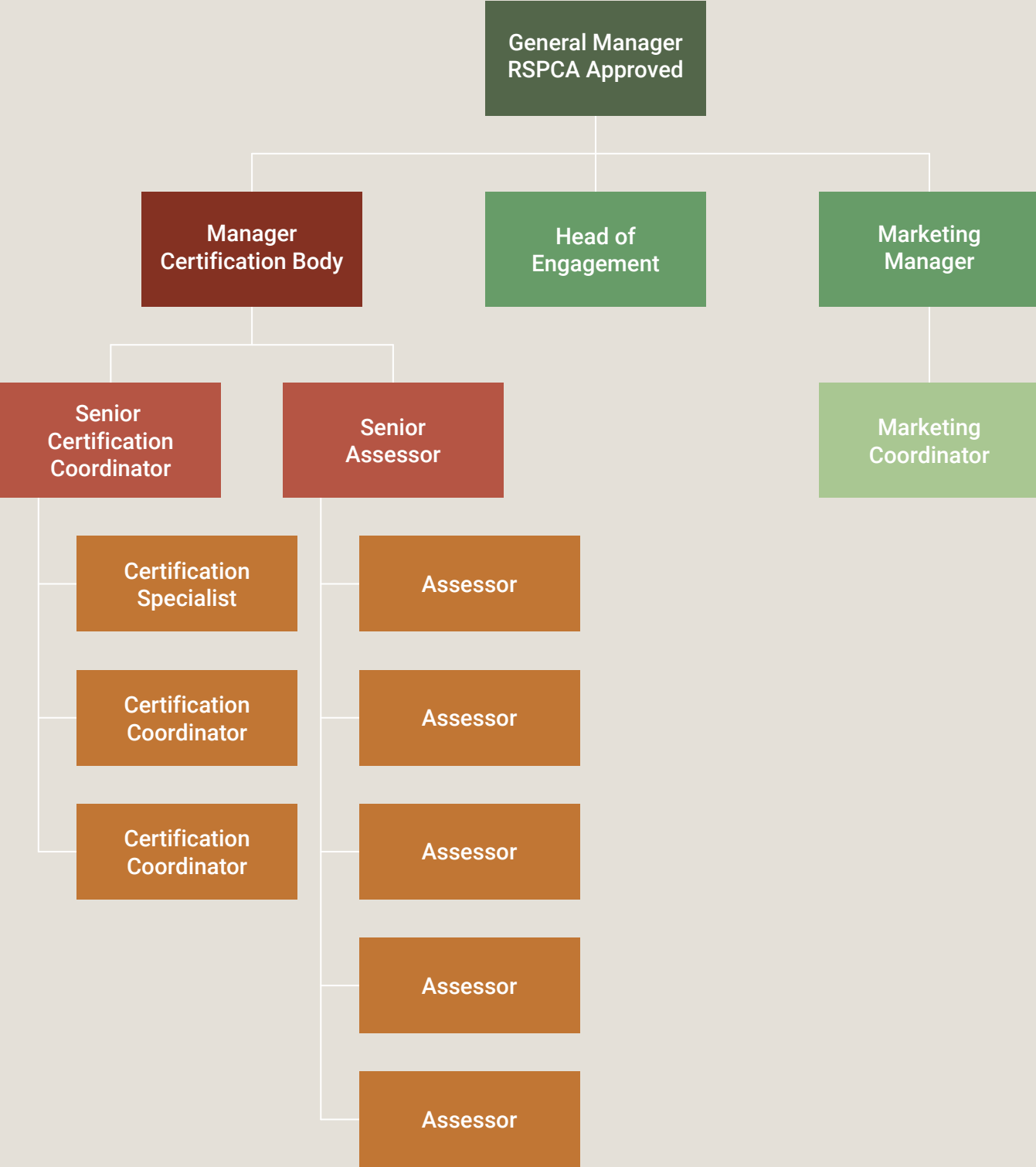
- Licensing fees \$2,688,596
- Producer fees \$157,060

FY 2023-24 Expenditure



- Assessment & Certification costs \$1,404,568
- Operational costs \$916,391
- Marketing costs \$326,852
- Strategic cost \$205,500

Organisational Chart



RAISING THE BAR

FOR FARMED ANIMALS

PO Box 531
Curtin ACT 2605

02 6282 8300

approvedfarming@rspca.org.au

rspcaapproved.org.au

