



# **MYTON FOOD GROUP**

## Animal Welfare Report

2023 Calendar Year

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# Myton Food Group

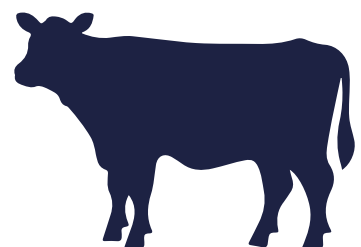


At Myton Food Group, we have a legacy to be proud of.

We have always been innovative and forward thinking. Our journey started in 1976, opening our first produce packaging site Cutler Heights in Bradford. Our manufacturing business has continued to grow, with the opening of our Falfish sites in Cornwall in 2021.

Across our manufacturing sites, we pack and process fresh meats, fish and eggs, bake savoury and sweet pies, pack fruit, vegetables and flower bouquets and bake bread. We make sure that Myton Food Group colleagues produce food we're all proud of and champion.

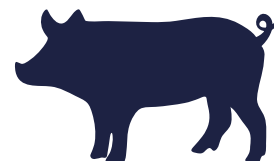
This report covers animal welfare for our Woodhead Bros meat processing sites, Chippindale Food Group site for eggs and the work that we are doing within our supply chain.



**Over 1,000 cattle suppliers**



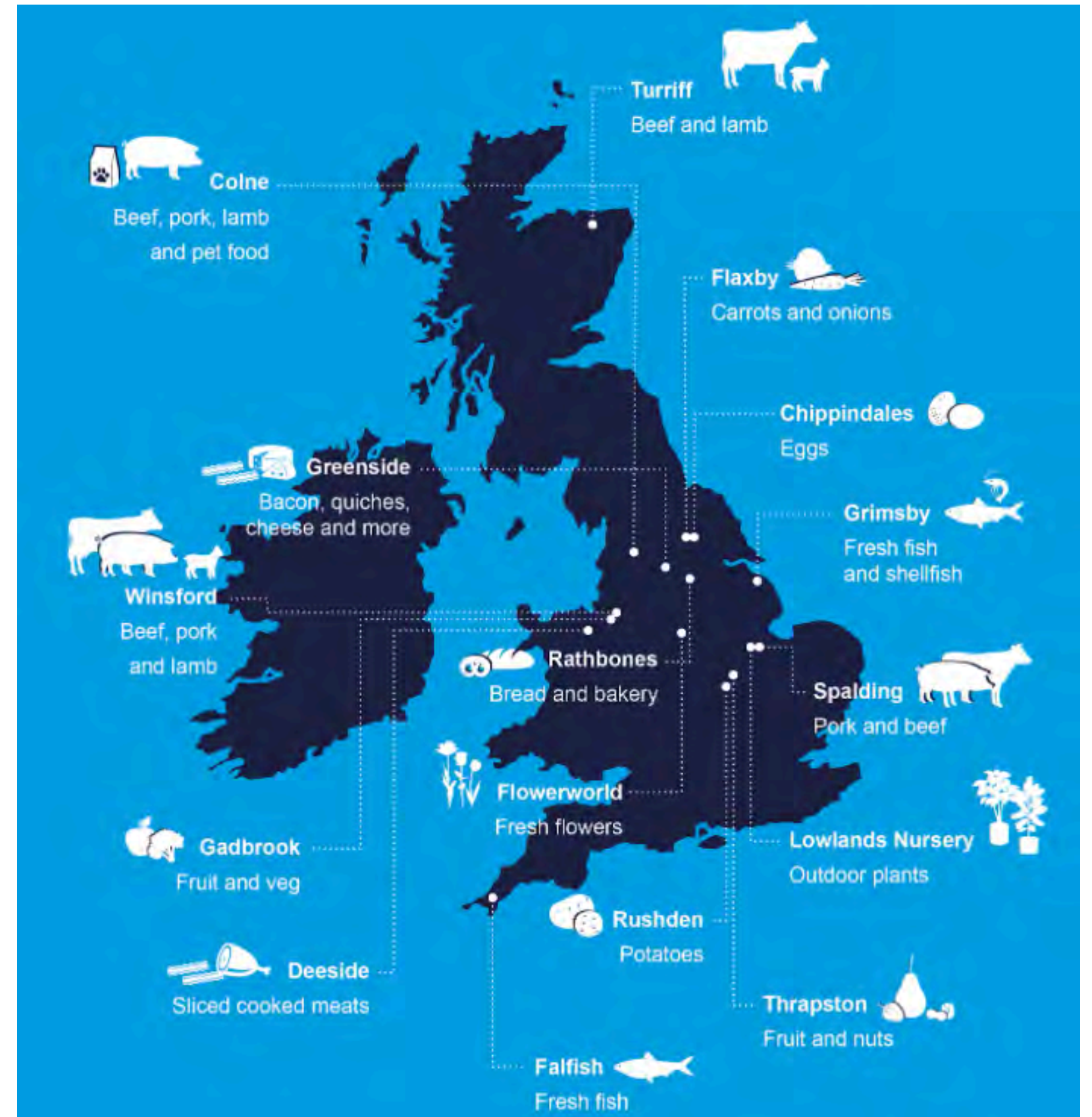
**Over 500 lamb suppliers**



**47 pig suppliers from over 300 farms**



**Over 65 egg producers**



# Governance and Welfare Standards

Animal welfare standards are a contractual obligation for our livestock suppliers. 100% of meat sourced by Woodhead Bros and eggs sourced by Chippindales must be farm assurance certified.

Our livestock and agricultural team complete farm visits every week, working closely with our suppliers monitoring the welfare of animals in our own supply chain, allowing us to react quickly to any concerns regarding animal welfare. We are striving for continuous improvement to our animal welfare standards.

In addition to the reporting of key welfare indicators, we are working with academic institutions and agricultural colleges, along with sector experts, to deliver practical research and best practice guidance to improve animal welfare standards, which we share with our supplying farmers.



## Farm Assurance Standards that we are working with:

- Red Tractor - Beef, Pork, Lamb
- QMS - Quality Meat Scotland - Beef, Lamb, Pork
- Farm Assured Welsh Lamb (FAWL)
- British Quality Assured Pork (BQAP)
- RSPCA Assured- Pork and Eggs
- British Lion Code - Eggs

# Our Commitment to Animal Welfare



**At the heart of our animal welfare policies sits the Five Domains framework. This framework promotes positive welfare states, creating a rounded, holistic view of welfare that aligns with science-based and compassionate farming practices. These practices must be upheld by our farmers supplying into our Woodhead Bros abattoirs and egg packing site, Chippindale Foods.**



## Our Actions and Initiatives

**Great stockmanship to ensure content, well cared for animals :** Our colleagues handling livestock in our abattoirs are animal welfare trained in WATOK (welfare at the time of killing) regulations, ensuring that employees are well-equipped to maintain high welfare standards and drive continuous improvement.

Our designated animal welfare officers and senior animal welfare officers are trained, developed with the University of Bristol and accredited by LANTRA Awards.

**Animal Welfare Steering Group:** This group meets regularly to review key welfare indicators and ensure that welfare standards are continuously monitored and improved across the supply chain.

**Welfare Culture Sessions:** Previously led by Dr. Jane Downes, a prominent expert in animal welfare, these sessions emphasise the importance of maintaining high welfare standards.

# Working With Industry

We're proud of the relationships we have with farmers across the UK. Working with both farmers and closely with industry we can help to drive change and help shape strategies on animal welfare in the industry.

We work closely with Compassion in World Farming and Supply Chain Resilience in addition to UK assurance schemes.



# Egg Procurement - Chippindale Foods



## Range Enhanced

- Free range plus planting wildflowers, trees and other plants to create habitats for pollinators and other wildlife, including 20% natural cover.
- 90% of weekly supply.

## Organic

- Free range plus hens must be fed an organically produced diet and range on organic land.
- No antibiotic usage or wormer allowed.
- 1% of weekly supply.

## Free Range

- Free to roam around outside through 'pop holes' and better able to perform natural behaviours like nesting, perching and dust bathing.
- 9% of weekly supply.

**Sourcing over 14 million eggs a week**

# Procurement - Elite Beef Scheme



## Welfare:

- Elite Beef calf rearing specification
- Unannounced audits
- Finishing unit specification
- Antibiotic reduction
- Genetic improvement programmes
- Ongoing Research and Development
- Consistently monitored and tracked data
- End-to-end supply chain insights
- Transparency and traceability

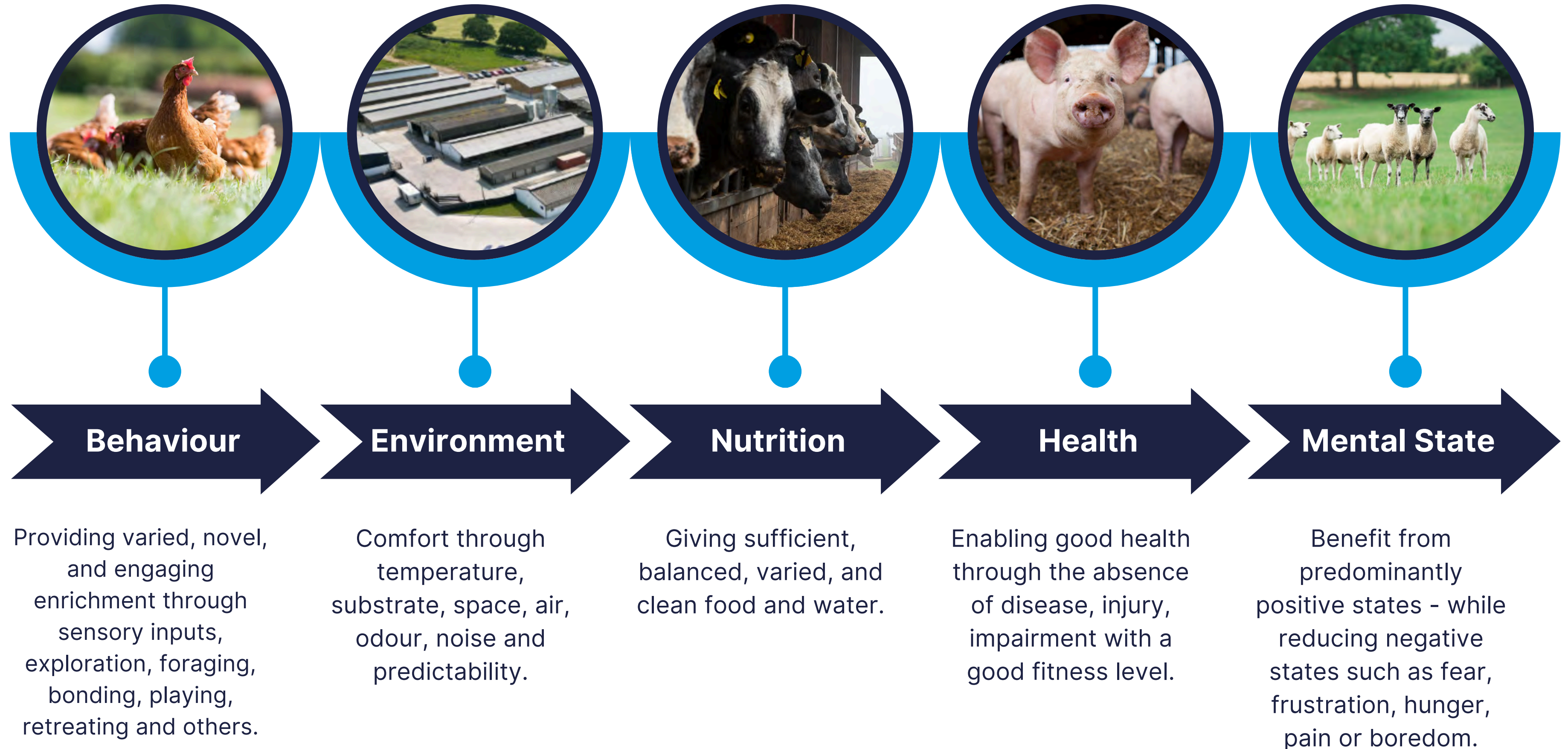


Elite Beef, one of the leading largest integrated beef supply chains in the industry. Allowing us to provide our farmers and customers with security and stability, embracing the very best in beef genetics, and delivering consistent and fabulous tasting British beef to our customers.





# The Five Domains



# Animal Welfare on Farm - Livestock



**Assurance** - All farms supplying Woodhead Bros are required to be Red Tractor Assured or equivalent, complying with their stringent animal welfare regulations, ensuring adherence to high welfare standards across the supply chain.

**Our Expert Buying Team** - With over 100 years of experience in our buying team, we are building strong supplier relationships. Our team have regular contact with our suppliers, and conduct regular visits out on farm.

**Livestock Technical Specialists** - Conduct regular farm visits, with a focus on the welfare on farm, offering technical guidance and support to improve welfare practices.

**Unannounced Audit Team** - In 2021 we began our unannounced audit programme with an independent third-party, to gain a better insight into standards on farms that we work with. The audits focus on 5 key areas: health and welfare, stockmanship, site security, farm appearance and fallen stock management.

# Animal Welfare on Sites - Livestock



At Myton Food Group we are passionate about animal welfare at our three processing sites; Colne, Spalding and Turriff.

**Assurance** - All of our Woodhead Bros abattoir sites are audited by Red Tractor or equivalent, complying with their stringent animal welfare regulations, ensuring adherence to high welfare standards across the supply chain. Our two pig processing sites are also RSPCA assured.

**Transport Welfare Monitoring** - Ensures the welfare of animals during transport, with no journey planned to be over 8 hours. The majority of our animals travel less than 4 hours to our processing sites.

**Animal Welfare Officer Training** - World-renowned and highly valued by industry and competent authorities alike, the AWO training is built on scientific research by the Animal Welfare department of the University of Bristol Veterinary School. All of our sites have designated animal welfare officers, following training with Bristol University.

Our lairage staff are all WATOK trained, and pig Lairage staff have completed AHDB pig welfare and handling training. The welfare training platform was developed in collaboration with Red Tractor, the National Pig Association (NPA), the Pig Veterinary Society (PVS), the Pig Health and Welfare Council, and pig producers.

# Animal Welfare on Farm - Eggs



**Our specialist fields team** is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of animal welfare and food safety on our producer's farms. This is achieved through bi-annual audits in compliance with British Lion standards and several welfare inspections per flock. The team also works closely with industry leaders and participate in ongoing training to ensure we remain at the forefront of best welfare practices, including nutrition, poultry diseases, animal husbandry and water quality. This allows us to connect with our farmers and offer support on a broad range of subjects.

**Our eggs** are sourced from farms that meet stringent quality assurance and traceability credentials, including BEIC, RSPCA, and OF&G (Organic).

**5 domains welfare auditing** In 2024, we upgraded our current in-house welfare audits to incorporate all aspects of the 5 domains of animal welfare. This has been rolled out successfully and is undertaken by our fields team twice a flock at each farm. Additional data collected from these will offer benchmarking opportunities, providing a platform for technical advice and guidance from the team.

**Third Party unannounced auditing** In 2023, we began working with an independent third-party assurance company, to conduct unannounced catching audits on randomly selected laying farms. The audits focus on welfare of end of lay hens, to ensure humane handling practices and compliance with RSPCA animal welfare standards.

# Looking to the Future

## Animal Welfare Expert Panel

At Myton Food group in support of Morrisons, we launched our Animal Welfare expert panel in 2024 to help us drive continuous improvement of animal welfare within our supply chains. Together with Directors, Category Leads, Team Colleagues, and industry representation across every category, we meet to discuss animal welfare across the various categories, what actions could be prioritised and how we can monitor and implement new initiatives.

The panel is chaired by Jonathan Statham, and meets twice a year. Minutes are recorded and actions are logged and timebound.



**Chair:**

**Professor Jonathan Statham**

- Chair of the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England
- Professor of Sustainable Livestock Health & Welfare at Harper and Keele Vet School
- Past President of British Cattle Veterinary Association and Yorkshire Veterinary Society
- Qualified and practising vet, Bishopton Veterinary Group and RAFT Solutions Ltd



**Panel member:**

**Dr Catherine Douglas**

- Reader in Animal Welfare and Behaviour
- Degree Programme Director - Agriculture and Animal Science - Newcastle University
- Also past recipient of Ig Nobel Prize for veterinary medicine



**Panel member:**

**Dr Sara Perez**

- Veterinary Director, Poultry Health Services, UK
- Winner - National Women in Agriculture Awards



**Panel member:**

**Dr Jane Downes**

- Member: Defra's Animal Welfare Committee
- Trustee: Universities Federation for Animal Welfare
- Past Veterinary Director, Meat Hygiene Service, Food Standards Agency

# Key Welfare Outcomes 2023 - Transportation

We are committed to ensuring animals in our supply chain are looked after at every stage. We also control the majority of our livestock transport and have 11 high welfare transporters fitted with drinking systems and insulated roofs to keep the livestock as comfortable as possible on their journeys. Any journey times which take animal transport over our 8 hour policy, whilst still legally compliant, are investigated and reports made to our Animal Welfare Steering Group. We also have a Code of Conduct for all transport companies we work with to ensure care of handling and transport. All animals are inspected for welfare compliance both prior to loading and after unloading by our own drivers who hold City & Guilds welfare qualification. The majority of live animal transport in our fresh supply chain from farm to abattoir arrives in under four hours. We also contingency plan in events of extreme weather.

The below figures refer to journeys made within the UK. 100% of our meat products are British.

	<b>0-4 hours (YoY change)</b>	<b>4 - 8 hours (YoY change)</b>	<b>&gt; 8 hours (YoY change)</b>
Beef	75.25% (+16.74%)	24.49% (-20.25%)	0.25% (+0.03%)
Pork	57.56% (+6.71%)	42.36% (-6.45%)	0.07% (-0.27%)
Lamb	70.42% (+5.08%)	22.94% (-5.68%)	6.64% (+0.60%)
End of Lay Hens	100%	0%	0%

# Key Welfare Outcomes 2023 - Transportation

We monitor any road traffic accidents (RTAs), noticeable fatigue and any stock dead on arrival. Figures below represent 2023 Road Traffic Accidents and resulting fatalities for our own transport vehicles, while DOAs represent the total figure, including from contractor vehicles.

## Beef

RTAs that resulted in livestock fatalities in 2023	None
DOAs (YoY change)	0.0125% (-0.0013%)
Notes on YoY change	Any potential trends or patterns associated with travel times and DOAs have been investigated, with no conclusive connections found

## Pork

RTAs that resulted in livestock fatalities in 2023	None
DOAs (YoY change)	0.0033% (+0.0018%)
Notes on YoY change	Six DOA were recorded in cattle for 2023. Each DOA have been investigated and findings were fed back to the relevant parties

## Lamb

RTAs that resulted in livestock fatalities in 2023	None
DOAs (YoY change)	0.0038% (-0.0012%)
Notes on YoY change	Any potential trends or patterns associated with travel times and DOAs have been investigated, with no conclusive connections found

# Key Welfare Outcomes - Pre-Slaughter Stunning

All animals are stunned in a manner that renders the animal insensible to pain prior to slaughter.

- Our abattoirs were the first in England to have staff qualified in the Welfare at the Time of Killing (WATOK) standards.
- 100% of pigs within our supply base are gas stunned before slaughter, in line with current RSPCA Assured recommendations.

We remain open to considering alternative stunning methods in pigs, and would welcome additional research by Defra into how these methods can be practically applied to a commercial abattoir setting. We also engage with AHDB and other processors in the industry to understand what this could look like.

Our animal welfare steering group review these figures regularly and are continually looking at improvements that can be made.

## % Stunned



Beef

End of Lay Hens \*

\*End of Lay Hens (Shell Egg Supply Chain Only)

Lamb

Pork

## % Effectively Stunned (YoY Change)

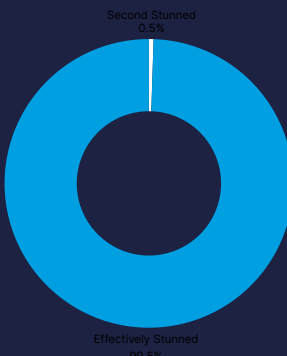
Defined as animals not requiring a back up stun.

Beef

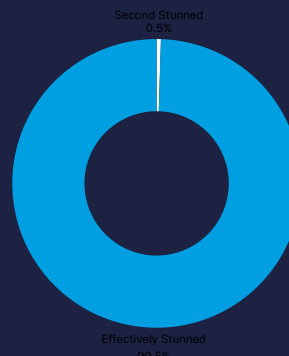
Lamb

Pork

End of Lay Hens (Shell Egg Supply Chain Only)



99.48% (+0.44% YoY)



99.52% (-0.24% YoY)



99.96% (no change YoY)



99.99% (No Change)



# Key Welfare Outcomes - Close Confinement

We have strict requirements in avoiding animals produced in systems which use sow stalls, single penning, battery cages, tethering, veal crates and force feeding. We adhere to EU regulations, and more specifically British Red Tractor standards, that have strict controls on animal confinement.

## Pork



Free from sow stalls (gestation crates)

- 12.38% outdoor bred (ie no farrowing crates in use), has been increasing since 2019.
- 10.09% adaptive farrowing / loose lactation (ie temporary crating/ 'free farrowing' crates in use), increasing in our supply.

In line with industry definitions of 'free farrowing', how we report close confinement data in pigs has changed to provide more clarity.

## Shell Egg



Free Range or Organic

## Ingredient Egg



Free from battery cage production

60.2% cage free as of 1st July 2024. 64% cage free as of 1st July 2023, 59% in July 2022, 59% in 2021, 57% in 2020, and 55% in 2019.

# Routine Surgical Procedures 2023

Within the Myton Food Group supply chain, we do not permit routine surgical procedures.

Certain procedures are permitted under strict veterinary supervision and guidance, such as castration in cattle and sheep.

Species	Policy Requirement	2023 Compliance Rate	Commentary
Beef	Castration under veterinary guidance only	100%	No routine castration in supply
Pork	No routine castration No routine tail docking % of whole, intact tailed pigs No routine teeth reduction	100% 100% 1.2% 100%	No change yoy
Lamb	No mulesing Castration under veterinary guidance only	100% 100%	No mulesing in supply No routine castration in supply

# Species Specific Outcomes 2023 - Enrichment

We are committed to ensuring animals in our supply chain have positive experiences. To ensure animals in our Own Brand supply chain can express their normal behaviour and experience positive mental state we require animals to have access to enrichment as below.

Species	% with Access to Enrichment	Examples of Enrichment
Laying Hens (Eggs)	100%	100% Free Range; outdoor range including trees/bushes, perch space, pecking objects, dustbathing areas
Beef	100%	Grazing on outdoor systems; straw on non-slatted indoor systems
Pork	100% had access to at least one of the examples listed	Straw, hessian cloth sacks, hemp rope, fresh wood, plastic toys
Lamb	100%	Grazing on hillside/outdoor systems; straw on non-slatted indoor systems

# Species Specific Outcomes 2023 - Beef



KPI	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Commentary
Casualty Animals	0.00%	0.01%	0.02%	0.01%	0.01%	Little change year on year, any incidents have been investigated through the Animal Welfare Steering Group and fed back to the relevant suppliers.
Lairage Resting Time 0-6 hours		39%	38%	35.4%	49.0%	Changes in the lairage resting times had no effect on the overall welfare of the cattle
Lairage Resting Time 6-12 hours		34.4%	21%	20.2%	17.1%	
Lairage Resting Time >12 hours		26.6%	41%	44.4%	33.9%	

# Species Specific Outcomes 2023 - Lamb



KPI	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Commentary
Casualty Animals	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	0.01%	0.01%	Casualty slaughters are monitored and any potential trends or patterns associated are highlighted at our animal welfare steering group.
Lairage Resting Time 0-6 hours		22.60 %	22.70 %	23.55 %	26.30 %	Reduced resting times; this had no effect on the overall welfare of the lambs



# Species Specific Outcomes 2023 - Pork



KPI	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Commentary
Casualty Animals	0.01%	0.02%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%	Casualty slaughters are monitored and any potential trends or patterns associated are highlighted at our animal welfare steering group.
Lairage Resting Time 0-6 hours		36%	32%	38%	38.21%	Increased lairage resting times; this had no effect on the overall welfare of the pigs
Lairage Resting Time 6-12 hours		44%	22%	25%	21.96%	
Lairage Resting Time >12 hours		20%	45%	37%	39.83%	
Lameness		0.03%	0.01%	0.01%	0.01%	
Tail Bitten Pigs		0.52%	0.19%	0.15%	0.16%	

# Species Specific Outcomes 2023 - Eggs

## Laying Hens

KPI	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Commentary
Mortality	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	Of the farms that data was collected from, a small number suffered higher than expected mortality rates and feather loss in 2023 vs 2022 and 2021. This is due to birds housed for longer during the Avian Influenza government housing order.
Keel Bone Damage	40%	27%	20%	20%	31%	
70 week Feather Score 2	26%	22%	23%	26%	30%	
Cage Free	78%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Free range target achieved ahead of 2025 commitment.

## Ingredient Egg Supply Chain

KPI	2019	2020	2021	July 2022	July 2023	July 2024	Commentary
Cage Free	55%	57%	59%	59%	64%	60%	In 2021, our egg packing site began supplying liquid egg to our manufacturing sites. As of 1st July 2024, our supply chain remains 60.2% cage free. While positive to 2022 reporting, in 2023 supply chain shortages drove a slight decline in eggs sourced from cage free production systems.

# Our Partners

## School of Sustainable Food and Farming

We work closely with Morrisons and the School of Sustainable Food and Farming (SSFF). Our aim is to promote sustainable and resilient systems through educating, inspiring and empowering current and future farmers. We work with our farmers towards reducing emissions, enhancing nature positive farming to ensure sustainable growth of high quality British food from farms we know and trust.

The SSFF are working to improve farm practice and the farm data to track progress on greenhouse gas emissions reduction, unlock benefits by understanding soil organic carbon amongst other sustainability metrics.



## Map of Ag

We work with Map of Ag, a data platform that provides carbon footprinting solutions for the agriculture sector. The platform connects farms and industry to help users measure, monitor, and manage their businesses.

- Provides carbon footprinting solutions for farms and the agrifood sector
- Helps users make informed decisions to drive environmental impact
- Provides 1:1 consultation with farmers and vets to improve welfare and efficiency.







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