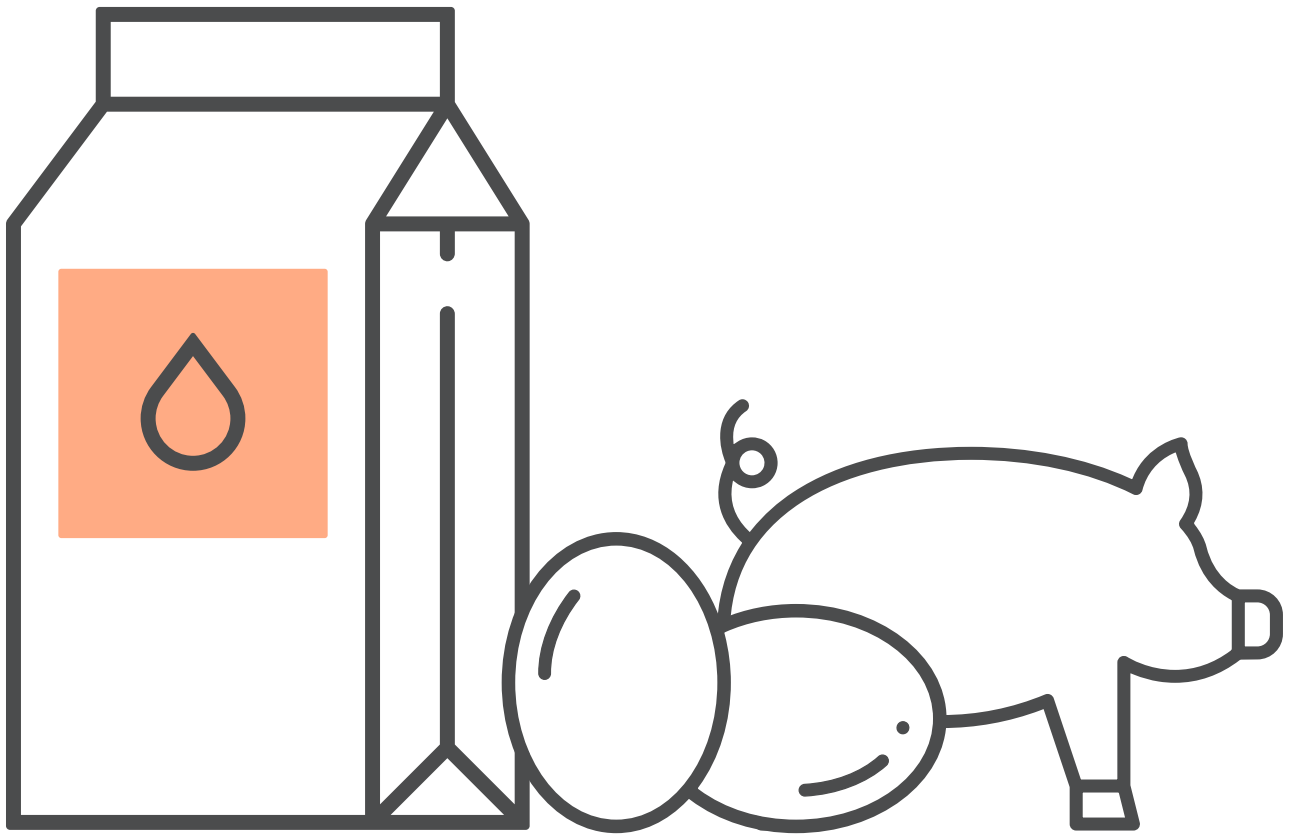


RESPONSIBLE SOURCING







Key procurement goals




Key procurement goals



Use this table to identify production systems related to responsible sourcing of proteins and textiles, including options for best practice.



This information is specifically in relation to proteins and textiles consumed and used primarily by humans. It does not cover by-product use or products consumed by pets.



PROTEIN	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
Eggs (layer hens) 	<p><i>Cage-free shell eggs</i> <i>Cage-free ingredient eggs (liquid/powder)</i></p> <p>Cage free means that hens have been kept in systems where they are free to move about, and not confined to cages. Cage free can be barn systems, or birds can have access to the outdoors (free range).</p>	<p><i>RSPCA Approved shell eggs</i> <i>RSPCA Approved ingredient eggs (liquid/powder)</i></p> <p>RSPCA Approved eggs are certified to RSPCA Standards. Hens have been kept in an environment where they can express their natural behaviours, including perching, dustbathing and nesting. Practices such as induced moulting are not allowed. RSPCA Approved layer hen farms are assessed 2-4 times a year to check they meet the RSPCA's detailed animal welfare standards.</p>
Chicken (meat chickens) 	<p><i>RSPCA Approved chicken</i></p> <p>All chicken meat in Australia is 'cage' and 'hormone' free however this claim doesn't necessarily mean the bird is farmed humanely.</p> <p>RSPCA Approved chicken is certified to RSPCA Standards. Birds have been raised in an environment where they're encouraged to be active and express natural behaviours, including perching, dustbathing and foraging. RSPCA Approved meat chicken farms are assessed 2-4 times a year to check they meet the RSPCA's detailed animal welfare standards.</p>	<p>Additional welfare benefits may include use of slower growing bird genetics, increased space allowance.</p>



PROTEIN	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Turkey (turkeys)</p> 	<p><i>RSPCA Approved turkey</i></p> <p>All turkey meat in Australia is ‘cage’ and ‘hormone’ free however this claim doesn’t necessarily mean the bird is farmed humanely.</p> <p>RSPCA Approved turkey is certified to RSPCA Standards. Birds have been raised in an environment where they’re encouraged to be active and express natural behaviours, including perching, dustbathing and foraging. Painful procedures such as toe clipping are not allowed. RSPCA Approved turkey farms are assessed 2-4 times a year to check they meet the RSPCA’s detailed animal welfare standards.</p>	<p>Additional welfare benefits may include use of slower growing bird genetics, increased space allowance.</p>
<p>Duck (ducks)</p> 	<p>There is currently little labelling information on the method of production for duck meat. In Australian commercial duck production, birds are farmed indoors in large sheds that are either climate controlled or naturally ventilated. They may have access to water through drinkers, however this may not be sufficient access to carry out natural water-related behaviours.</p> <p>Procurement teams should enquire with suppliers using the supply chain analysis document to understand more about the duck purchased.</p>	<p><i>Higher welfare indoor duck or free-range duck</i></p> <p>Whether ducks are reared indoors or with outdoor access (free range) the conditions inside are important in providing opportunity for good animal welfare.</p> <p>Higher welfare duck farming systems provide ducks with sufficient space to move around freely, clean and dry litter for comfortable resting, adequate lighting, good ventilation, access to water facilities to carry out their natural water-related behaviours, and, where birds have access to the outdoors, shade and shelter to encourage birds to access the range.</p>



PROTEIN	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Pork (pigs)</p> 	<p><i>Australian sow-stall free pork, outdoor bred pork or free-range pork</i></p> <p>Sow-stall free systems are a positive first step but pigs can still be kept in barren pens without bedding and sows can still be confined to farrowing crates for 3 or more weeks at a time. In outdoor bred systems, breeding pigs have outdoor access and are not confined to stalls or crates. Their offspring will be raised indoors. In free-range systems, both breeding and growing pigs have continuous outdoor access.</p>	<p><i>RSPCA Approved pork</i></p> <p>RSPCA Approved pig farms provide pigs with an environment where they can express their natural behaviours, including exploring, foraging and socialising. Sow stalls and farrowing crates are not allowed, nor are painful husbandry procedures. RSPCA Approved pig farms are assessed twice annually to check they meet the RSPCA's detailed animal welfare standards.</p>
<p>Salmon (farmed Atlantic salmon)</p> 	<p><i>RSPCA Approved salmon</i></p> <p>As fish are capable of feeling pain and distress, it's important they are farmed with consideration of animal welfare. By choosing RSPCA Approved farmed Atlantic salmon, fish have been raised in an environment where they can express natural behaviours and have been handled and slaughtered humanely. RSPCA Approved salmon farms are assessed regularly to check they meet the RSPCA's detailed animal welfare standards.</p>	<p>Additional welfare benefits may include increasing space allowance in sea pens, opportunities for exploration through environmental variation.</p>
<p>Dairy (cattle)</p> 	<p>There is currently little labelling information on the method of production for dairy products, and due to the nature of milk being pooled from multiple farms it's challenging to identify specific supplier farms. In Australian commercial dairy production, cows are farmed in predominantly pasture based systems and come indoors for milking daily. There are a small number of entirely indoor dairy farms in Australia, where cows do not have access to pasture.</p>	<p><i>Higher welfare dairy</i></p> <p>Higher welfare dairy farming systems provide cattle with sufficient space to move around freely, choice of accessing pasture, enough food and water to avoid competition, strategies to reduce mastitis and lameness, polled breeding strategies, pain relief for disbudding, no dehorning, no tail docking, no calving induction, pathways for non-replacement calves to be reared for veal or beef, good colostrum management for calves, group housing of calves, cow-calf contact.</p>

PROTEIN	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Beef (cattle)</p> 	<p>Australian beef products come from animals born and raised on pasture. At least one third of beef cattle will spend the last part of their lives in feedlots in order to guarantee meat quality and consistency. Beef sourced from animals held in feedlots is labelled 'grain fed' or 'grain-fed finished'. Feedlots don't provide animals with access to pasture where they prefer to rest and digest food.</p> <p>Beef cattle are subject to painful procedures such as castration, dehorning, disbudding and hot iron branding. Enquire with suppliers if pain relief is used during these procedures.</p> <p><i>In the absence of RSPCA Approved Standards for beef cattle, RSPCA Australia has developed Beef cattle welfare: Our vision to encourage producers to improve on-farm practices that influence animal welfare. Where calves are sourced from the dairy industry and reared for beef, the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme Standards for Dairy Calves should be met and farms regularly assessed as part of the Scheme.</i></p>	<p><i>Grass-fed or pasture-raised beef</i></p> <p>'Grass-fed' or 'pasture-raised' beef has come from animals raised on pasture for their whole life.</p> <p>Higher welfare beef cattle farming systems find alternatives to painful procedures, e.g. no hot-iron branding and/or castration, and use of polled cattle meaning disbudding/dehorning is not required. Cattle always have access to shade.</p>
<p>Veal (beef or dairy calves)</p> 	<p><i>RSPCA Approved veal, or pink veal from group-housed calves</i></p> <p>Veal is produced from beef or dairy cattle farmed for 6–12 months. Due to their young age, it's important that calves are raised in the company of others and in an environment that encourages natural behaviours, including playing, socialising and suckling. By choosing RSPCA Approved veal, calves have been raised in an environment where they are encouraged to express their natural behaviours. RSPCA Approved veal farms are regularly assessed to check they meet the RSPCA's detailed animal welfare standards.</p>	<p>Additional welfare benefits may include more space allowance, increased frequency and quantity of milk feeding, access to pasture before weaning.</p>

PROTEIN	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Lamb & Mutton (sheep)</p> 	<p>Australian lamb and mutton products come from animals born and raised on pasture. Some sheep will spend the last part of their lives in feedlots in order to guarantee meat quality and consistency. Lamb and mutton sourced from animals held in feedlots is labelled 'grain fed' or 'grain-fed finished'. Feedlots don't provide animals with access to pasture where they prefer to rest and digest food.</p> <p>Sheep are also subject to painful procedures such as tail docking and castration. Ewes may be mulesed. Enquire with suppliers if pain relief is used during these procedures.</p>	<p><i>Grass-fed or pasture-raised lamb or mutton</i></p> <p>'Grass-fed' or 'pasture-raised' has come from animals raised on pasture for their whole life.</p> <p>Higher welfare sheep farming systems find alternatives to painful procedures, e.g. no castration, no mulesing. Sheep always have access to shade.</p>
Not recommended		
<p>Foie gras (ducks & geese)</p> 	<p>The common method of foie gras production involving repeated force feeding of the bird, seriously jeopardises the welfare of ducks and geese and is not used in Australia – all foie gras pate sold in Australia is imported.</p>	<p>Foie gras alternatives that do not involve force feeding.</p>

TEXTILE PRODUCT	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Wool (sheep)</p> 	<p>Non-mulesed wool</p> <p>It is unacceptable to continue to breed sheep that are susceptible to flystrike and therefore require mulesing or other breech modification procedures (e.g. sheep freeze branding) to manage flystrike risk.</p> <p>Wool should be sourced from flystrike resistant sheep that have not been subject to breech modification.</p>	<p>Certified wool</p> <p>Wool certified by a scheme that includes animal welfare should specifically prohibit mulesing or other breech modification.</p> <p>A robust wool certification scheme should have publicly available standards, frequent on-farm and unscheduled audits and be conducted by an independent organisation.</p>
<p>Cashmere/Mohair (goats)</p> 	<p>The combing of goats with a sharp-toothed comb is a prolonged procedure that can lead to bruising and skin injuries, and cause unnecessary and extended pain, suffering and distress in goats.</p> <p>The stress experienced by goats during shearing (as carried out in Australia) can be reduced by handling goats in a low-stress manner, ensuring shearers are trained and competent in best practice technique to reduce the risk of skin injuries and ensuring the appropriate treatment of wounds and injuries when required.</p> <p>Good planning and management are necessary to prevent hypothermia in shorn goats. All goat farms in Australia should at the very least comply with the Australian industry welfare standards and guidelines for goats.</p>	<p>Higher welfare goat fibre</p> <p>Higher welfare goat farming systems provide goats with sufficient space to move around freely in groups, access to pasture, feeding systems that meet the goat’s behavioural needs, pain relief for disbudding, low-stress handling and shearing, access to shade.</p>

TEXTILE PRODUCT	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Angora (rabbits)</p> 	<p>Fur can be sourced by either trapping or farming an animal just for its fur, or as by-products of other production industries.</p> <p>Where fur is sourced, this should only be as a by-product of a primary production system.</p> <p><u>RSPCA Australia is opposed to the use of any animal where the purpose of their death is primarily to produce a non-essential luxury item like fur or skin.</u></p>	<p>Where fur is sourced as a by-product of other production industries those systems should manage animals in a higher welfare environment where their needs are met.</p> <p>Fur should be certified to publicly available standards, with frequent on-farm and unscheduled audits and be conducted by an independent organisation.</p>
<p>Down (ducks & geese)</p> 	<p><i>Responsible Down Standard or other similar certification (Traceable Down Standard or Downpass)</i></p> <p>Where down is sourced, this should only be as a by-product of a primary production system, which should be humane and meet the minimum criteria as described under Duck.</p> <p>Down refers to the soft layer of feathers that is closest to a duck or goose's skin, and is primarily located in the chest and belly regions. Down can be a by-product of birds farmed for meat, eggs or foie gras and collected post slaughter. However, there is still some down collected by live plucking.</p> <p>By choosing certified down unnecessary suffering for ducks and geese can be reduced as practices like live plucking and force feeding are not allowed, and this has been verified through an audit process. However, these ducks or geese may have been farmed for their meat in conventional systems that do not meet their needs.</p> <p>A robust certification should have publicly available standards, frequent on farm and unscheduled audits and be conducted by an independent organisation.</p>	<p><i>Higher welfare indoor duck/geese or free-range duck/geese</i></p> <p>Currently there is no down certification from ducks/geese farmed to higher welfare standards. Down certification schemes should also address key issues in the farming of ducks/geese to ensure they live in an environment that meets their needs.</p> <p>Whether ducks /geese are reared indoors or with outdoor access (free range) the conditions inside are important in providing opportunity for good animal welfare.</p> <p>Higher welfare duck/geese farming systems provide ducks /geese with sufficient space to move around freely, clean and dry litter for comfortable resting, adequate lighting, good ventilation, access to water facilities to carry out their natural water-related behaviours, and, where birds have access to the outdoors, shade and shelter to encourage birds to access the range.</p>

TEXTILE PRODUCT	SHORTER TERM GOALS	LONGER TERM GOALS
<p>Fur (various species)</p> 	<p>Fur can be sourced by either trapping or farming an animal just for its fur, or as by-products of the other production industries.</p> <p>Where fur is sourced, this should only be as a by-product of a primary production system that raises animals to higher welfare standards.</p> <p><u>RSPCA Australia is opposed to the use of any animal where the purpose of their death is primarily to produce a non-essential luxury item like fur or skin.</u></p>	<p>Where fur is sourced as a by-product of other production industries those systems should manage animals in a higher welfare environment where their needs are met.</p> <p>Fur should be certified to publicly available standards, with frequent on farm and unscheduled audits and be conducted by an independent organisation.</p>
<p>Leather (various species)</p> 	<p>Leather can be sourced by either trapping or farming an animal just for its hide, or as by-products of the other production industries.</p> <p>Where leather is sourced, this should only be as a by-product of a primary production system, that raises animals to higher welfare standards.</p> <p><u>RSPCA Australia is opposed to the use of any animal where the purpose of their death is primarily to produce a non-essential luxury item like fur or skin.</u></p>	<p>Where leather is sourced as a by-product of other production industries those systems should manage animals in a higher welfare environment where their needs are met.</p> <p>Leather should be certified to publicly available standards, with frequent on farm and unscheduled audits and be conducted by an independent organisation.</p>

RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme

The Approved Farming Scheme includes Standards for production systems that may house animals in enriched indoor environments; or in systems where they are housed in a large shed with outdoor access (free range); or in systems that have animals living in paddocks with sheds/shelters providing protection from the weather (free range).

Assessment of farms against the Standards is a critical aspect of the RSPCA Approved Farming Scheme. RSPCA Approved farms are visited by an RSPCA Assessor 2–4 times a year, with additional unscheduled visits.

Brands marketing products as RSPCA Approved must have traceability systems in place to ensure these products are clearly identified, kept separate from other products, and can be traced from point of sale back through to the farm.

Other certifications

There are many accreditation, certification, and assurance programs globally that cover various aspects of production, signify different credentials or may add validity to claims on products. When it comes to animal welfare, there are a few crucial considerations:

- Standards must be focussed on addressing the behavioural and physical needs of the species
- Standards must be publicly available
- Audits conducted frequently and on site
- Operated by an independent organisation

What is the RSPCA's view on farming of wild animals?

Both introduced and native wildlife, such as emus, ostriches, deer and crocodiles, have or are being farmed in Australia. While domesticated animals such as cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry have been bred and reared specifically as farm animals for many centuries, wild animals have not been domesticated and are often unsuited to a captive farm environment. In addition, there is much less known about the health, husbandry, care and management of non-traditional farm animals which can make it very difficult to meet their needs and provide an adequate standard of welfare.

For these reasons, RSPCA Australia is opposed to the farming of wild native or introduced animals except where such animals:

- are clearly suitable for farming
- can be looked after relatively easily, and can adapt to living and breeding in captivity
- can be caught, transported and slaughtered humanely, and without causing distress
- pose no health or public safety risks to humans or other animals.

Where introduced animals (such as deer and goats) are farmed, these can pose a threat to native flora and fauna if they escape. Farmers must be required to account for their animals and ensure they have adequate fencing and breeding controls to minimise the risk of escape and the establishment of a wild population.

Further reading: [Why is production system labelling on food products important?](#)

If you have questions on what procurement decisions your organisation should make get in touch with [RSPCA Australia](#).