



April 2022

## **RED TRACTOR MEAT & POULTRY PROCESSING STANDARDS CONSULTATION**

### **Rationale for introducing the collection of welfare outcomes (WOs)**

#### Why Red Tractor should be collecting Welfare Outcomes

Welfare Outcomes are not new. Many businesses and customers collect welfare outcome data of some form or another, and other UK and international farm assurance schemes also collect WO from their memberships. So why the need?

- WO are considered to provide the most direct and accurate picture of animal welfare, and meat processors who collect data will know from how they use the data that they can draw more informed conclusions about the conditions on farm and the welfare of animals on those farms within their own businesses.
- WO can help us review our scheme standards - used in aggregate, Red Tractor can start to understand if our standards deliver what we intend them to deliver, across the whole of the membership and use that data to inform how the standards develop; we can then review scheme standards more effectively.
- Enhances our scheme's credibility and also the reputation of the industry - by demonstrating that we monitor and aim to improve the welfare of animals within the scheme enhances the credibility of Red Tractor, and more broadly the industry.
- Farm assurance schemes' use of welfare outcome assessments is recommended by a number of key organisations and reports, e.g., FAWC, 2005; FAWF, 2011; EFSA, 2012; ISO, 2016.

#### How Red Tractor will use WO data

We are not intending to use WO data as a stick approach; the aim would be to use the data as part of a 'dynamic welfare management system' to coordinate all activities related to achieving continuous improvement within the scheme. The intention is to facilitate continuous improvement through more informed standards, and more informed strategies to improve welfare. This is done in conjunction with the industry to ensure that standards development is achievable and based on best practice and available science. In this respect, being able to build a better picture of the welfare being achieved within the scheme is imperative. An important principle of using WO to achieve continuous improvement is to facilitate support and improvement where it is most needed, not to punish producers.

#### Management of WO data

The first step is to collect the data and this is just the start of a long journey for Red Tractor to fully utilise WO. We are already planning how to manage this data starting with building better resources for our already existing extensive data management systems.

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