

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUSINESS BENCHMARK ON FARM ANIMAL WELFARE 2019: “PERFECT STORM” FOR ACCELERATING FOOD COMPANY ACTION ON FARM ANIMAL WELFARE

London, 2 April 2020: The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW), the leading global measure of policy commitment, performance and disclosure on animal welfare in food companies, has launched its eighth annual report in London today.

The 2019 Benchmark, which analysed 150 global food companies and is supported by Compassion in World Farming and World Animal Protection sees Co-op Group (Switzerland), Cranswick, Marks & Spencer, Migros, Noble Foods and Waitrose recognised as global leaders on farm animal welfare.

Beyond the individual company rankings, the BBFAW 2019 reports that 60 per cent of the world’s leading food companies now have formal farm animal welfare policies and appropriate management processes for ensuring they are effectively deployed internally and through supply chains. It cites consumer interest in farm animal welfare, coupled with positive momentum inside a majority of the world’s most influential food companies as key accelerators of year on year change. However, it warns that progress is still too slow with 40 per cent of the 150 companies still appearing in the bottom tiers, providing little or no information about how they are managing the risks and opportunities associated with farm animal welfare.

Nicky Amos, Executive Director of the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare, said: “The 2019 findings demonstrate that the BBFAW continues to be an important driver of change. An increasing number of companies are using the annual benchmark to drive continuous improvement in farm animal welfare practices, performance and disclosure. However, it is clear there is a great deal more to do if farm animal welfare is to become institutionalised across the global food industry.”

She continued: “In 2019, the rise in consumer and investor interest, coupled with increasing pressure on suppliers from food companies signals a “perfect storm” for moving the dial on farm animal welfare. Our 2019 company and investor surveys tell us that customer interest in animal welfare is the primary driver for business action for 79% of companies, while 82% of investors consider animal welfare to be an investment risk. Companies that fail to take responsibility for ensuring the welfare of animals farmed for food can expect heightened scrutiny from their business customers and partners, from investors, and from consumers.”

Philip Lymbery, Global CEO at Compassion in World Farming, commented: “For the last eight years, the Benchmark has been instrumental in encouraging global food businesses to adopt new policies on farm animal welfare. Now, the onus is on companies demonstrating strong performance to implement those policies, by for example, making sure that cage-free systems are fit for purpose and delivered in a timely fashion.”

Steve McIvor, CEO at World Animal Protection, said: “Although the animal welfare movement is starting to pick up pace, more work needs to be done. The exploitation of billions of animals on factory farms not only cause mass suffering to animals it exposes us to disease and puts us all at risk. Farm animals have suffered in cruel conditions for long enough. It’s time to change that and this tool makes it clear which companies are leading, and which are lagging.

“Food producers, supermarkets and restaurant chains will ignore the demands of consumers at their own peril. With this tool, we expose who’s leading the way on animal welfare, and who’s lagging and showing little concern for animal cruelty. The BBFAW tool provides a robust and objective analysis of corporate disclosure on farm animal welfare, and it takes out the hard work of reading through pages of company reports, so that the animal welfare information is easily accessible.”

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Notes to Editors

1. The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) is the globally recognised investor framework for assessing the quality of companies' practices, processes and performance on farm animal welfare.
2. The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare, founded in 2012, is supported by its founding partners the leading animal welfare organisations, Compassion in World Farming and World Animal Protection.
3. BBFAW provides an annual, independent assessment of farm animal welfare management and performance in global food companies. It enables investors, companies, NGOs and other stakeholders to understand corporate practice and performance on farm animal welfare. More information on the programme can be found at www.bbfaw.com
4. Through the annual benchmark, extensive engagement programmes with investors and with companies, and the production of guidance and other materials for companies and investors, BBFAW has driven higher farm animal welfare standards across the world's leading food businesses.
5. BBFAW 2019 is the eighth annual report from the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare. It analyses the farm animal welfare management and performance of 150 of the world's largest food companies, across 37 distinct, objective criteria. As such, it is the most authoritative and comprehensive global account of corporate practice on farm animal welfare.
6. The 2019 Benchmark covers 150 global food companies across 23 countries: 52 Retailers and Wholesalers, 63 Producers and Manufacturers, and 35 Restaurants and Bars. The list includes listed and non-listed companies.
7. Companies were measured on their approach to managing farm animal welfare in four areas: (1) Management Commitment and Policy, (2) Governance and Policy Implementation, (3) Leadership and Innovation, and (4) Performance Reporting and Impact.
8. In line with the BBFAW's objective to drive improvements in the welfare of animals farmed for food, the weighting of the performance and impact questions (which make up 35% of total score) was adjusted in 2019 to emphasise welfare impact over performance disclosure, with the aim of encouraging companies to focus on welfare outcome-based measures. This weighting adjustment resulted in a 1% reduction in average overall scores. It also resulted in 5 companies being ranked one Tier lower than they would have ranked without the scoring adjustment and one company being ranked one Tier higher.
9. Company assessments were based on information published by companies on the date of their assessments. All companies were assessed during the period from 1st August to 30 September 2019.

10. The number of companies that are considered to have farm animal welfare as an integral part of their business strategy has grown significantly over the eight Benchmark cycles, from 3 (out of 68) in 2012 to 22 (out of 150) in 2019.
11. The company-by-company results are presented in Attachment 1 to this media release.
12. Cranswick, Coop Group (Switzerland), Marks & Spencer and Waitrose and Noble Foods retain their Tier 1 position. Migros also occupies Tier 1 in 2019.
13. Thirty of the 150 companies assessed in 2019 improved by at least one Tier in the 2019 Benchmark. This is the largest year-on-year increase we have seen since the Benchmark was established in 2012. These companies are:

Aldi Süd
Auchan
Colruyt
Coopérative U Enseigne (formerly Systeme U)
E Leclerc
Edeka Group
Jeronimo Martins
Les Mousquetaires
Migros
Sysco Corp
Agro Super
Associated British Foods
Campbell Soup Company
Cooperl Arc
Danish Crown
Fonterra
General Mills
Hilton Food Group
LDC
Maple Leaf Foods
Minerva Foods
Mowi (formerly Marine Harvest)
Nestlé
Premier Foods
Terrena Group
Chipotle Mexican Grill
Darden Restaurants PLC
Mitchells & Butlers PLC
SSP Group
Subway/Doctor's Associates Inc

14. In the 2019 Benchmark, eight companies fell by one Tier, a figure that is broadly in line with previous years. These are: Lidl, Loblaws, KraftHeinz, Marfrig Alimentos SA, Mondelez International, Unilever NV, Vion Food Group, Dunkin' Brands. Of these, five were directly impacted by the changes in weighting made in the 2019 Benchmark.

More information on the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare programme can be found at www.bbfaw.com

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