



Business Benchmark on  
Farm Animal Welfare

## Terms of Reference

# BBFAW Industry Reference Group

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| Group name        | BBFAW Industry Reference Group (“the IRG”)                                                              |
| Reports to        | BBFAW Strategy and Impact Working Group (“SIWG”)                                                        |
| Status            | Advisory only — no decision-making authority                                                            |
| Term              | 2026 (subject to annual review and renewal)                                                             |
| Meeting frequency | One to two meetings during 2026 (with a follow-up meeting to feedback on final decisions, if necessary) |
| Secretariat       | BBFAW Secretariat                                                                                       |

## 1. Background and Purpose

The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) assesses and ranks the world’s leading food companies on their management of, and reporting on, farm animal welfare. The BBFAW methodology is maintained and evolved by the BBFAW Strategy and Impact Working Group (“the SIWG”), which is responsible for all decisions relating to the design, scope and application of the methodology.

To ensure that proposed adjustments to the methodology are practical, proportionate, and reflective of the operating realities of food businesses, the BBFAW Secretariat is establishing an Industry Reference Group (“IRG”). The Group will provide the SIWG with structured, cross-sector, cross-regional input on proposed methodology changes ahead of the SIWG finalising its decisions.



## Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare

### 2. Objectives

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The purpose of the Group is to:

- Provide practitioner and commercial perspectives on proposed adjustments to the BBFAW methodology.
- Help the SIWG understand the practical implications of methodology changes for different business models, sectors, and regions.
- Identify unintended consequences, data availability issues, or implementation challenges arising from proposed changes.
- Support the credibility, relevance, and usability of the BBFAW methodology across the food sector globally.

### 3. Scope of Advice

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The Group's remit covers advice on:

- Proposed changes to BBFAW indicators, scoring criteria, and guidance notes.
- The practicality and clarity of methodology requirements for companies of different types, sizes, and regions.
- Emerging issues or trends in farm animal welfare management that may warrant future methodology consideration.
- Communication and guidance materials intended to help companies respond to the benchmark.

The Group does not have a remit to determine benchmark scores, rankings, or company-specific assessments, and, while some modelling data will be shared, will not be given access to individual company data or results.

### 4. Status and Decision-Making

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The SIWG values the input of The Industry Reference Group, which will help us ensure any revised criteria are clear, workable, and meaningful. The Group is an advisory body and has no decision-making authority over the BBFAW methodology, benchmark design, scoring, or any other aspect of BBFAW's operation.



## Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare

All decisions relating to the methodology remain the responsibility of the SIWG. The SIWG will carefully and fully consider the Group’s advice and feedback, and the Secretariat will provide the Group with feedback on how its input has been considered by the SIWG.

### 5. Membership and Composition

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Membership will be drawn from food businesses that are representative of:

Sector coverage

- Food retail and wholesale
- Food manufacturers and producers
- Restaurants and bars (including foodservice)

Regional coverage

Membership will be globally representative, covering the following regions:

| Region        | Illustrative coverage                                                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Europe & UK   | Represented across retail/wholesale, manufacturing/production and restaurants and bars |
| North America | Represented across retail/wholesale, manufacturing/production and restaurants and bars |
| Latin America | Represented across retail/wholesale, manufacturing/production and restaurants and bars |
| Asia Pacific  | Represented across retail/wholesale, manufacturing/production and restaurants and bars |



## Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare

Indicative group size is 8–12 member companies, reflecting a balance across sectors and regions. Each member company will nominate one primary representative, with the option to nominate an alternate to attend in their place when required.

Members will be selected and invited by the BBFAW Secretariat, in consultation with the SIWG, with the aim of achieving balanced sector and regional representation. Selection will have regard to a company's relevant expertise, seniority of the nominated representative, and willingness to commit to the full 2026 meeting schedule.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

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### Group members will:

- Attend scheduled meetings and engage constructively with materials circulated in advance.
- Provide candid, business-informed perspectives on proposed methodology adjustments.
- Represent the practical realities of their sector and region, while respecting the confidentiality of discussions as set out in Section 9.
- Where relevant, consult informally with peers or sector bodies to bring broader perspectives back to the Group, without disclosing confidential BBFAW materials.

### The BBFAW Secretariat will:

- Convene and facilitate meetings of the Group.
- Prepare and circulate discussion materials, including proposed methodology changes, in advance of each meeting.
- Capture and summarise the Group's feedback and present it to the SIWG.
- Report back to the Group on how its input was considered by the SIWG.
- Coordinate publication of the Group's outputs in line with Section 8.

### The SIWG will:

- Consider the advice provided by the Group when finalising decisions on methodology adjustments.
- Retain full decision-making authority over the methodology at all times.



## Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare

### 7. Meetings

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- The Group will meet two times during November 2026 and January 2027 for one hour.
- Meetings will be convened and chaired by the BBFAW Secretariat.
- Meetings will be held virtually, to accommodate the Group's global membership across time zones, unless otherwise agreed.
- The Secretariat will circulate an agenda and supporting materials at least one week ahead of each meeting.
- The Secretariat will circulate a summary note of each meeting to members and to the SIWG.
- Additional ad hoc written consultation (e.g. by email or survey) may be used to supplement meetings where timelines require it.

### 8. Outputs and Publication

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Outputs of the Group, including summaries of its advice and how this has informed methodology adjustments, will be shared publicly via the BBFAW website. This is intended to promote transparency in how the methodology is developed and to demonstrate the role of industry input in shaping the benchmark.

Published outputs will summarise the Group's collective advice and will not attribute specific views or positions to individual member companies unless a member explicitly agrees to be quoted or named.

### 9. Confidentiality

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- Draft methodology proposals, discussion papers and other materials shared with the Group ahead of publication are confidential to members and their nominated alternates.
- Members will not share draft materials externally, or use them for competitive advantage, ahead of public release by BBFAW.
- Members will not have access to individual company benchmark data, scores, or assessments.



## Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare

### 10. Governance and Review

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- These Terms of Reference are established for the 2026 meeting cycle and will be reviewed by the BBFAW Secretariat and SIWG during 2027.
- Membership, scope or meeting frequency may be adjusted for future years in light of experience and the SIWG's evolving priorities.
- The Secretariat may, in consultation with the SIWG, invite additional subject-matter guests to specific meetings where relevant expertise would benefit a particular discussion.

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*Document owner: BBFAW Secretariat | Version: Draft for review | Applicable period: 2026-27*