

University of Bristol – Animal Welfare Policy

The University of Bristol is committed to operating sustainably and responsibly, and to advancing animal welfare standards both within our operations and throughout our supply chain. Our approach to animal welfare is guided by the **Five Freedoms** as defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council. Recognising that farm animals are sentient beings capable of experiencing both physical and emotional states, we have adopted an additional, sixth principle:

1. **Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** – Access to fresh water and a diet sufficient to maintain full health and vigour.
2. **Freedom from Discomfort** – Provision of an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. **Freedom from Pain, Injury, or Disease** – Through prevention, rapid diagnosis, and treatment.
4. **Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** – Access to sufficient space, appropriate facilities, and social interaction with other animals of the same species.
5. **Freedom from Fear and Distress** – Ensuring conditions that prevent mental suffering.
6. **Freedom to Experience Positive Welfare** – Creating conditions that promote positive emotions and enable natural behaviours.

We are also mindful of the growing consumer concern regarding ethical food sourcing. In response, the University continues to pursue higher standards of animal welfare throughout our procurement processes.

Egg Sourcing

All eggs used across our operations—whether shell, liquid, or ingredient—are sourced from 100% free-range systems.

Chicken Welfare

The University of Bristol is committed to improving chicken welfare and has adopted the **Better Chicken Commitment** for all chicken (fresh, frozen, and processed) within our UK supply chain. We aim to meet the following standards in full by **2026**:

1. Compliance with all EU animal welfare laws and regulations, regardless of the country of origin.
2. A maximum stocking density of 30kg/m², with minimal thinning (limited to one per flock if used).
3. Use of slower-growing breeds with improved welfare outcomes, including:
 - a. *Hubbard Redbro* (for indoor use only)
 - b. *Hubbard JA757, JACY57, 787, 957, or 987*
 - c. *Rambler Ranger, Ranger Classic, Ranger Gold*, or any breed meeting the **RSPCA Broiler Breed Welfare Assessment Protocol**.
4. Enhanced environmental enrichment, including:
 - a. Lighting at a minimum of 50 lux, including natural light
 - b. At least two metres of perch space and two pecking substrates per 1,000 birds
 - c. Compliance with the maximum air quality standards as set out in Annex 2.3 of the EU Broiler Directive
 - d. Prohibition of cages and multi-tier systems

5. Use of humane stunning methods, such as **controlled atmospheric stunning** with inert gas or multi-phase systems, or **effective electrical stunning without live inversion**.
6. Ongoing compliance to be verified through third-party audits and **annual public reporting** on progress.

Statement of Intent: Poultry Stunning Methods

Electrical water bath stunning remains the primary method used globally for poultry slaughter. However, significant welfare concerns exist with this practice. In 2012, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recommended phasing out this method.

While effective electric alternatives are still under development, we recognise that under halal standards, controlled atmosphere stunning may not be permissible if the animal is not alive at the point of slaughter. Nevertheless, it is essential to develop a method that renders the animal insensible to pain—yet still alive—before slaughter.

The University of Bristol commits to:

- Actively engaging with suppliers and supporting research aimed at urgently identifying and implementing alternatives to electrical water bath stunning.
- Supporting the call for a **ban on water bath stunning by 2026**, with the expectation that new, humane electrical stunning methods (that do not require conscious inversion) will be commercially available by **1 January 2026**.
- Investing in and adopting such improved stunning systems as soon as they are commercially viable.

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next scheduled review will take place in April **2026**.

Signed:

Rob Smith
Senior Head Chef

Date:

April 2025