An animal’s welfare (including normal biological functioning, emotional state and ability to express certain normal behaviours) directly impacts its productivity and overall efficiency. Good animal welfare is good and responsible business and is a key enabler for a profitable and resilient livestock industry that delivers positive environmental benefits.

Our key principle here is to achieve “an industry that ensures welfare of livestock by adhering to the Five Freedoms, and promotes animal health and natural behaviour”.

- **Freedom from hunger and thirst** — by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- **Freedom from discomfort** — by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- **Freedom from pain, injury or disease** — by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- **Freedom to express normal behaviour** — by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal’s own kind.
- **Freedom from fear and distress** — by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

Today animal welfare standards vary across the world and there are many examples of good practice as well as a gradual transformation to new practices across the industry as whole. We recognise the challenges to ensure animal welfare improvements and for transparency on what is currently being achieved. We encourage our members to adopt best practices and support farmers in their implementation.

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Real progress requires proactive and ongoing engagement with stakeholders and collaborative action. The choices our members make do have impact. As a membership organisation of over 115 members across the food and beverage industry, SAI Platform recognises our role in supporting improvements in animal welfare.

- **We have a shared intent to address these challenges.** Success requires a common approach, built on strong science. Practical solutions need to be adopted at scale in order to provide economic, social and environmental viability of the farming sector.
- **We work collaboratively, within SAI Platform membership and across partner organisations,** in addressing animal welfare to most effectively catalyse and scale success, as the magnitude of the challenge requires joint action.
- **We prioritise our workplans and projects** in support of positive animal welfare.
- **We endorse the leadership already shown** with a clear position providing support, good practices and a common voice, by many of our members and other industry partners, including the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock, the Global Coalition for Animal Welfare.
SAI Platform's theory of change

SAI Platform works with all the parts of the crop and animal protein value chain across all aspects of sustainability - economic, environmental and social change. We position our work as part of a wider set of activities and a wider community of organisations and initiatives with similar aims.

We choose our activities based on:

- The priorities of our members and the raw materials they produce and source.
- The scale of opportunity for action and the change we can achieve.
- The potential for SAI Platform to have an impact though open collaboration, sharing and advocacy of best farming practices, inputs and outputs management, soil health improvement, livestock solutions\(^3\), carbon sequestration, land use change and prevention of deforestation.

SAI Platform has a role to develop and support the systemic changes required. We will:

- **Support our members to improve their own practices.**
  - Using our tools and solutions such as the European Roundtable for Beef Sustainability (ERBS), the Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA), and the Sustainable Dairy Partnership (SDP), as well as on the ground projects to deliver and scale positive change.
  - Engaging with local stakeholders to implement practical solutions through collaborative action at producer level to address animal welfare issues.

- **Work with thought leaders and partners** to improve data and methodologies and apply the best available science to our strategies.

- **Support our members with implementation of practical solutions and metrics** to help them adopt best practices for animal welfare at a farm level and across the supply chain.

- **Ensure transparency and provide open access to best practices**, whether they are members or not of SAI Platform, to support the widespread adoption of change across the whole industry.

- **Support the call on governments** to establish policy commensurate with the need for change.

- **Support the demonstration of the business case** for agriculture and identify suitable funding to underwrite the transition needed at farm level to deliver on animal welfare.

\(^3\) [http://www.fao.org/3/a-i8098e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i8098e.pdf)
Current situation

Animal care can differ in approach and quality across the globe and is often the product of local culture, regulation and legislation. This diversity can be a barrier to implementing improvements.

Society and consumer demand are key drivers of change. There are strong indicators to support products delivered with a higher animal welfare standard outlined as in this meta-study from Newcastle University\(^4\). Consumers are demanding more and more transparency in the livestock supply chain to be reassured that the animal products they buy are aligned to good animal welfare practices.

Innovative technologies are under development to digitise animal welfare tracking to show full transparency. Farmers are committed to ensure the welfare of livestock animals\(^5\).

There is a need, not only to raise baseline standards for animal welfare, but to embed its continuous improvement into corporate social responsibility and to support the alignment of product practices with sustainability programmes to drive the level of change needed.

Good animal care, principles of good housing, feeding and health, and good breeding, are recognised to deliver and safeguard animal welfare. Where greater protection is afforded, the industry can follow the principles in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code\(^6\). The industry can further consider:

a. **Committing to eliminate the worst systems and practices**

- **Confinement** (freedom to express natural behaviour). Inappropriate stocking densities and restrictive cage systems, that lead to unnecessary stress.
- **Painful procedures** (freedom from pain). Ensure appropriate use of anaesthetic and analgesia in any painful procedures and of use of pre-stunning for slaughter.
- **Production-related problems.** Inhumane treatment of unwanted animals (e.g. male calves, male chick maceration), poor transportation protocols and practices that cause diseases and pain including lameness from breeds used & high growth rates (e.g. with broilers).
- **Inhumane treatment of unwanted animals** (e.g. male calves, male chicks), poor transportation protocols and poor practices that cause diseases and pain including lameness, irresponsible use of veterinary medicines (particularly antibiotics and performance enhancers).

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\(^4\)https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313696178_Citizens_consumers_and_farm_animal_welfare_A_meta-analysis_of_willingness-to-pay_studies


\(^6\) https://www.oie.int/international-standard-setting/terrestrial-code/
b. Promoting the best systems and practices where appropriate

- **Non-confinement systems**, including pasture access for cattle; group housing and free farrowing for pigs; cage free, barn and free-range systems for poultry.
- **Good system design**, including increased space allowances, the provision of functional space and comfortable, enriched environments. These are key to enabling basic behaviours, such as walking, running, wing-flapping, resting, and other important behaviours such as foraging, rooting, nesting, bathing, and socialisation.
- **Operating without routine mutilations**, where tail docking and beak trimming are used as management tools to reduce the risk of tail biting and feather pecking and are supported by developing and managing systems that suit the animal’s needs which are key to reducing the need for tail docking and beak trimming.
- **Appropriate breeds** that allow good animal welfare and productivity.
- **Adherence to OIE guidelines** 7,8 in the case of transport and slaughter, as a minimum at a global level, and with specific local legislation where applicable such as in the EU.
- **Proactive veterinary health plans and robust antibiotic stewardship schemes** to improve the health status of farm animals in their care and ensure appropriate use of antibiotics, antimicrobials and other medicines and minimise the use of hormones that enhance production.
- **Measuring welfare outcomes** and implementing action plans to continuously improve welfare set against clear targets for key indicators and benchmarking or incentivisation for good performance.
- **Adherence to third party assurance schemes** that have animal welfare components firmly embedded and a continuous improvement of the same.

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7 Dustbathing – poultry; water-bathing – ducks; wallowing pigs
c. Managing the risks and opportunities aligned to farm animal welfare through ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) frameworks

- **Public-facing policies on farm animal welfare** with clear scope and target dates to meet specific outcomes, for example, a commitment to only produce/sell eggs and egg products/ingredients from hens reared in cage-free systems, at a global level by 2025.

- **A governance and management structure** to deliver the company’s farm animal welfare policy that includes:
  - Allocation of overarching responsibility and day-to-day management and oversight of farm animal welfare within the business.
  - The right allocation of resources and responsibilities to deliver the related objectives, targets and performance indicators.
  - Appropriate control systems such as employee training on farm animal welfare, corrective action processes, auditing and supply chain monitoring.

- **Transparent reporting on farm animal welfare performance** measures such as:
  - The proportion of animals that are free from confinement and routine mutilations, the proportion of animals that are pre-slaughter stunned, and the proportion of animals that are transported within specified maximum journey times.
  - Animal based indicators of production (e.g. mortality rates), health (example incidence of mastitis, antibiotic usage) and physical wellbeing (e.g. walking ability and rates of lameness).