



International Poultry Council Animal Welfare Position

The International Poultry Council (IPC) develops policies and addresses common concerns to advance the long-term interests and sustainability of the global poultry meat sector. The IPC is formally recognized as the representative organization of the global poultry meat industry by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and Codex Alimentarius. Under a Memorandum of Understanding, the OIE and the IPC consult on matters of common interest, including animal health and welfare.

This document summarizes the IPC position on key animal welfare elements.

Welfare in Context

- **IPC recognizes that animal welfare is complex and multifactorial**, involving scientific, ethical, economic, cultural, social, and religious dimensions.

The Needs of the Animal

- **IPC agrees that, consistent with the internationally accepted *five freedoms* and the aims of animal welfare**, poultry must be provided fresh water, adequate feed, proper handling, health care, and environments appropriate to their species needs and use, and should be cared for in ways that prevent and minimize fear, pain, distress, and suffering.
- **IPC supports welfare training for all personnel** who work directly with live poultry or who manage those who work directly with live poultry. Regular, appropriate welfare training should deliver knowledge of behavioural, biological and welfare needs of poultry. Training should also cover practical management skills, humane handling techniques and an understanding of biosecurity procedures that safeguard poultry health.
- **IPC supports development of production systems that improve Animal Welfare** and where environmental, economic and sustainability aspects of the system are also considered in conjunction with animal welfare elements.
- **IPC supports the integration of animal welfare principles into the business culture** of companies throughout the poultry supply chain. IPC member companies and member organizations are championing programs that improve the welfare outcomes of poultry and increase transparency about poultry care and production practices.



International Standards

- **IPC supports *outcomes-based* poultry welfare programs** and endorses the commitment of the poultry meat sector and other stakeholders to implement outcomes-based measures of animal welfare at all stages of production, transport and slaughter. IPC provides poultry industry expertise and experiences to multi-stakeholder discussions on animal welfare policy development, particularly under the auspices of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).
- **IPC supports the role of the OIE and its mandate to define and promote the adoption of international standards** for animal health and welfare, acknowledges the importance of these standards in the conduct of safe international trade in animals and animal products, and their relevance to the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- **IPC supports science-based internationally aligned animal welfare standards** that are species-specific, based on the welfare outcomes for the animal, and are regularly updated to reflect new scientific knowledge and sector professional experience.
- **IPC encourages dialogue and collaboration in defining outcome-based standards and appropriate measures.** Outcome-based standard setting is strengthened by involvement of broad stakeholder interests and experts in the public and private sectors, including animal breeding and farming, who are focused on continuous incremental improvement in poultry health and welfare outcomes.

Aligning Assurance

- **IPC encourages the evolution of private animal welfare assurance schemes towards outcome-based standards that align with OIE international standards** and that are practical and enforceable for the poultry meat sector and regulators and are clear and transparent for consumers. Greater alignment of welfare assurance schemes and regulation to the standards and measures recognized in OIE international standards would bring greater clarity to all stakeholders.

Sustainable Development

These key welfare elements underpin IPC's commitment to the sustainable development of the sector. IPC is focusing on the following five UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- Zero hunger (SDG 2) – sharing good practices, achieving food security, and promoting sustainable production;
- Good health and well-being (SDG 3) – promoting poultry as a healthy choice and sharing good management and manufacturing practices;
- Quality education (SDG 4) – building capacity to ensure education is provided to personnel to ensure poultry are raised in a sustainable manner;
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9) – Building a resilient infrastructure and global supply chain that supports innovative and sustainable industrialisation;



- Climate action (SDG 13) – reducing greenhouse gases and wastage through improved efficiency and productivity.

Conclusion

In publishing this Welfare Position, the IPC is seeking to promote the importance of bird health and welfare as an essential part of sustainable global poultry production and a proactive poultry supply chain. To succeed in understanding and practicing poultry welfare, it is fundamental that, foremost, the industry and its stakeholders must observe and act to meet the health and welfare needs of the poultry themselves. This is our focus.