



Objectives, Actions & Performance

Factsheet Animal Welfare



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1 Introduction

One third of the ALDI South Group's product range comprises fresh and frozen meat, dairy products, and eggs. However, the rearing of farm animals in these supply chains is highly industrialised, resulting in severe negative effects on farm animal welfare. For instance, pigs spend most of their life in crates too small for them to turn around, while broiler chickens grow too heavy to stand up. Additionally, housing conditions frequently cause animals to injure themselves and each another.

But the issue doesn't stop at the farm gate – it also has a critical impact on the environment and human health. The unnaturally high production rates of factory farms have devastating effects on the environment, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, water pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Farm animals are given antimicrobials to promote growth, and herds are sometimes administered antibiotics proactively to prevent the spread of disease caused by overcrowding. This practice can lead to antibiotic resistance and the development of superbugs. All these challenges are reflected in globally aligned NGO pressures and the growing awareness among customers.

The good news is we see a lot of positive developments in many of the markets we operate in. In Germany, ALDI is already a frontrunner with its groundbreaking approach to moving its fresh meat and drinking milk assortment, as well as its chilled meat and sausage products, entirely towards better welfare husbandry systems. However, we acknowledge that there are many challenges associated with raising animal welfare standards in our supply chains that still need to be addressed.

2 Our Animal Welfare Strategy

2.1 Our Approach

Our approach to animal welfare is guided by the globally recognised “Five Freedoms” proposed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC):

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst: providing access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
2. Freedom from discomfort: providing a suitable environment that offers shelter and a comfortable resting area
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease : prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment
4. Freedom to express normal behaviour: providing sufficient space, proper facilities, and the company of the animal's own kind
5. Freedom from fear and distress: ensuring conditions and treatment that prevent mental suffering

We recognise all farm animals within our supply chains as sentient beings. This concept is the basis of our commitment and efforts towards animal welfare. It demonstrates the extent to which the individual countries of the ALDI SOUTH Group have aligned their actions in this area. Our national policies are binding for our suppliers and include specific commitments adapted to the requirements of each national market.

Our approach applies to all our private label food and non-food products within the following product groups:

Food products:

- Meat and poultry products from all animal species
- Shell eggs
- Milk and dairy products



- Fish and seafood products

Non-food products:

- Textiles and bedding
- Health and beauty products, cleaners, detergents

2.2 Governance and Responsibilities

Our national buying policies are binding documents for our buyers and suppliers and form an integral part of our purchasing contracts. However, this international website provides an overview of the Group's position. Our suppliers and business partners are expected to adhere to these standards, as well as any additional requirements that go beyond them and have become part of our contractual relationships. These standards must also be applied to all sub-suppliers throughout the entire production process. Suppliers are required to provide corrective action plans when instances of non-compliance with our policies are detected. These plans must clearly demonstrate how the relevant violations will be resolved within a specified timeframe.

We work closely with our suppliers to implement our sustainability requirements. Our suppliers must ensure that all personnel responsible for handling live animals are effectively trained to carry out routine husbandry practices in a way that minimises pain and distress. If necessary, they also should be qualified to promote good standards of animal welfare within their areas of responsibility.

We require our suppliers to ensure that raw materials are traced back to source. They must be able to provide information on the entire value chain based on product labelling upon request. If traceability is limited due to structural characteristics of the industry at the national level, we encourage efforts to improve it.

We conduct our own audits and spot checks to ensure compliance with our policies. Third-party service providers may also be entrusted with this task.

Goals are defined at both national and international level, and their status of achievement is evaluated annually. The Managing Directors in charge of procurement at the national level are updated on the status of implementation of their respective national policies, at least once a year.

The animal welfare policies are assessed annually and adjusted as necessary to guarantee long-term sustainable and responsible procurement of our animal-based products. The relevant policies are developed further by National Sustainability departments in consultation with NGOs and/or national expert committees. An International Working Group on Animal Welfare, chaired by the International Sustainability department and comprising sustainability managers from national ALDI countries, is responsible for developing our strategic approach at an international level.

Proposals for updates to our international approach are approved by the International Sustainability Committee. The responsibility for implementing our standards during daily operations, as well as specific commitments, goals, and measures, lies with the respective National Buying departments. This is supported and coordinated by the National Sustainability departments.



2.3 Addressing Key Challenges

Despite the complexity of animal welfare, including products such as fresh meat, eggs, dairy, textiles and cosmetics, and the various markets in which we operate, we recognise the need for the industry to address key challenges. Our goal is to enhance our supply chains to tackle the challenges outlined below:



- Avoiding or improving housing conditions where animals are provided with limited space and cannot move freely or express normal behaviour (“close confinement”)
- Minimising the need for routine surgical procedures conducted to prevent problems or injuries associated with abnormal behaviour within certain husbandry systems (“routine mutilations”) and improving necessary procedures to minimise pain and distress
- Ensuring that animals are rendered unconscious before being slaughtered (“pre-slaughter stunning”)
- Limiting the duration of live transport
- Avoiding the use of prophylactic antibiotics and growth-promoting substances
- Enabling natural animal behaviour by providing manipulable materials such as straw bales and roughage (“environmental enrichment”)
- Certification of good husbandry conditions and on-product communication for customers
- Measuring the progress made towards these challenges

We acknowledge that national market conditions have a strong influence on the materiality of specific issues for each ALDI SOUTH Group country and that different species or husbandry systems require different actions. Accordingly, each country develops its policy in line with its national market conditions and priorities, while considering our international commitment to continuously improve our performance on key challenges listed above. As we make progress in the future, we aim to implement more specific requirements and targets at an international level.



3 Achievements

3.1 International Achievements and Commitments of the ALDI SOUTH Group

While our national animal welfare policies focus on specific market goals and measures, the following commitments have already been adopted at the international level:

- We do not use raw materials derived from exotic or endangered animal species in our products
- Our products containing down, feathers, duck or goose meat are guaranteed to be free from live-plucking and force feeding
- We do not offer any products containing angora wool or real fur
- Our suppliers are contractually prohibited from using the mulesing method for products made from merino wool
- We do not allow animal testing for finished health and beauty products or for detergents and cleaners
- We provide vegetarian and vegan options as alternatives for animal-based products and regularly evaluate our related product lines. These products are clearly labelled to ensure that customers can easily identify them
- We offer organic and welfare-friendly options for meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. We ensure that these products are clearly labelled on our packaging, in our stores, and in our promotional materials
- We are committed to sourcing 100% of our shell eggs from cage-free supply chains by 2025 at the latest
- We require our suppliers of fresh meat and poultry to stun animals prior to slaughter

3.2 National Achievements

The requirements and conditions of the national market within the ALDI SOUTH Group's individual countries vary, as do the approaches taken to improve animal welfare standards throughout our supply chains. For more information on the commitments and goals specific to each country, please refer to the animal welfare sections of our national websites:

[HOFER Austria](#)

[ALDI Ireland](#)

[HOFER Austria](#)

[ALDI Italy](#)

[ALDI China](#)

[HOFER Slovenia](#)

[ALDI Germany](#)

[ALDI Switzerland](#)

[ALDI Hungary](#)

[ALDI UK](#)

[ALDI US](#)

The [second impact report](#) already shows that all plots have now been GPS mapped, increased Fairtrade sales and more farmers in organic certification.



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