

Ethical husbandry/animal protection

Meat and meat products as well as eggs rank among the most important and sensible product groups in our METRO Cash & Carry wholesale stores. Alongside absolute freshness and high quality, animal welfare is extremely important to us when selecting suppliers. Our customers are also placing increasing value on ethical husbandry. They want to know where the food we sell them comes from and what conditions it was produced under.

At METRO Cash & Carry, we strive to provide the greatest possible transparency and are constantly increasing the proportion of meat and eggs from ethical, ecological husbandry within our product range by implementing sustainable purchasing procedures. A key prerequisite for meeting this standard is to strategically embed the principle of sustainability within our core business.

The METRO Sustainability Committee is in the process of discussing and consulting on the steps needed to further concretise the concept of animal welfare, among other things. Corresponding measures will then be developed and implemented by an interdisciplinary working group.

METRO Cash & Carry is committed to improvements in the following areas in particular:

Overarching measures

- n **Agreements with suppliers:** We work with our suppliers to develop measures for ethical husbandry along the entire value chain.
- n **Contribution to initiatives:** As a member of the TAFS (Trust in Animals & Food Safety) forum, we work with science, industry, public authorities and consumers to foster a better understanding of the interconnectedness of food safety, animal welfare and animal protection.
- n **Consumer education:** We educate our customers on the origin of animal products and deploy methods such as the targeted advertising of a sustainable lifestyle to promote the purchase of sustainably produced food.
- n **Regional focus:** Working with regional producers enables us to have greater influence on animal welfare and to optimise the use of natural resources, for example by short supply routes. For instance, METRO Cash & Carry Germany already has 9,000 regional products in its product range.
- n **Innovative meat alternatives:** The demand for meat is increasing as the world's population grows. For that reason, our food tech experts and external partners are

working together to come up with innovative foods made from alternative proteins – for example from insects.

Laying hens and poultry farming

Eggs: The METRO Cash & Carry stores in Germany and Austria have not stocked eggs from battery hens in its own-brand product range for a number of years ([METRO commitment on cage free eggs for Own Brand assortment](#)).

In Europe, METRO Cash & Carry is working towards a shift to alternative farming methods for eggs and liquid egg products in its own-brand product range by 2022 in Western and Southern Europe and by 2025 in Eastern Europe. The in-store promotion of alternative and sustainable farming methods such as barn and free-range farming is an important factor in enabling customers to make a conscious purchasing decision and thus fostering sustainable consumption.

Geese and ducks: By entering into supplementary agreements, METRO Cash & Carry Germany obliges its suppliers to adopt ethical husbandry in the production of goose and duck meat that goes beyond the minimum statutory requirements. This includes not force-feeding the animals or live-plucking them, complying with statutory requirements on space and livestock density in housed or free-range farming and only to use animal feed certified under Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) criteria. Additionally, the husbandry conditions and source of feedstuffs need to be regularly monitored and documented.

Use of antibiotics

Compliance with strict quality and safety requirements is of paramount importance for METRO. For that reason, we oblige our suppliers to comply with the International Featured Standard Food (IFS Food) or other GFSI-recognised standards that make detailed demands on a supplier's quality management system, staff hygiene and plant equipment.

In addition, a responsible use of antibiotics plays its part in guaranteeing food safety and reducing resistances. Ethical husbandry means that animals are less prone to infections, which reduces the need to administer antibiotics. For that reason, METRO is committed to an optimised and controlled use of antibiotics by its suppliers and regularly has the quality of the supplied animal products inspected by independent institutes.

Pig farming

Most young pigs slaughtered in Europe are castrated without anaesthetic shortly after birth to prevent an unpleasant smell in the meat when it is later cooked. In order to meet the demands of customers and animal welfare advocates, METRO Cash & Carry is working with NGOs, government representatives and other partners in the supply chain to put an end to unanaesthetised castration. For that reason, the only meat we sell internationally comes from pigs that have been surgically castrated following an inhalation anaesthetic, as well as meat from intact male pigs and injected male pigs (immunocastration).

Rabbit farming

By entering into supplementary agreements, METRO Cash & Carry Germany obliges its suppliers to adopt ethical husbandry in rabbit farming that goes beyond minimum statutory requirements. This involves keeping the rabbits in groups and not exceeding a given livestock density, providing the animals with a natural day-night rhythm with a dark phase of at least 8 hours and offering them materials for activity and opportunities for retreat, ensuring adequate ventilation of the cages to remove gases, dusts and germs and using GFSI-certified feed only. Additionally, the husbandry conditions and source of feedstuffs need to be regularly monitored and documented.