



Animal Welfare Position Statement

Animal Welfare



For more than a century, our commitment to food safety has been a core part of who we are at Wawa. To ensure we will always have the trust of our customers that we've built and earned over 100-plus years, we are continuously addressing important issues in the area of food safety and animal welfare so that we are operating at the highest of standards. We are driven by our values and we will only partner with suppliers who share in those values and our strong belief in being responsible food retailers and adopting strong practices to ensure it.

Wawa is committed to animal welfare by working with our suppliers to improve their practices of raising animals responsibly and treating them humanely.

Broiler Chickens

The sourcing of sustainable broiler chickens is an important challenge for the entire poultry and food industry, and Wawa is committed to being part of the solution. We take our role as a responsible food provider very seriously and are involved in numerous discussions on this topic.

Wawa supports high standards of animal welfare and is committed to working with suppliers who continuously improve their performance based on proven scientific research and veterinarian-recommended practices. In some areas, it will take time to transition industry practices but regardless, Wawa will continue to support suppliers that provide better animal health and welfare outcomes, while also operating transparently around the progress.

Below are some of the standards our suppliers are meeting or working to meet for broiler chickens in the future.

- Climate-controlled, cage-less housing where chickens are protected from the elements and provided space to move
- Clean living conditions that are well ventilated, lighting controlled and have litter management
- Wholesome diet where feed and water are easily accessible by all birds
- No use of antibiotics for Wawa supply; however, sick chickens should be treated for disease and handled as a conventional flock
- Continual improvements in breed selection to increase welfare outcomes
- Stress reduction prior to harvest through controlled atmosphere stunning or alternative options deemed humane
- Third party verification of animal welfare practices

Layer Hens

Wawa supports the most humane layer hen housing approach from our suppliers. The topic of “cage-free” for layer hens needs to take into consideration many factors including the breed of hen and the approach the supplier takes to transition a system from conventional housing to “cage-free”. Therefore, Wawa continues to work with our suppliers and external animal welfare experts to understand which approach is most humane for the layer hens. As more research is available, Wawa will adjust our goals and work with our suppliers to ensure appropriate transition plans are implemented if necessary. In addition to housing, there are other animal welfare standards for layer hens that Wawa requires of our suppliers.

- Clean, climate-controlled and well-ventilated housing where birds are protected from the elements and provided continuous fresh air and space to move around and express natural behaviors
- Wholesome diet where feed and water are easily accessible by all birds; feed shall not be withheld at any time
- Darkness at night shall be provided to allow the birds to rest
- Personnel involved in catching and transporting must be trained and knowledgeable in proper handling
- Third party verification of animal welfare practices

Pork

Wawa supports the elimination of gestation crates for pregnant sows and are working with our pork suppliers to ensure they are transitioning to different housing by 2022. Wawa’s suppliers are working to ensure the group housing approach ensures better welfare for the pregnant sows as they transition. Wawa has defined additional animal welfare standards for their pork suppliers.

- Clean, climate-controlled and well-ventilated environment that allows room for pigs to easily lie down and stand-up as desired
- Wholesome diet where feed and water are easily accessible
- Veterinarian relationship to develop a plan for medical management
- Caretaker training, daily animal observations and trained transporters to ensure animal well-being
- Stress reduction prior to harvest through controlled atmosphere stunning or alternative options deemed humane
- Third party verification of animal welfare practices

Turkey

In addition to working with our broiler chicken suppliers on routine antibiotic use, Wawa also focused on the antibiotic practices of our turkey supplier. We have transitioned to no antibiotic use ever for turkeys supplied to Wawa. However, we feel antibiotic use is necessary in some cases to ensure animal welfare so we ensure our supplier has the ability to provide antibiotics when needed and transition those birds to a conventional flock outside of Wawa’s supply. Other animal welfare requirements for our turkey supplier are also similar to those required of our broiler chicken suppliers.

- Climate-controlled, cage-less housing where turkeys are protected from the elements and provided space to move
- Clean living conditions that are well ventilated, lighting controlled and have litter management
- Wholesome diet where feed and water are easily accessible by all birds
- Stress reduction prior to harvest through controlled atmosphere stunning
- Third party verification of animal welfare practices

Dairy Cattle

Wawa's Dairy heritage goes back over 100 years and assurance of safety and humane animal practices has been supported since the beginning. Wawa supports continuous improvement of animal welfare practices for dairy cattle and works closely with our suppliers to verify progress. All cows providing milk to Wawa are never treated with the rBST growth hormone. In addition, all farms supplying milk to Wawa are required to meet the standards of the National Dairy Farm Program: Farmers Assuring Responsible Management™ including but not limited to:

- Proper nutrition and access to clean water for the health and welfare of all animals
- Prohibiting the practice of tail docking
- A commitment to the use of low stress animal handling practices
- Veterinarian relationship and a documented plan for medical management
- Animal welfare training for all employees with animal care responsibilities at the farm
- On farm evaluations of animal welfare practices

Beef Cattle

Understanding the detailed practices of beef cattle back to the farm level is a current focus for Wawa. At a minimum, we expect farms supplying beef to Wawa will employ responsible animal health care and management practices that not only ensure the safety and quality of our food, but that are also in accordance with accepted animal welfare standards. Some of the key elements of a farm policy that are consistent with Wawa's Values include evidence of a relationship in place between the farm and a Veterinarian to better manage the care of the animals and proper handling and welfare training for animal caretakers. As we learn more, we will develop continuous improvement goals under our Food Policy as we have with other animal species.
