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## Animal Welfare Must Be on the Menu

To the leadership of the Sustainable Chicken Forum,

We are deeply concerned that the Sustainable Chicken Forum has dropped its commitment to slower-growing breeds, one of the most effective measures to improve the lives of the millions of chickens in our food chain. The forum has been launched without a clear commitment to science-based animal welfare standards.

For years, organisations across the UK have encouraged food service and retail businesses to adopt the Better Chicken Commitment, a practical, measurable and science-backed framework designed to significantly improve the lives of millions of chickens.

Animal welfare is not an optional extra. True sustainability means protecting the welfare of the animals we farm for our food.

It must include:

- Slower growing breeds
- Lower stocking densities
- Enriched environments
- More humane methods of slaughter
- Transparent reporting

Without these, any claim of “sustainable chicken” risks misleading customers and undermining public trust. A poll conducted by RSPCA showed that 77% of UK Adults were appalled that chickens farmed for their meat are suffering because of fast growth rates\* Breed is key, enrichment, natural light and more space count for little if a bird is not healthy enough to benefit.

We respectfully call on all members of the Sustainable Chicken Forum to:

1. Publicly commit to meeting the standards of the Better Chicken Commitment

2. Publish clear welfare benchmarks and timelines
3. Include independent animal welfare expertise within the governance of the Forum

Sustainability without animal welfare is incomplete.

We all have to work together to build a food system which protects people, animals and the planet. We stand ready to work constructively with you to ensure that progress for the planet does not come at the expense of animal wellbeing.

Signed,

RSPCA and supporters

\*RSPCA poll conducted by Savanta of 2,089 UK adults aged 18+ online between 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.