



25 May 2021

Mr J F Robins
Secretary & Campaigns Consultant
Animal Concern Ltd
Post Office Box 5178
Dumbarton
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Sent via email: john@jfrobins.force9.co.uk

Dear Mr Robins

Thank you for your email and sincere apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I can assure you that we are very aware of the many difficult challenges facing the salmon farming industry and share many of your concerns.

Sadly, whilst there are no easy answers to solving some of these issues, we have developed around 500 detailed standards aimed solely at improving salmon welfare. But we want to go even further. We are continually reviewing our standards and processes and working with academics, salmon welfare experts, RSPCA Assured scheme members and relevant others to look at new ways to help bring about further improvements to salmon welfare.

I can also assure you that it is not the case that the standards permit RSPCA Assured salmon members in Scotland to shoot seals, even as a last resort. No one wants seals to be shot, least of all the RSPCA. We prohibit the shooting of seals on RSPCA Assured certified farms in Scotland and support the Scottish Government's ban.

The RSPCA standards clearly reference the new ban in Scotland. If an RSPCA Assured Scottish salmon farm shot a seal, they would be breaking the law and they would be suspended from the RSPCA Assured scheme, pending investigation. This would mean that no salmon from that farm could carry the label during that time.

As an animal welfare charity we believe we have a responsibility to be involved in trying to find solutions. Since the RSPCA and RSPCA Assured have been involved in the salmon industry, we have helped bring about many improvements to the welfare of farmed salmon which would not have happened without our involvement.

Patron HM The Queen

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I hope this information is useful and reassures you of some of the things we are doing to help improve the welfare of farmed salmon.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Sherwood".

Chris Sherwood
Chief Executive