



# Egg Track

## 2019 European Report



## Foreword

The wave of cage-free commitments recently witnessed has been staggering, as more and more companies recognise that cages are outdated, unwanted by consumers, and do not deliver a good enough quality of life for hens.

While this move is encouraging, laying hens will only benefit when these commitments come to fruition - when all hens are reared in true cage-free systems that are both fit for purpose and future-proofed. The transition to cage-free systems, whether barn, free range or organic, therefore needs to be paced and cannot wait until the final commitment date.

Public reporting on company progress towards fulfilling commitments is an integral part of corporate responsibility. Whilst the findings of this second European EggTrack report indicate that the proportion of companies reporting progress has increased, the data shows that 28% are yet to provide any evidence that they are working towards meeting their goals, and the majority of companies (58%) are still not reporting fully against their commitments.

Since the first European EggTrack report was published in 2018, Compassion's Food Business team has stepped up its work to encourage and support companies during the process of transitioning their egg supply away from caged systems.

One of Compassion's key concerns has been the development of a variety of intensive multi-tier systems. One example is the 'combi-cage' or 'combination system' which some producers have invested in, particularly in the USA and Italy. Over the past year, we have visited a number of these systems to better inform our opinion and have concluded that they do not afford hens the welfare benefits expected of cage-free living: internal partitions or doors restrict the birds' movement within and between tiers and hens may be locked in for long periods of time; nest boxes are not secluded and provide no comfortable material; and head height is also restricted. These systems cannot meet an acceptable level of welfare for hens and should not be seen as 'fit for future' investments.

In a bid to guide companies to invest in acceptable cage-free systems, we have visited and assessed many different true aviary designs. Informed by the farm visits, existing schemes and through extensive discussions with equipment manufacturers and academics, we have developed detailed guidance on the key features for multi-tier systems that can truly deliver good welfare.

My team continues to work closely with companies on their cage-free commitments, providing advice, encouraging progress and making the case for commitments to cover egg in all its forms – shell, product and ingredient.

I was extremely pleased to see leading companies including Carrefour France, Franprix, Chef Express and Aldi Italy receive 2019 Good Egg Awards at our recent Good Farm Animal Welfare Awards ceremony in Brussels. These companies have not only committed to cage-free eggs throughout their supply, but have also prohibited the use of combination systems and included all forms of egg in their commitments.

The market is undeniably moving towards a new cage-free era and I sincerely hope other companies yet to introduce cage-free policies will follow their example and that cages for laying hens can finally be consigned to the history books.



Dr Tracey Jones  
Director of Food Business

## Introduction to EggTrack

EggTrack reports company progress towards ending the use of cages for laying hens throughout their egg supply. Whilst designed to hold companies accountable for progress on their animal welfare policies, it is also designed to celebrate those commitments, and stimulate the shift away from caged production, encouraging producers to invest in the best systems, fit for purpose and fit for future. By demonstrating the progress companies are making towards meeting their long-term cage-free commitments year on year, we hope to inspire further progress and give producers the confidence to invest in future-proofed alternative systems.

All the companies highlighted in this report have made a commitment to sourcing only cage-free eggs by 2025 or sooner. This year, we have increased the number of group-level companies in the report to 106 (from 83 in last year's inaugural report). The report does not include every business with a cage-free egg commitment, but we have selected leading companies based on their size, the volumes of eggs they use and their market influence.

This report shows the progress companies are making across their shell egg and product and ingredient egg supply chains. Whilst many companies' cage-free egg commitments cover only shell eggs, the more 'hidden' product and ingredient eggs in supply chains are equally important and it is encouraging that 91% of food service companies and 57% of retail groups have commitments that cover both.

**Cage-free commitments should cover all eggs in company supply chains.**

The data in this report has been compiled from publically available information on company websites during the first two weeks of August 2019. Any significant differences in the ways in which companies have reported their progress have been noted in the report.

As per last year, some companies' commitments are lacking clarity. For some it is not clear as to whether they cover all eggs in a company's supply chain, i.e. shell and product and ingredient eggs, or to which geographies or brands their commitments apply. We recommend

that all companies make this explicit in their reporting and extend their commitments to cover all eggs in their supply chain, where this is not already the case.

Reporting progress against commitments is an important indicator that companies are proactively working with their supply chain to enable change in a sustainable and responsible manner. The industry needs to be actively transitioning to cage-free eggs now if their 2025 goals are to be met. We plan to produce this EggTrack report annually until the 2025 commitment deadline. Any companies without a plan for meeting their cage-free egg commitment can find helpful resources at the end of this report – particularly in relation to the type of systems they should invest in for the future. Please contact one of Compassion's Food Business Managers for further advice and support.

### Compassion encourages all companies to:

- Clarify the scope of commitments;
- Report progress for all commitments;
- Extend commitments so that they cover all eggs in the supply chain, i.e. shell and product and ingredient eggs;
- Work with your suppliers now to ensure deadlines are met and a progressive transition to cage free is made;
- Ensure that you invest in the best alternative systems, which are fit for purpose (provide a good quality of life for hens) and fit for future (are acceptable for the lifetime of investment and successfully address emerging issues, e.g. operating with intact beaks).

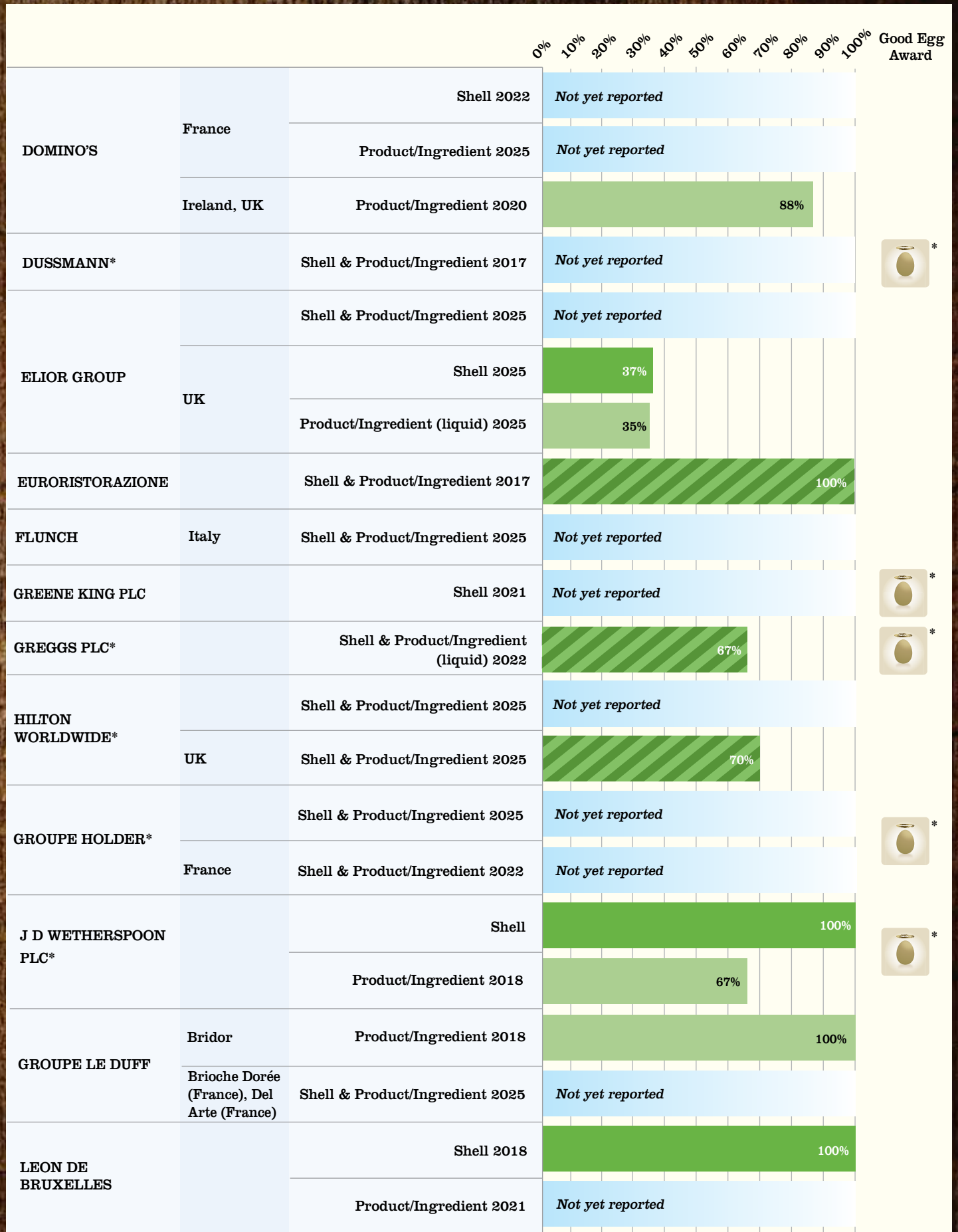


# Reporting: Food Service

			0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	Good Egg Award
ACCOR*		Shell & Product/Ingredient (liquid) 2020												
API RESTAURATION		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											
ARAMARK		Shell & Product/Ingredient (liquid) 2025												*
AUTOGRILL*		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											*
AZZURRI GROUP	ASK Italian, Zizzi	Shell 2020	100%											
		Product/Ingredient 2020	Not yet reported											
GROUPE BERTRAND	Groupe Flo	Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											
CAFFÈ NERO*		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2021	Not yet reported											
CAMST*		Shell 2022												*
		Product/Ingredient 2025												
CASUAL DINING GROUP		Shell 2025	100%											
		Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											*
		Café Rouge, Las Iguanas	Product/Ingredient 2022	Not yet reported										
CIR FOOD*		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2018												
COLUMBUS CAFÉ*		Unspecified 2020	Not yet reported											
COMPASS GROUP	United Kingdom	Shell & Product/Ingredient (liquid) 2025	Not yet reported											
		Shell 2025												*
		Product/Ingredient (liquid) 2025												
COURTEPAILLE		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											
GRUPPO CREMONINI	Marr	Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											*
	Chef Express	Shell & Product/Ingredient (Product) 2024	Not yet reported											

\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Food Service



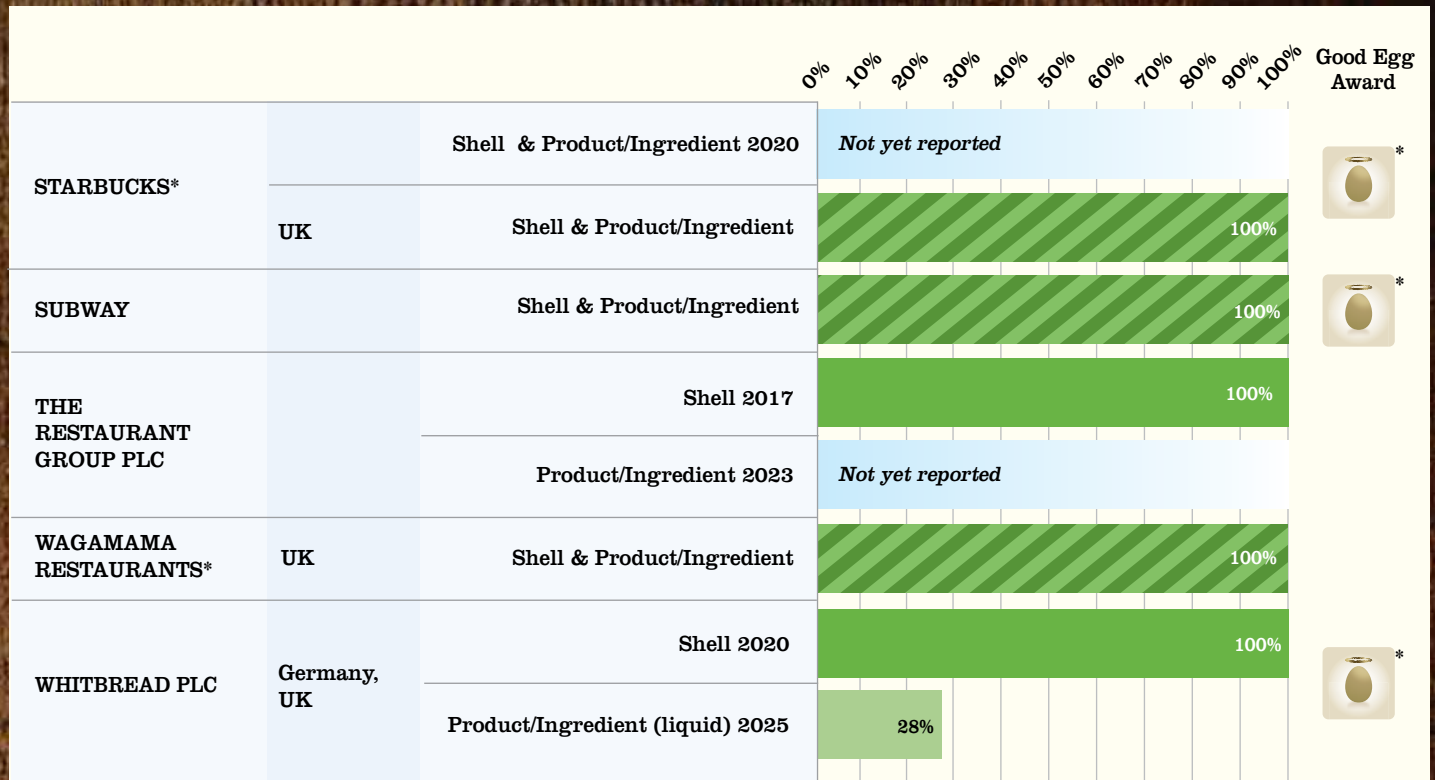
\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Food Service

			0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	Good Egg Award
MARKAS		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2024												
MCDONALD'S*		Shell												
		Product/Ingredient 2025												*
	Netherlands, UK	Shell & Product/Ingredient												
		Shell 2017												*
MITCHELLS & BUTLERS PLC*		Product/Ingredient 2025												
		Unspecified 2022												
PIZZA EXPRESS		Shell												
		Product/Ingredient 2025												
PRET A MANGER*	UK	Shell & Product/Ingredient												*
PREZZO RESTAURANTS PLC		Shell												
		Product/Ingredient 2020												
RESTAURANT BRANDS INTERNATIONAL*	Burger King	Shell												*
SERVAIR	France	Shell 2018												
		Product/Ingredient 2025												
SFINKS POLSKA*		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025												
SODEXO*		Shell 2025												*
		Product/Ingredient (liquid) 2025												
	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland	Shell & Product/Ingredient (liquid)												
SSP INTERNATIONAL		Shell 2020												*
		Product/Ingredient 2025												

\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Food Service

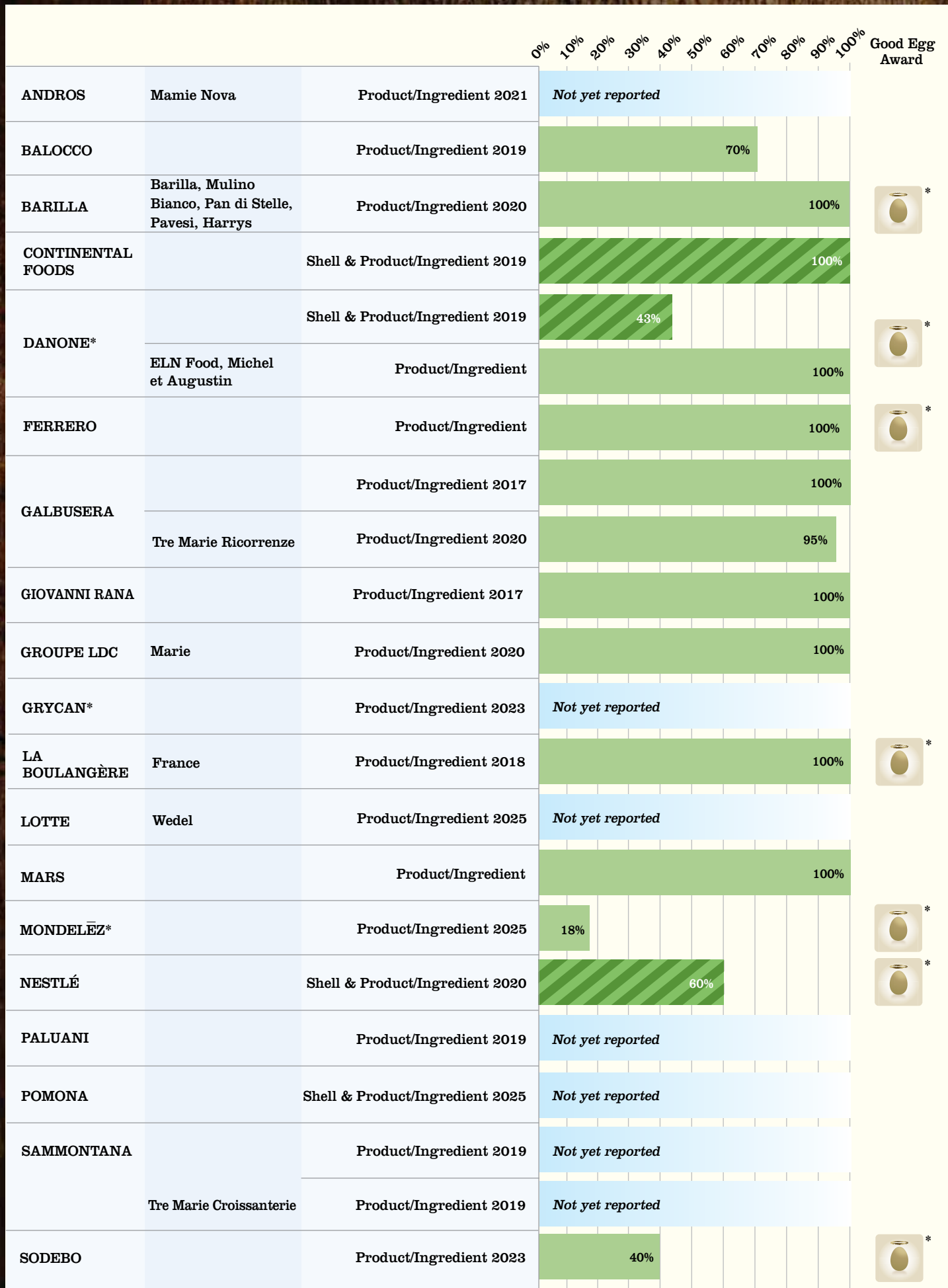


\*See notes on page 15 for full details.



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# Reporting: Manufacturers and Producers



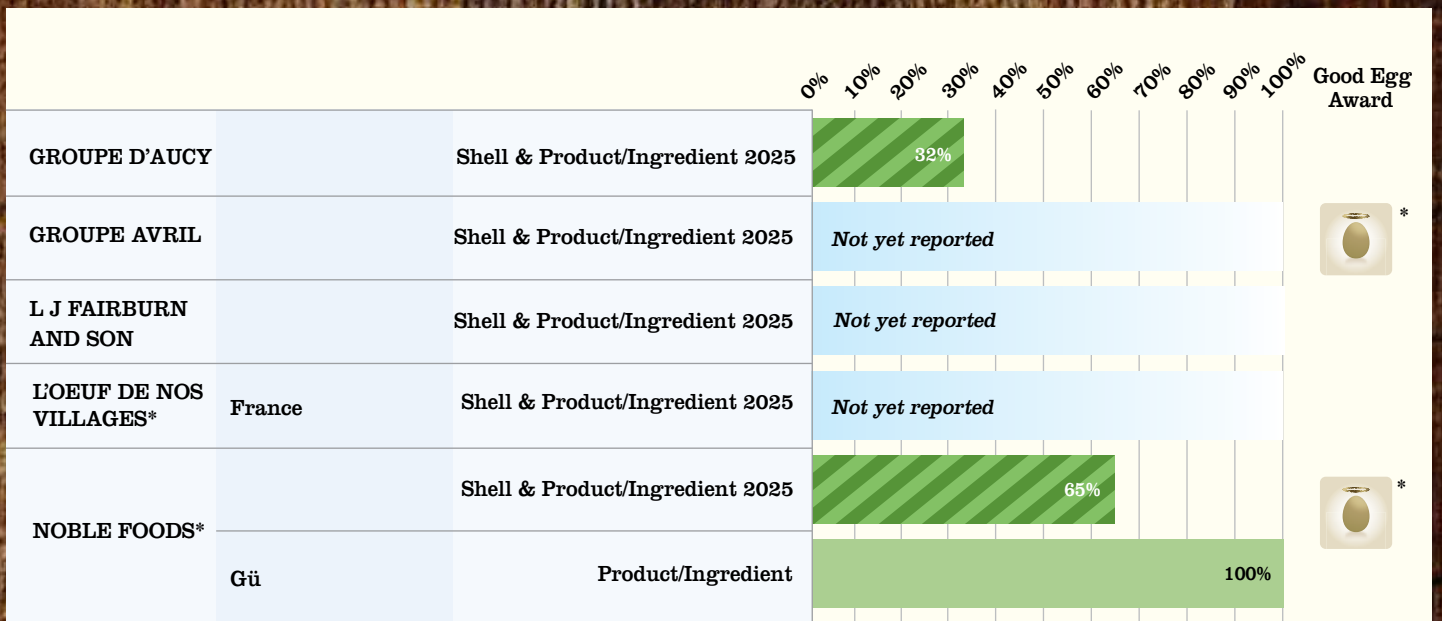
\*See notes on page 15 for full details.



# Reporting: Manufacturers and Producers



# Reporting: Producers



# Reporting: Retailers



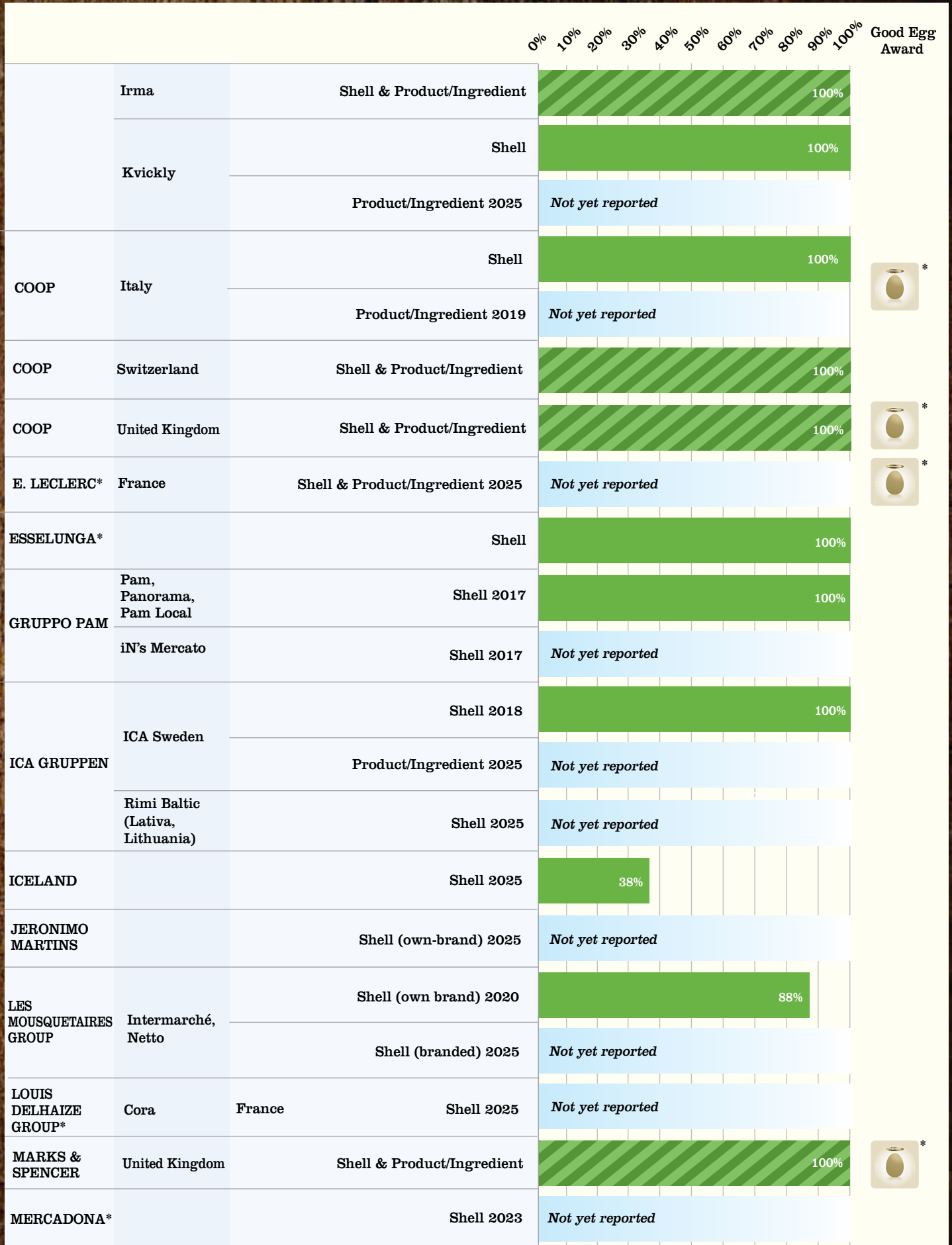
\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Retailers

				0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	Good Egg Award
	Italy	Shell		100%											
		Product/Ingredient 2020		67%											
	Slovenia	Shell 2017		100%											
		Product/Ingredient 2019		Not yet reported											
AUCHAN*	France	Shell 2025		50%											
		Product/Ingredient 2025		Not yet reported											
	Poland	Shell 2025		Not yet reported											
	Alcampo	Spain	Shell 2025		Not yet reported										
BENNET		Shell 2017		Not yet reported											
CARREFOUR*	Belgium	Shell (own-brand) 2020		100%											
		Shell (branded) 2025		Not yet reported											
	France	Shell (own-brand) 2020		76%											
		Shell (branded) & Product/Ingredient 2025		Not yet reported											
	Italy	Shell		100%											
		Product/Ingredient		Not yet reported											
Poland, Romania, Spain	Shell 2025		Not yet reported												
GROUPE CASINO	France (Casino, Monoprix, Franprix)	Shell 2020		81%											
		Product/Ingredient 2025		Not yet reported											
COLRUYT	Belgium, France	Shell & Product/Ingredient		100%											
CONAD*		Shell		83%											
COOP DENMARK GROUP		Shell 2020		Not yet reported											
		Product/Ingredient 2025		Not yet reported											














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# Reporting: Retailers



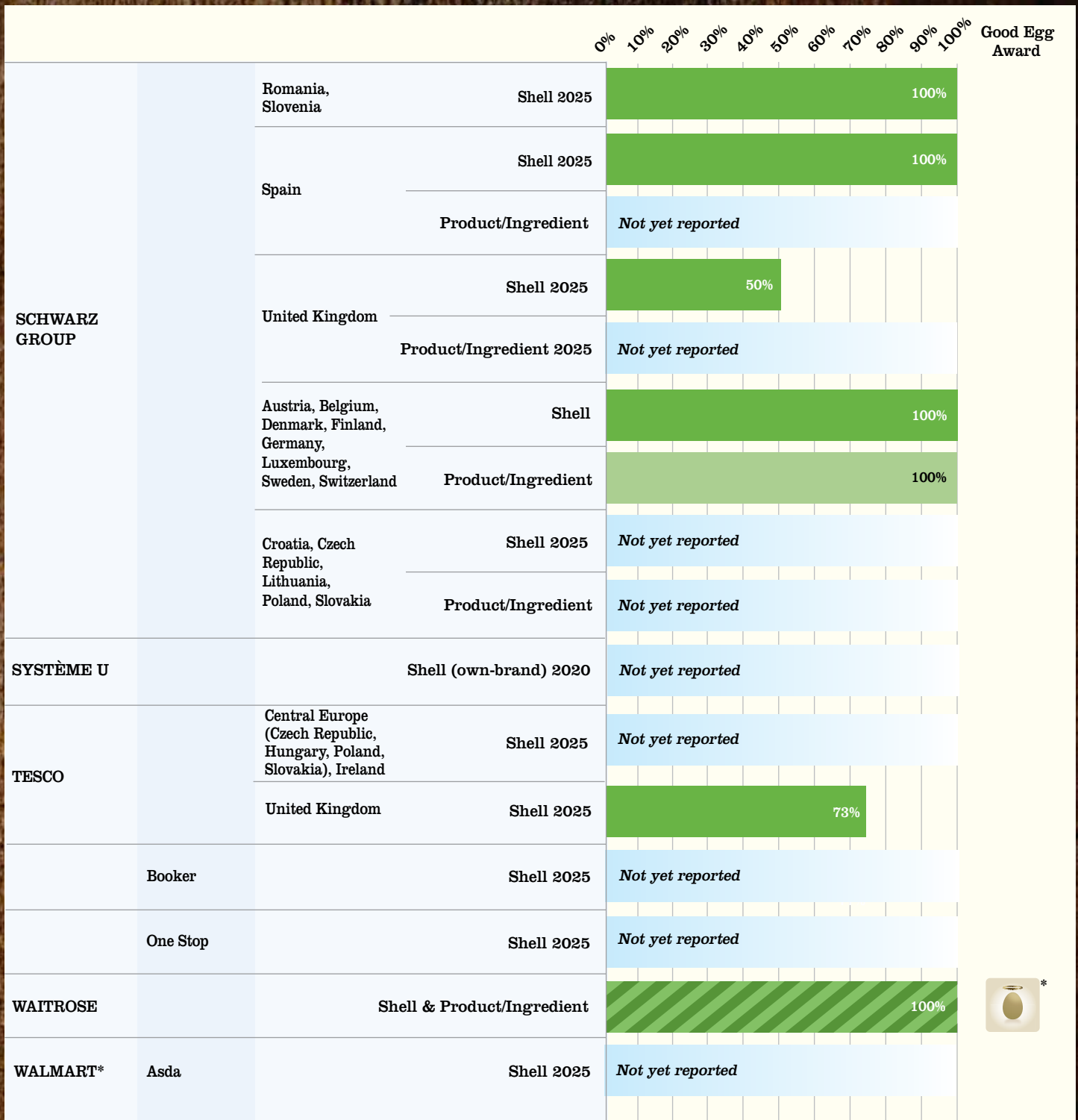
\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Retailers

				0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	Good Egg Award
METRO GROUP*	METRO/MAKRO Cash & Carry		Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											 *
	Real,-		Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											 *
MIGROS			Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											 *
			Shell 2022	78%											 *
MORRISONS			Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											 *
			Shell	100%											 *
OCADO			Shell	100%											 *
PICARD SURGELÉS*			Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											 *
REMA 1000	Norway		Shell	100%											 *
REWE GROUP			Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											 *
	REWE, Penny	Germany	Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											
	REWE International AG	Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine	Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											
SAINSBURYS			Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											 *
SCHIEVER (ATAC, BI1 AND MAXI-MARCHÉ)		France	Shell	100%											 *
		Bi1 (Poland)	Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											
SCHWARZ GROUP	Kaufland		Shell 2025 & Product/Ingredient	Not yet reported											
		Germany	Shell & Product/Ingredient	100%											
	France		Shell 2025	75%											
			Product/Ingredient 2020	73%											 *
	Lidl	Italy	Shell & Product/Ingredient 2019	92%											
	Netherlands		Shell	100%											
			Product/Ingredient 2025	Not yet reported											

\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

# Reporting: Retailers



\*See notes on page 15 for full details.

## Notes on the data:

### General:

'Unspecified' means that companies have not specified whether their commitment applies to shell or product and ingredient eggs. We advise that companies provide clarity on commitments where necessary.

In the case of manufacturers, we have noted any unspecified commitments as 'Product/Ingredient'.

In the case of producers, we have noted all commitments as 'Shell & Product/Ingredient' reflecting that these commitments cover all eggs produced.

Where a geographical location has not been specified for commitments or progress reporting in this report, this means that it applies to all European operations of the company.

End-dates have not been provided for cage-free egg commitments that were set for completion earlier than 2017 and which have been met. In most instances companies do not provide this historical information for fulfilled commitments and, to be consistent, we have omitted it for all.

### Company-specific: Food Service

**Accor:** Reporting based on percentage of hotels 100% cage-free

**Autogrill:** States: in Italy, shell and product eggs are free range in directly operated points of sale and proprietary brands. In the Netherlands, subsidiary HMSHost has an agreement with Kipster (cage-free high welfare farm).

**Caffè Nero:** "The whole eggs used in our savoury range of products are 100% free-range."

**Camst:** A calculation error and a decrease in the proportion of cage-free shell eggs purchased have resulted in a lower percentage of cage-free shell eggs compared to last year (48%). Camst report a recovery in the growth trend in the first half of 2019.

**CIRFood:** Our understanding is that this commitment does not cover CIRFood's bar and restaurant operations. We encourage CIRFood to provide more clarity on the scope of their commitment.

**Columbus Café:** State that the eggs used in their 'English Toast' are already free range.

**Dussmann:** Commitment not found on company website.

**Greggs plc:** Total progress figure given for shell and product/ingredient eggs combined. However, shell eggs have been 100% cage-free since 2014.

**Groupe Holder:** The commitment regarding their activities in France was not found on the company website but forms part of their Good Egg Award.

**Groupe Le Duff:** Progress reporting for Bridor not found on company website but reported in trade press in February 2019 (e.g. <https://www.lechef.com/au-quotidien/2019-03-01-bridor-bannit-les-oeufs-de-poules-en-cage-de-ses-recettes/>).

**Hilton Worldwide:** UK progress figure is combined progress for UK & USA.

**J D Wetherspoon plc:** "Approximately one-third of suppliers using egg as an included ingredient in supplied products is not using free-range eggs."

**McDonald's, Europe:** Commitment unclear: "In the U.S. and our international lead markets, we have committed to sourcing only cage-free eggs by 2025 at the latest. We've been cage-free for the breakfast menu in all European markets since 2011 (except Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine, which account for approximately 6% of whole eggs in Europe)." Information based on Good Egg Award.

**McDonald's, United Kingdom:** Commitment unclear: "UK: Breakfast menu contains free-range eggs sourced from British and Irish farms, most of which are independent and family-owned. All eggs conform to the Lion Quality Code of Practice or equivalent and meet strict RSPCA Assured standards." Information based on Good Egg Award.

**Mitchells & Butlers plc:** "100% of pre-prepared scrambled egg [...] is produced from free range egg and 90% of liquid egg purchased is also made from free range eggs."

**Gruppo Pellegrini:** It is unclear whether Gruppo Pellegrini's commitment covers all of the eggs in their supply chain.

**Pret A Manger:** Commitment not found on company website. Information based on Good Egg Award.

**Restaurant Brands International, Burger King:** Commitment unclear: "The Burger King brand and its restaurant owners currently serve cage-free shell and liquid eggs\* for breakfast in Europe. \*Cage-free egg products do not include frozen eggs at this time." Information based on Good Egg Award.

## Notes on the data:

**Sfinks Polska:** States that the majority of their restaurants already don't use eggs from caged hens.

**Sodexo, Europe:** Global progress figure.

**Starbucks, Europe:** "We are committed to working with our suppliers toward our goal to be 100% cage-free in company-operated stores by 2020." Starbucks' 2020 commitment under its Good Egg Award also includes licence partners.

**Wagamama:** It is not clear whether this commitment applies to Wagamama in the United Kingdom only or also the other countries in which the brand operates.

### Manufacturers

**Danone:** Global progress figure.

**Grycan:** On 24 May 2017, Grycan put a statement on the news section of their website about their decision to stop using cage eggs in all their products by 2023. However, the statement is no longer available on their website.

**Mondelēz:** Global progress figure. Company website states: "We currently use 100% cage-free eggs in all of our European chocolate brands as well as in our biscuit products sold in Belgium and the Netherlands."

**Unilever:** Global progress figure. Company website states: "In Western Europe, Hellmann's, Amora and Calvé brands have used 100% cage-free eggs since 2009."

### Producers

**L'Oeuf de Nos Villages:** Report that "80% of our producers offer cage-free eggs".

**Noble Foods, Gü:** Commitment not found on company website. Information based on Good Egg Award.

Last year, Noble Foods was the sole producer in EggTrack so it is encouraging that they are now joined by four further significant egg producers that have made commitments to move all of their production to cage-free. We call on all major egg producers to commit to ending the use of cages, reflecting the commitments made by their customers.



### Retailers

**Auchan, France:** Intermediate target for 100% of own-brand eggs by 2022.

**Carrefour, Italy:** We encourage Carrefour Italy to provide more clarity around their commitments, specifically on the deadline and progress made to date. They report that all new branded products added to the range now contain barn eggs.

**Carrefour, Poland:** Intermediate target for 100% of own-brand eggs by 2020.

**Conad:** Caged eggs represent 17% of the shell egg category by value.

**E. Leclerc, France:** Intermediate target for 100% of own-brand eggs by 2020. Company website also states (in translation): "Today, 50% of eggs sold under the Marque Repère brand are from cage-free hens."

**Esselunga:** Company website also states (in translation): "Cage-free eggs are used in fresh pasta, bakery products and confectionery, and gastronomy products manufactured in Esselunga's own factories, as well as for some recurring products (e.g. Panettone, Pandoro and Colomba under the Le Grazie brand)."

**Louis Delhaize Group, Cora, France:** Intermediate target for 100% of own-brand eggs by 2020.

**Mercadona:** Progress not reported but they have pulled forward their commitment date by two years, to 2023 instead of 2025.

**Metro Group, METRO/MAKRO Cash & Carry:** Intermediate target for 100% of shell eggs and liquid egg products by 2022 in West and South Europe.

**Picard Surgelés:** Their website provides a list of products already made with cage-free eggs.

**Walmart, Asda:** Commitment no longer found on company website.



## Notes on the data:

### Good Egg Awards

Full details of the Good Egg Awards received by the companies in this report:

### Food Service:

**ARAMARK** DE 2009 & UK 2011, Shell; **Autogrill** IT Shell 2009; **CH & ES** Shell 2010; **Camst** IT, Shell 2022; **Casual Dining Group** UK, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2022; **Gruppo Cremonini** Chef Express IT Shell & Product/Ingredient 2024; **Compass Group** Restaurant Associates, UK, Shell 2008; *et al.*; **Dussmann** DE, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2012; **Greene King plc** UK, Shell 2021; **Greggs plc** UK, Shell 2014 & Product/Ingredient 2022; **Groupe Holder** FR, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2022; **J D Wetherspoon plc** UK, Shell 2007; **McDonalds** EU, Shell 2010; UK & NL, Product/Ingredient 2015; **Mitchells & Butlers plc** UK, Shell 2017; **Pret A Manger** UK, Shell 2008 & Product/Ingredient 2016; **Restaurant Brands International** Burger King, EMEA, Shell 2012; **Sodexo** Sodexo Prestige, UK, Shell 2010; *et al.*; BE, Shell 2008; **SSP International** Rail Gourmet Group, UK, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2011; **Starbucks** EMEA, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2020; UK, Shell 2009; **Subway** EU, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2014; *et al.*; **Whitbread plc** UK, Shell 2020.

### Manufacturers:

**Barilla**, IT, Product/Ingredient 2012; **Harry's** FR, Product/Ingredient 2016, *et al.*; **Danone** Global, Product/Ingredient 2019; **Ferrero** EU, Product/Ingredient 2015; **La Boulangère** FR Product/Ingredient 2018; **Mondelēz** Cadbury Crème Egg, UK, Product/Ingredient 2011; **Nestlé** EU, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2020; **Sodebo** FR, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2023; **St Michel** FR Product/Ingredient 2015; **Unilever** Mayonnaises & Dressings, EU, Product/Ingredient 2012; *et al.*

### Producers

**Groupe Avril** FR Shell & Product/Ingredient 2025; **Noble Foods** The Happy Egg Co., UK, Shell 2011 & Product/Ingredient 2012; **Gü Puds**, Global, Product/Ingredient 2014.

### Retailers:

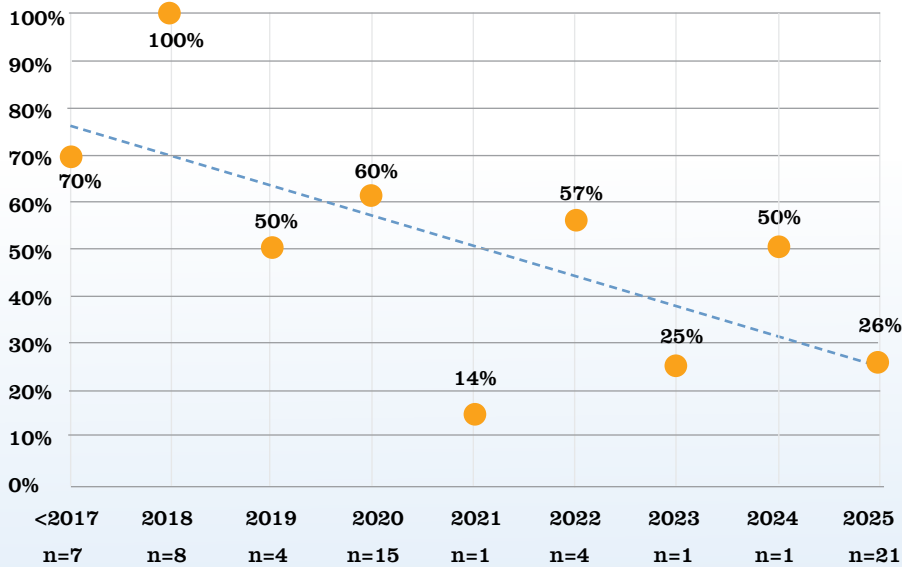
**Aldi Nord** DE, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2021; **Aldi Süd** Hofer, AT, Shell 2009; IT Shell & Product/Ingredient 2022; **Carrefour** BE, Shell 2009; FR Shell 2025; **Groupe Casino** FR, Shell 2020; **Franprix** Product/Ingredient 2022; **Colruyt** BE, Shell 2007 & Product/Ingredient 2020; FR, Shell 2015; **Coop Denmark Group** Irma, DK, Product/Ingredient 2015; **Kvickly**, DK, Shell 2015; **Coop** IT, Shell 2010; **Coop** UK, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2008; **E. Leclerc** Scamark FR Shell 2020 & Product/Ingredient 2023; **Marks & Spencer** UK, Shell 2007 & Product/Ingredient 2012; **Metro Group** Real,- DE, Shell 2009 & Product/Ingredient 2016; **Migros** Migros, CH, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2015; **Morrisons** UK, Shell 2022; **Ocado** UK Shell 2011; **REMA 1000** NO, Shell 2016; **REWE Group** REWE and Penny, DE, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2016; **REWE** International AG, AT, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2007; **Sainsburys** UK, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2012; **Schiever** FR, Shell 2015; **Schwarz Group** Kaufland, DE, Shell 2010 & Product/Ingredient 2020; *et al.*; **Lidl**, FR, Product/Ingredient 2020; **Lidl**, IT, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2019; **Lidl**, BE, Product/Ingredient 2018; **Lidl**, DE, Shell 2009; **Waitrose** UK, Shell & Product/Ingredient 2008.



## Looking forward

In this second edition of the European EggTrack report, 72% of the 106 companies included have reported progress against their commitments for at least part of their supply chain and 42% of companies have reported fully against their commitments, covering all parts of their supply chain.

### Percentage of Commitments Reported Against



*This graph shows the proportion of commitments that have been reported against, by end-date.*

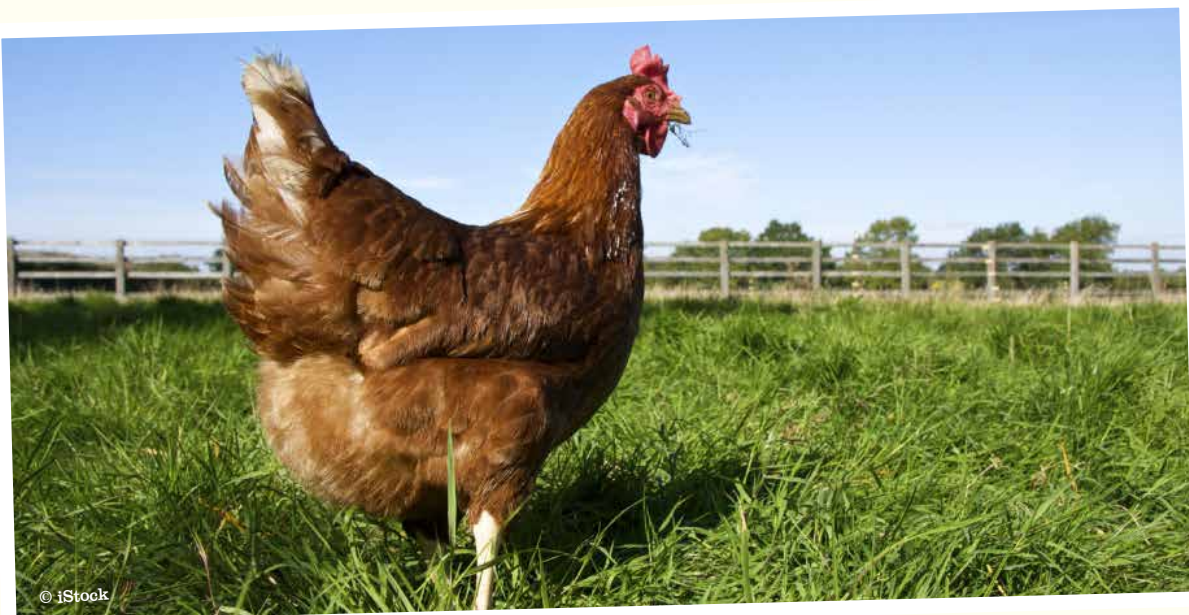
### Overall trend

Commitments with imminent end-dates are more likely to have been reported against.

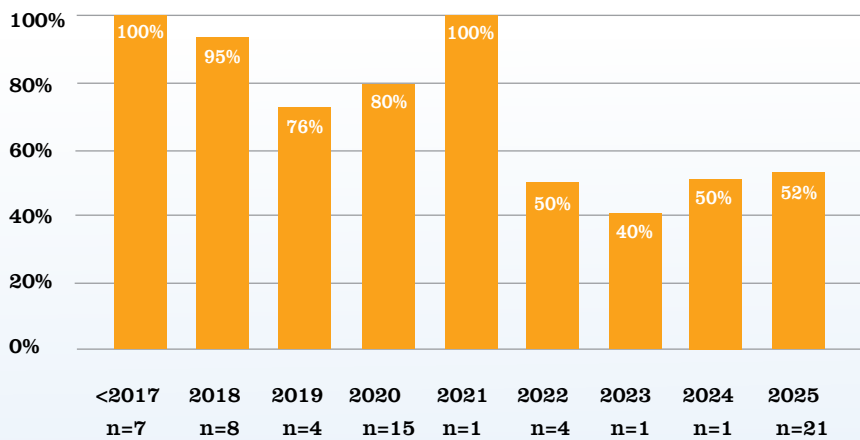
26% of the commitments with 2025 end-dates have been reported against.

We encourage those companies with longer commitment timeframes to pace their conversion year-on-year and to publicly report progress.

On a like-for-like basis, removing the 23 new companies from the dataset, 81% of companies are reporting at least partially, compared to 75% in last year's report, and 46% are reporting fully, compared to 43% last year. This is an encouraging improvement, but the majority of companies are still not reporting fully against their commitments.



## Average Progress by Commitment End-Date



*This graph shows the average progress of the commitments for which progress has been reported.*

### Overall trend

More progress has been made against commitments with imminent end-dates.

Of the commitments with 2025 end-dates, 21 of these have been reported against and the average percentage of eggs that are now cage-free is 52%.

More encouraging are the trends in progress made. Last year, the average progress made against future commitments (2018 onwards) was 56%. This year, the average progress made against future commitments (2019 onwards) is 64%. On a like-for-like basis (looking only at the data 2019 onwards), average progress has improved from 54% to 64%.

During the compilation of this second edition of the EggTrack report, it was still found that a number of the commitments and progress reporting were not clear as to which parts of the supply chain they apply (e.g. which geographies, brands and forms of egg). Similarly, it is not always clear what companies mean by 'egg products' or 'ingredients'. Some companies use either term to mean liquid and powdered egg, etc. and some companies also include eggs in bought-in composite products in these descriptions, such as pastry and sauces. We reasonably expect such commitments to cover all forms of egg present within supply chains but encourage companies to address any areas of ambiguity in order to provide transparency.



## Cage-free Systems for Laying Hens

As shown in this report, since 2016 many of the world's most influential food companies have now committed to move to a cage-free egg supply chain by 2025 or sooner. The industry now needs to decide how to meet the demand for cage-free eggs. Food companies need to work with their suppliers to ensure the production systems adopted are fit for purpose, ensuring the animals experience a good quality of life, and fit for the future too, anticipating future expectations of the industry. Future-proofing investment is critical to commercial sustainability and requires preparing for upcoming issues, such as the need to operate without beak trimming and maintain good feather coverage, and the need to improve keel bone condition.

Laying hens are gregarious animals with elaborate social behaviours based on group structure in a flock. In the wild they spend much of their time searching for food, foraging and scratching, maintaining their plumage condition via dustbathing and preening, and perching in trees at night to avoid predators. They also exhibit a thorough nest building repertoire, from careful nest selection and inspection, to settling and laying their eggs, followed by cackling and re-joining the flock.

Cage-free systems now being installed need to satisfy the wants and needs of the hens, so they not only have good physical condition and health, but good mental wellbeing and are able to express their repertoire of natural behaviours. New systems also need to be able to operate without beak trimming, with little or no feather pecking, and to demonstrate low levels of keel bone fractures.

CIWF have been working closely with industry to understand the commercial challenges, representing the needs of the birds whilst understanding the position of the egg as an entry price point for protein. We believe our recommendations will ensure that farmers, hens and consumers will benefit.

### Important factors to consider in house design are:

- **The provision of sufficient space to live** – the maximum density permitted in the EU for barn and free range systems is 9 birds/m<sup>2</sup>, but reducing this to 7 birds/m<sup>2</sup> can significantly benefit the hens – giving them more space to move freely.
- **Providing sufficient enrichment materials to occupy the hens** such as foraging, pecking and dustbathing substrates, and plenty of perching space.
- **Providing different functional spaces** - e.g. separate day and night quarters, with high perches for resting, plenty of nest boxes, and separate activity zones for dustbathing, foraging and scratching; or at least access to a veranda and natural light.
- **Free-range systems should have good shade and shelter** to encourage outdoor ranging, and a variety of herbs, shrubs, and grasses to satisfy the foraging needs of the hens.
- **It's also important that the pullet rearing house** is similar in design to the laying house as this allows the young hens to get accustomed to perching – especially jumping on and off – so they don't injure themselves. They will also be less fearful of their new surroundings when moved into the laying house.

### Multi-tier Systems

Cage-free multi-tier or aviary systems were developed in Europe, about two decades ago, to enable producers to maximise the use of space in a cage-free system, without compromising the minimum welfare needs of the hens.



Vencomatic Red-L system in use. Photo courtesy of Vencomatic Group

They can be used in both barn and free range systems, and are available in an ever increasing variety of designs and specifications, able to be tailored to suit existing building dimensions, from a multitude of equipment manufacturers.

Considering 'fit for purpose, fit for future', the cage-free production systems which Compassion recommends are free range or highly innovative systems such as Kipster and Rondeel, followed by barn systems with verandahs / wintergardens.

The conversion of caged systems to cage-free multi-tier / aviary barn systems within existing buildings is however going to feature significantly in the cage-free movement and, since designs range from highly intensive multi-tiers to spacious aviaries, it is important to set minimum standards needed to deliver an acceptable level of welfare for the hen. Multi-storey buildings offer a solution when converting from multi-level caged systems. To minimise risk to bird health, each storey should be independent from another, featuring separate air spaces with sufficient ventilation capacity to maintain good air quality for the flock size per storey. Movement of birds in and out of storeys should be a smooth and organised process to **reduce the risk of stress to birds**.

### Combination systems are **NOT** permitted, and includes any system that:

- Allows hens to be permanently enclosed
- Restricts movement within the tier via internal partitions.

### Compassion recommends spacious aviaries, based on science and best practice, including:

- 9 hens/m<sup>2</sup> and preferably 7 hens/m<sup>2</sup> within the structure
- Maximum of 15 hens/m<sup>2</sup> at floor area
- Minimum head height between tiers of 50cm
- At least 2 meters between rows of aviary tiers
- Easy access between tiers and ease of movement through each row (with the inclusion of ramps, platforms and/or stepped systems)
- Minimum of 15cm perch space per bird and preferably as much as 22cm
- Enclosed nests with comfortable and soft floor; ideally tipping boxes which exclude hens at night to maintain good hygiene
- Dry, friable litter that promotes dustbathing, pecking and foraging; ideally more than 560cm<sup>2</sup> litter available per hen
- More than 4 different pecking substrates per 1000 hens
- Synchronicity between systems for pullet rearing and laying.



Nature Step System in use, with wide aisles. Photo courtesy of Glenrath Farms

## Company Highlight: Barilla

Leading Italian manufacturer, Barilla Group, has phased out battery and enriched cages across its entire egg supply chain, one year ahead of its 2020 commitment.

Eggs used in Barilla's European operations have been sourced from cage-free production systems for a number of years. After completing the transition in the USA, Turkey and Brazil, all of the eggs used across Barilla's global operations are now from hens not confined in cages, benefiting the lives of 2 million laying hens every year.

Their work to ensure higher welfare standards for laying hens continues and the group is currently carrying out a number of activities to ensure the farms they source from are both fit for purpose and fit for the future. Part of this has been an extensive process of supply chain mapping, including the identification of any 'combination systems' as well as other relevant inputs and welfare outcomes, such as stocking densities, the presence of ramps, mortality rates and the incidence of keel bone fractures. Barilla developed an online platform to achieve this, with complementary auditing and compliance procedures including enhanced traceability from farm to delivered egg product. They also undertook internal animal welfare training for all employees involved in managing the supply chain.

Barilla has been able to achieve these results thanks to the dialogue and with its suppliers and stakeholders, basing on the principles of transparency, fairness, collaboration and mutual respect. A work model that over the years has become a fundamental part of the Group's way of doing business.

**Leonardo Mirone, Raw Material Purchasing Director, commented:** "Over the years we have worked on the supply chains of our most important raw materials to make a positive contribution to farmers, communities and the planet. Today we engage with over 5,000 companies through cultivation contracts, ensuring a fair price to farmers and guaranteeing premiums for high quality. We ensure that all our suppliers of raw materials of animal origin comply with the highest standards, in compliance with Barilla's Guidelines on Animal Welfare, developed in collaboration with Compassion in World Farming. To this end, Barilla has also publicly

committed not to test raw materials or products on animals, either directly or indirectly.

As far as eggs and egg products are concerned, Barilla believes that the confinement of hens is a harmful practice for the wellbeing of animals and has therefore decided to abandon this farming method throughout the supply chain. This journey started in Europe in 2012 and was fully completed at global level in 2019, one year ahead of our initial 2020 target."

Barilla has continually worked to improve animal welfare standards across its business and has received four Good Farm Animal Welfare Awards from Compassion over the years. In 2018, Barilla was also confirmed as the highest ranking Italian company in the global Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW).

**Elisa Bianco, Food Business Manager in Italy, said:** "We are delighted to be working with such a global leader who over the years has proven to be a great advocate for farm animal welfare. We congratulate Barilla for achieving this first important milestone and look forward to collaborate with them further on their animal welfare journey."



# COMPASSION'S FOOD BUSINESS TEAM

The companies that Compassion works with are key drivers towards achieving a more ethical and sustainable food system. With the food industry facing increasing demands to provide greater transparency, we offer guidance around performance reporting to help inspire and communicate meaningful progress. Compassion's Food Business Team are also able to provide technical support to companies as they pursue their cage-free egg commitments and wider animal welfare goals.

## RESOURCES

A selection of our resources relevant to companies transitioning to cage-free egg production:

### CAGE-FREE SYSTEMS – LAYING HENS:

A one-page summary highlighting the key points for ensuring cage-free systems are 'fit for purpose' and 'fit for future'

[Click here](#)

### HIGHER WELFARE SYSTEMS FOR LAYING HENS – PRACTICAL OPTIONS:

A comprehensive guide to cage-free systems

[Click here](#)

### LAYING HENS STANDARDS MATRIX:

A table showing how different assurance schemes compare to Compassion's criteria for higher welfare

[Click here](#)

### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR MULTI-TIER SYSTEMS:

Part of our 'Fit for Purpose, Fit for Future' series of resources

[Click here](#)





## KIPSTER CASE STUDY

Video case study about the Kipster higher welfare barn system

[Click here](#)

## SELEGGT IN-OVO SEXING

Video case study about Seleggt's in-ovo sexing technology to avoid the culling of male chicks. Winner of our Best Innovation Award 2018

[Click here](#)



## COMPASSION'S OPINION ON COMBINATION ('COMBI') HOUSING FOR LAYING HENS:

A summary of why combination systems are not a suitable option for cage-free housing

[Click here](#)



## FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT OUR GOOD EGG AWARDS

[Click here](#)







## Egg Track

### 2019 European Report



Photo © Martin Usbourne

#### Compassion in World Farming

Compassion is recognised as the leading international farm animal welfare charity. It was founded in 1967 by Peter Roberts, a British dairy farmer who became concerned about the development of intensive factory farming.

For more information visit [ciwf.org](http://ciwf.org)

#### Food Business Programme

Compassion in World Farming's Food Business team works in partnership with leading manufacturers, food service companies and supermarket retailers that have the ability to positively impact large numbers of animals in their supply chains.

We believe in collaboration and a solutions-led approach, developing relationships that are based on trust, mutual benefit and reward for progress.

For more information visit [www.compassioninfoodbusiness.com](http://www.compassioninfoodbusiness.com)

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