



Animal Welfare Policy

Holland
& Barrett

1. Introduction & Purpose of the Policy

Holland and Barrett is Europe's largest and most trusted health and wellness retailer. With a global presence of more than 1,600 stores, across 19 countries, ensuring the sustainability of our supply chain is a top priority. This involves transparency on our approach to sourcing raw materials within our supply chain. At Holland and Barrett, we work hard to ensure materials are sourced ethically and maintain high standards of animal welfare.

Animal welfare is not just the right, humane thing to do, it also makes good business sense. Animal welfare is an important issue for consumers, but also, ensuring that animals are well treated and looked after will lead to improved product quality and can lead to improved environmental and social outcomes.

We are working to continually improve our standards and measures for reporting of animal health and welfare in our supply chain by increasing internal training, as well as supplier education and training, whilst also increasing the number of site visits each year. Holland and Barrett are working towards setting targets for their suppliers to show progress on animal welfare, and once these are set, we commit to publicly reporting against these.

Version	Date	Owner	Approver	Summary of changes	Next Review date
Version V1 2026	6.01.2026	Responsible Sourcing – S&I	Head of Responsible Sourcing	Contact	6.01.2028

2. Application of the Policy

This policy outlines Holland and Barrett's approach to animal welfare across their supply chain. Holland and Barrett seek to go beyond best practice. For example, only using responsibly sourced raw materials, including those derived solely or in part from animals.

Information outlined in this policy will form Holland and Barrett's commitment to upholding the highest standards of animal welfare for all animal derived products. The scope of the policy will cover all of Holland and Barrett's products, from Vitamins. Minerals, health supplements, food to beauty, and applies to all Suppliers.

To ensure Holland and Barrett achieves its commitment in going beyond best practice for improving animal welfare standards in its supply chain, raw materials will only be sourced from farms with good animal welfare standards and practices in place and will ensure thorough due diligence is carried out when sourcing products for Holland and Barrett's product line.

We want our customers to make informed choices about the products they buy from our stores and have the confidence and trust that Holland and Barrett promote and practice the highest animal welfare standards.

3. Policy Principles

3.1 Animal welfare

As part of Holland and Barrett's policy principles for sourcing any animal product, Holland and Barrett are working in accordance with the internationally recognised 'Five Freedoms' of animal welfare, established by the Farm Animal Welfare Council in 1979¹. This framework will act as guidance for Holland & Barrett to following when considering animal derived products. By following this framework, we are ensuring animal welfare standards cover the physical and mental health and wellbeing of animals and expect Suppliers to abide by the requirements of the five domains, for the sourcing of products derived from animals.

The five domains for assessing animal welfare are²:

1. Nutrition: Give sufficient balanced, varies and clean food and water.
2. Environment: Comfort through temperature, substrate, space, air, odour, noise, and predictability.
3. Health: Enabling good health through the absence of disease, injury, impairment with good fitness level.
4. Behaviour: Providing varied, novel, and engaging enrichment through sensory inputs, exploration, foraging, bonding, playing, retreating and others.
5. Mental state: The animal should benefit from predominantly positive state e.g., pleasure or comfort, while reducing negative states of fear, frustration, hunger, pain, or boredom.

Gelatine and collagen peptides products are derived from animals which forms part of Bovine Collagen. Gelatine is a common ingredient in the beauty and cosmetic industry, used in products such as shampoos, face masks and in the food industry as a thickener. Although producers of gelatine products do not deal directly with the live animal as the product is derived from the by-products of the meat and farmed fish processing industries, we will work with Suppliers to understand the influence they have in those supply chains with the aim of ensuring decent animal welfare.

¹ Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) and Five Freedoms: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/farm-animal-welfare-committee-fawc>

² Five Domains: <https://www.wcl.org.uk/duplicate-of-moving-to-the-five-domains-model-for-assessing-animal-welfare.asp>

3.2 Prohibited Sources

The source of the following materials does not align with our policy principles surrounding animal welfare and are therefore not to be used in any of Holland & Barrett's food and non-food products:

- **Coconuts sourced via monkey labour:** Holland & Barrett are committed to the prevention of cruelty in their supply chain and as such, the use of monkey labour to harvest raw materials such as coconuts is banned. Holland & Barrett sell a wide variety of coconut and coconut-containing food and non-food products. Previous reports³ have highlighted that monkey labour is still occurring in the coconut harvesting industry in Thailand. Consumers can be assured that Holland & Barrett do not and will not condone this practice within their supply chain, and Holland & Barrett expect Suppliers to ensure there is no monkey labour in their supply chains. Due diligence should be undertaken to ensure Holland & Barrett's coconut supply chains remain free of this form of animal cruelty.
- **Endangered species:** Any material obtained either entirely or partially from an endangered species as listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened species⁴ or any animal species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)⁵.
- **Unsustainable palm oil:** We are moving away from the use of unsustainable palm oil as it is driving the deforestation of habitats, causing species such as the Orangutan to become endangered. The Orangutan is included on the IUCN red list for endangered species. We plan to only stock products that contain RSPO certified palm oil⁶ and expect suppliers to work towards RSPO certification, as set out in our Deforestation Policy, that details our aim to have 100% of products containing palm oil, soy, cocoa, coffee and timber certified as sustainable by 2030.
- **Any animal derived bone or horn:** Traditionally, leopard and tiger bone are used to produce a liquid health tonic and other traditional medicines in Asian countries. This practice continues to occur in China. Holland & Barrett do not endorse this practice.
- **Shark fins:** Products containing shark fins are prohibited within Holland & Barrett products. This is due to the negative impact that shark finning has had on shark species globally and the practices involved, including some that are not already prohibited by the previously mentioned CITES ban. The pending UK Shark Fins Bill⁷ would prohibit the import and export of shark fins in the UK, however, Holland & Barrett prohibits the presence of shark fins in our products ahead of this Bill being passed, due to the cruel practices involved with shark finning⁸.

3.3 Animal testing

³ PETA: Coconut Industry Sector: <https://investigations.peta.org/thai-coconut-milk-cruelty>

⁴ IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

⁵ CITES: <https://cites.org/eng>

⁶ Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) <https://rspo.org/>

⁷ UK Shark Fins Bill: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3207>

⁸ Shark Finning: <https://ocean.si.edu/ocean-life/sharks-rays/shark-finning-sharks-turned-prey>

Holland and Barrett has a long-standing policy against animal testing for its own-label beauty and cosmetic products. We source all our beauty ranges from ethical sources and offer many brands that are certified by Leaping Bunny⁹. We also offer a variety of vegan products, which are defined as not being of animal origin or from animal-derived materials and ingredients, as defined by PETA¹⁰.

There are different standards of animal welfare practiced around the world, which can make measuring and setting standards challenging. In the EU, some of the highest standards of animal welfare are enforced as governed by the European Food Safety Authority. The EU also abides by the World Organisation for Animal Health which is a global initiative aimed at improving and ensuring continued high standards of animal welfare across supply chains. The EU also initiated a ban on all animal tested products, which means that imports to and exports from Europe must be compliant with such regulations.

As Europe's largest health and wellness trader, Holland & Barrett are compliant with these regulations and expects its Suppliers to comply with the appropriate local legislation.

In 2021, Holland & Barrett expanded its global presence by launching products on Chinese e-commerce site, Tmall. In May 2021, imported cosmetic goods to China became exempt from mandatory animal testing in China. This opened the Chinese market to European animal testing free retailers. This means that Holland & Barrett can assure customers their product lines sold in China have achieved the same standards of animal welfare as those sold in the EU.

3.4 Fish and aquatic organisms

Holland & Barrett stock a wide range of fish oil derived products including omega 3 fish oil, cod liver oil and krill oil.

We recognise the marine eco-system is fragile, and both wild fishing and fish farming have a major impact on the health of the marine environment. Therefore, we have developed product specific policies to ensure our marine products are sourced using methods that are the least damaging to the environment and promote social and economic benefits for communities.

We are working to ensure that all wild caught seafood is Friend of the Sea certified¹¹ (FOS) as best practice, Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)¹² certified or Marine Trust certified. For farmed seafood, sources should be certified by at least one of the following external seafood farm assurance schemes including Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)¹³, Global Aquaculture Alliance Best Aquaculture Practice (GAA BAP 4*), Global GAP, Friends of the Sea Aquaculture or the MSC. To promote social and economic benefits for marine

⁹ Leaping Bunny: <https://www.leapingbunny.org/>

¹⁰ PETA definition on vegan cosmetics and animal testing: <https://www.peta.org.uk/features/animal-testing-cosmetics/>

¹¹ Friend of the Sea: <https://friendofthesea.org/friend-of-the-sea/>

¹² Marine Stewardship Council (MSC): <https://www.msc.org/>

¹³ Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC): <https://www.asc-aqua.org/>

communities, Holland & Barrett support a wide range of fishery improvement projects (FIPs) and aquaculture improvement projects (AIPs).

At Holland & Barrett, we are also proud to have banned the sale of chemical sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate, which are damaging to coral reefs and marine life such as mussels, fish, and dolphins as they can absorb the chemicals.

We have since released our own sunscreens that reduce impacts to marine ecosystems, using active mineral ingredients to protect the skin from UVA and UVB rays rather than the chemical versions. We will continue to work with our Suppliers to ensure that all sunscreens meet the needs of marine habitats, through research into chemical impacts from such products.

3.5 Dairy Products

We stock an extensive range of whey protein powders as part of our sports nutrition product line. To ensure our whey protein powders have been sourced with high standards of animal welfare in practice, we are aiming to have 100% of our products certified sustainable by 2030 through certification schemes including RSPCA Assured¹⁴, Red Tractor¹⁵, Truly Grass Fed¹⁶ or A Greener World¹⁷, which are seals specifying that the dairy ingredients contained in the product meet the highest industry standards of quality, safety, animal welfare and environmental consciousness.

3.6 Bees and Honey Products

Honey, and particularly manuka honey is a key product sold by Holland & Barrett. This makes it an important product to consider the animal welfare impacts of bee colonies and hives. Holland & Barrett requires that honey producers should take appropriate steps to ensure bees have sufficient welfare standards, including ensuring pests and viruses are controlled through prevention mechanisms, ensuring hives are not over-saturated¹⁸, and bees are able to exhibit normal behaviours, thus reducing the likelihood of Colony Collapse Disorder¹⁹.

Holland & Barrett is working towards ensuring best practices for bee health which includes pollinator policy which ensures bee welfare is carried out in its honey supply chains, including through following the Apiculture New Zealand Honeybee Care Code²⁰.

For any questions relating to Animal welfare please contact our Responsible Sourcing Team at : responsiblesourcinguk@hollandandbarrett.com

¹⁴ RSPCA Assured Certification: <https://www.rspcaassured.org.uk/>

¹⁵ Red Tractor Certification: <https://redtractor.org.uk/>

¹⁶ Truly Grass Fed Certification: <https://www.trulygrassfed.com/frequently-asked-questions/>

¹⁷ A Greener World Certification: <https://agnroots.com/blogs/certified-grass-fed-whey/a-greener-world-certified-animal-welfare-approved>

¹⁸ New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority: <https://www.epa.govt.nz/everyday-environment/animals-and-insects/bees/>

¹⁹ New Zealand Environmental Protection Authority, Bee health: <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/bee-health>

²⁰ Apiculture New Zealand Honeybee Care Code™: <https://apinz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/NZ-Honeybee-care-code-pdf-.pdf>