



2023 CANADA ANIMAL WELFARE SCORECARD

Ranking Major Food Companies on
Their Animal Welfare Performance

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Executive Summary

Since 2021, the Canada Animal Welfare Scorecard has evaluated the animal welfare commitments, transparency, and progress of some of the most influential food companies in Canada.

As the only benchmarking tool of its kind in Canada, this report tracks companies' performance on making and fulfilling public pledges to improve animal welfare in their supply chains. The scorecard is based on publicly available information and features a sector-by-sector analysis of prominent food companies operating in Canada.

In this third edition, Mercy For Animals finds that Canadian food companies and Canada's animal agriculture industries continue to fall behind those of peer countries regarding progress on ending some of the most egregious animal production methods. While notable exceptions exist, the overall trend is alarming. With self-imposed deadlines drawing near and a widespread lack of transparency and progress, many companies operating in Canada are undermining animal welfare as an environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issue despite publicly claiming to take these concerns seriously.

In the mid-2010s, many major food companies in Canada committed to ending the use of eggs from caged hens and pork from crated sows and to improving the welfare of chickens raised for meat. After a series of animal cruelty investigations that received national media coverage, some of the largest buyers of meat, dairy, and eggs in Canada—such as grocery retailers, manufacturers, foodservice providers, and restaurants—announced these public pledges, sending a clear signal to industry that the time had come to adapt to consumer expectations for how animals should be treated.

Nearly a full decade later, however, only a handful of companies have completely fulfilled their commitments, in large part due to industry failure to modernize production practices. For example, 83% of hens in Canada's egg farms still spend nearly their entire lives in cages, compared with 25% in the United Kingdom, 40% in the European Union, and 66% in the United States. The egg industry has no public plan to end the confinement

of laying hens in cages; in fact, it is simply replacing conventional cages with slightly larger ones rather than going cage-free.

In 2019, the Canadian Pork Council estimated that 50% of the industry would have moved away from using gestation crates by the end of 2022, but it has not publicly reported progress since making that projection. The pork industry has also delayed its original 10-year housing transition deadline of 2024, which will result in five more years of intensive confinement for hundreds of thousands of mother pigs.

The broiler chicken industry has made progress on reducing stocking densities and phasing out live-shackle slaughter. But not a single major grocery retailer in Canada has yet adopted the Better Chicken Commitment (BCC)—the leading global set of standards driving the food industry toward higher-welfare practices—even though dozens of retailers worldwide have.

The deadlines put in place in Canada by companies—and entire industries themselves—were generous and feasible. While some companies are demonstrating meaningful progress, by and large Canadian industries have seemingly not responded to the responsible-sourcing commitments of their biggest buyers, food companies that are now at risk of breaking promises to their customers.

This inaction defies public sentiment. For example, in consumer research conducted by Faunalytics in 2022, more than eight in 10 Canadians surveyed agreed that laying hens should be able to roam freely, while in a 2023 Bryant Research study, the same percentage agreed that companies should be transparent about the progress they are making toward fulfilling their cage-free commitments.

At a time of increasing industry consolidation and record profits, immediate action from food companies is needed to address the lack of both transparency and urgency regarding these critical responsible-sourcing issues and promises to the public.

Consumer Research

Canadians Distrust Corporate Responsibility Claims and Want Cage Confinement Banned

Studies consistently show that **Canadians want farmed animals to have higher-welfare conditions**—and they want companies to share meaningful information about how animals are currently treated.



More than half of Canadians surveyed **don't believe most green or sustainability claims** brands make.

More than nine out of 10 Ontarians surveyed think that oversight and **transparency concerning the conditions for animals** at farms are important.



More than eight out of 10 Canadians surveyed say they would be **more likely to purchase from companies that are transparent** about their progress toward meeting their cage-free commitments.



More than eight out of 10 Canadians surveyed say that laying hens should be able to roam freely.

More than half of Canadians surveyed want brands to **make their products sustainable by default** or have clearer sustainability information.



More than seven out of 10 Canadians surveyed support a ban on cage confinement, while even more were disappointed to learn that **Canada confines more hens in cages than the United States**.



Global Comparison

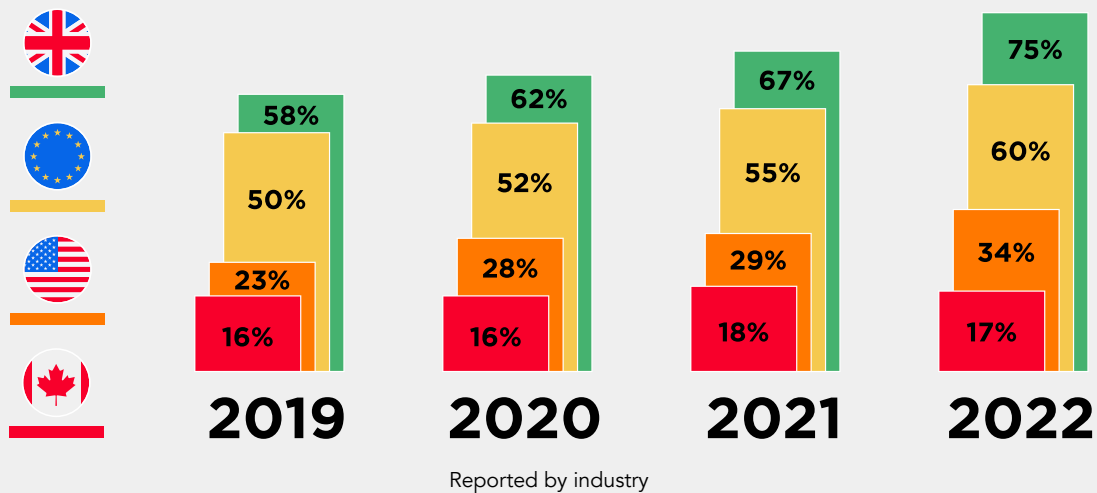
Canada Falls Behind in the Global Shift to End the Cage Age

Despite a global move away from cages and consumer opposition to cage confinement, **Canada is falling behind** in ending some of the worst suffering for hens.

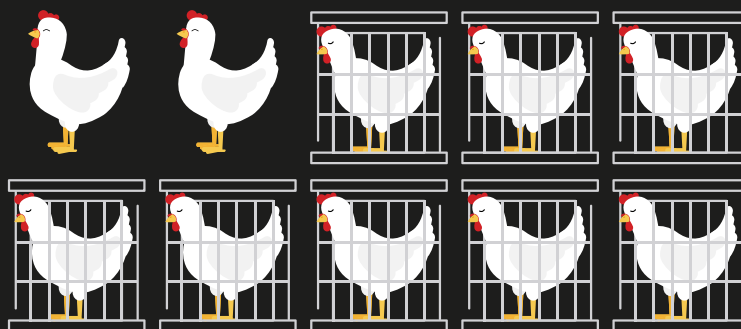
In 2017, the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) released the *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens* at a time when nearly 100 major food companies in the country had already promised to ban cage confinement from their supply chains. Animal welfare advocates expected to see the

Canadian egg industry emerge as a global leader in creating a cage-free future. More than five years later, however, Canada is making almost no progress on eliminating cages and has fallen far behind the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union regarding cage-free egg production.

Percentage of cage-free egg production in the United Kingdom, European Union, United States, and Canada



8/10 hens in Canada are still in cages



Industry Evaluation

Industry Holds Back Animal Welfare Progress

Industrial animal agriculture in Canada is largely self-regulated; no federal laws exist to protect animals in farms, and binding provincial farmed animal care standards are few. Most industries rely on voluntary standards laid out in codes of practice developed by NFAACC—a body largely made up of industry stakeholders.



In response to changing expectations regarding farmed animal welfare, the Canadian egg, pork, and chicken industries are not consistently demonstrating progress or transparency on the animal welfare issues identified as most pressing by animal welfare scientists and NGOs around the globe. Despite the clear animal welfare policies most major food companies adopted several

years ago, no public information exists on how industries plan to meet the demands on corporations for cage-free eggs, crate-free pork, or chicken that adheres to BCC standards. This gap in leadership and transparency is an obstacle for the companies that are making good-faith efforts to fulfill their animal welfare commitments.



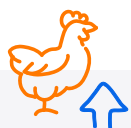
2019

The last time the Canadian Pork Council released an annual report, the same year that the industry deadline to ban gestation crates was delayed five years



0 Reporting

on percentage of the chicken industry that meets BCC standards in the latest Chicken Farmers of Canada annual report



1% increase

in hens raised cage-free in Canada since 2019



0 Publicly available roadmaps

for how industries will meet corporate commitments to source 100% cage-free eggs, crate-free pork, or BCC-aligned chicken

Company Rankings

What was evaluated?

- ✓ Commitments: animal welfare policies
- ✓ Transparency: public progress reporting
- ✓ Progress: roadmaps for implementation

Which animal welfare issues are most critical?

- ✓ Laying hens confined in cages
- ✓ Mother pigs confined in crates
- ✓ Environment, breed, and slaughter method of chickens raised for meat

Gold Tier



Silver Tier



Bronze Tier



Fourth Tier



Fifth Tier



Lowest Tier



*This information is current as of September 30, 2023.
See appendix 1 for links to company animal welfare policies, progress reporting, and roadmaps.*



Company Evaluation



Company Selection

The companies evaluated in this report were selected by size in terms of number of locations and annual sales, brand recognition, and sector. This selection process is designed to provide an accurate representation of the performance of prominent food companies in a variety of sectors in Canada on the three critical animal welfare issues outlined above.

Ranked companies include restaurants, retailers, foodservice providers, and manufacturers.



Evaluation Criteria

We collected public information to analyze the quality and scope of the animal welfare policies, progress reporting, and roadmaps of companies selected for this report.



COMMITMENTS

Sample Policy: [Company] is committed to sourcing 100% cage-free eggs (shell and liquid) in Canada by 2025.



TRANSPARENCY

Sample Progress Reporting:
In 2021, X% of the eggs we purchased in Canada (shell and liquid) were from cage-free sources.






PROGRESS

Sample Roadmap: By the end of 2023, 50% of the eggs we purchase will be cage-free, 75% by the end of 2024, and 100% by the end of 2025.

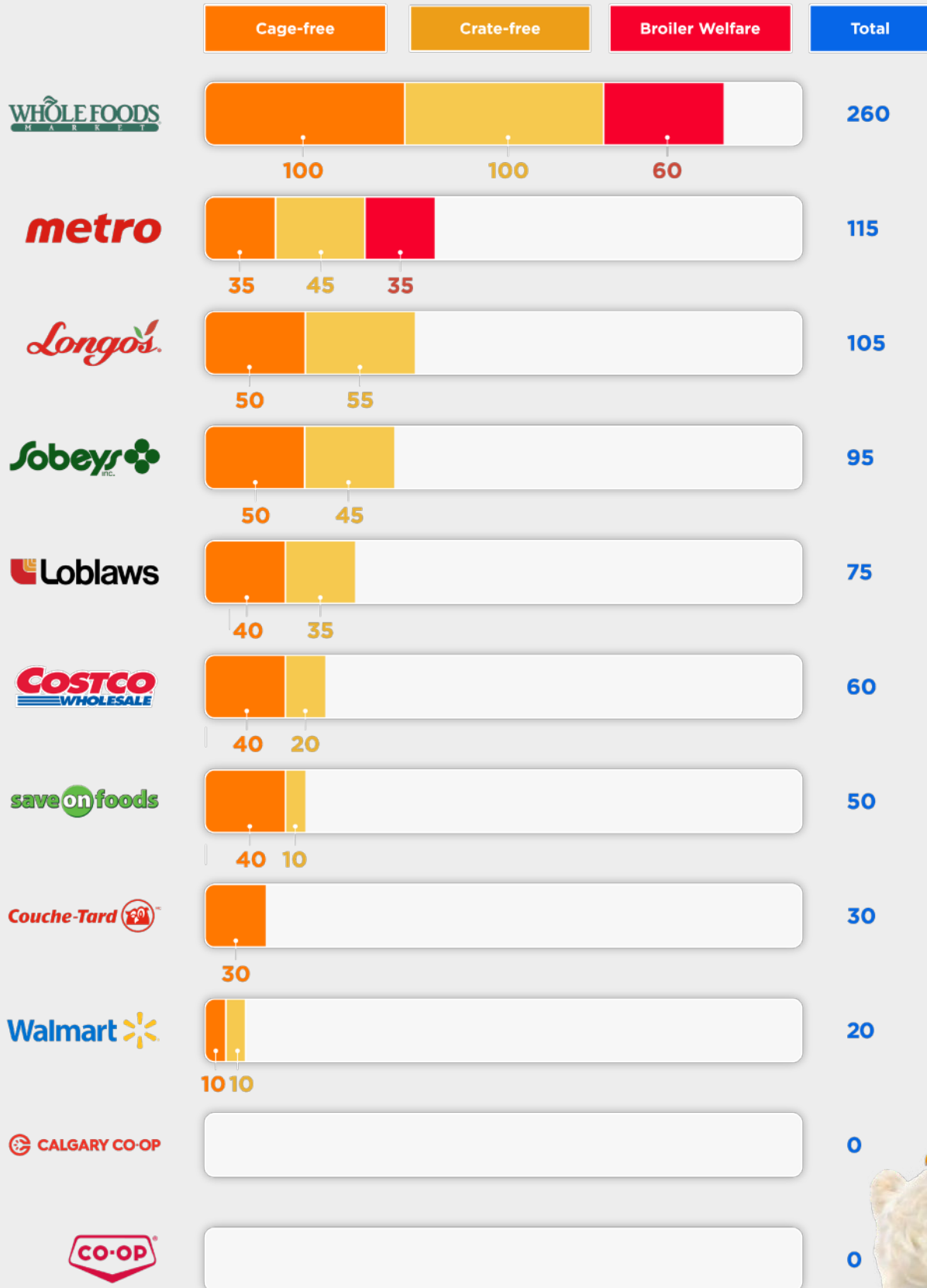
The following tables list performance scores for companies in various sectors. See appendix 2 for full scoring methodology.

Transparency among retailers

 Reporting progress for total supply chain
  Reporting progress for private-label brand only
  No transparency

	Cage-Free Eggs	Crate-Free Pork	Broiler Chicken Welfare
			
			
			
			
			
			
			
			
			
			
			

Scores for grocery retailers

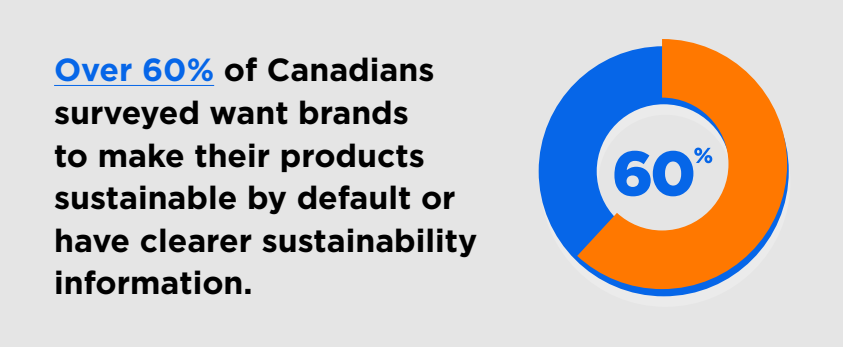
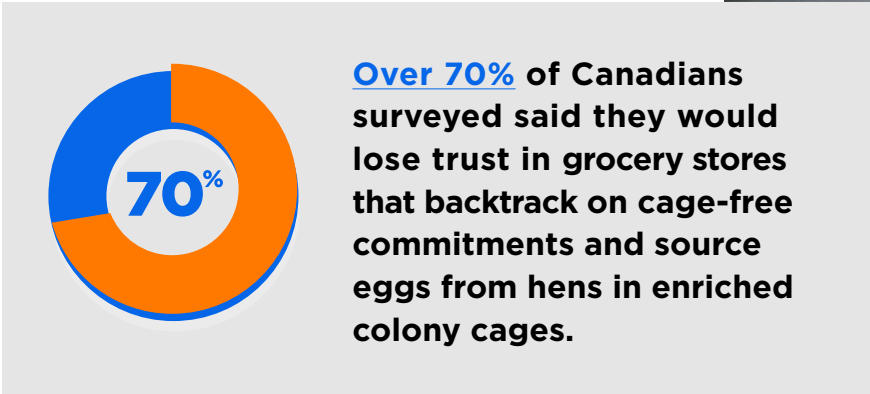




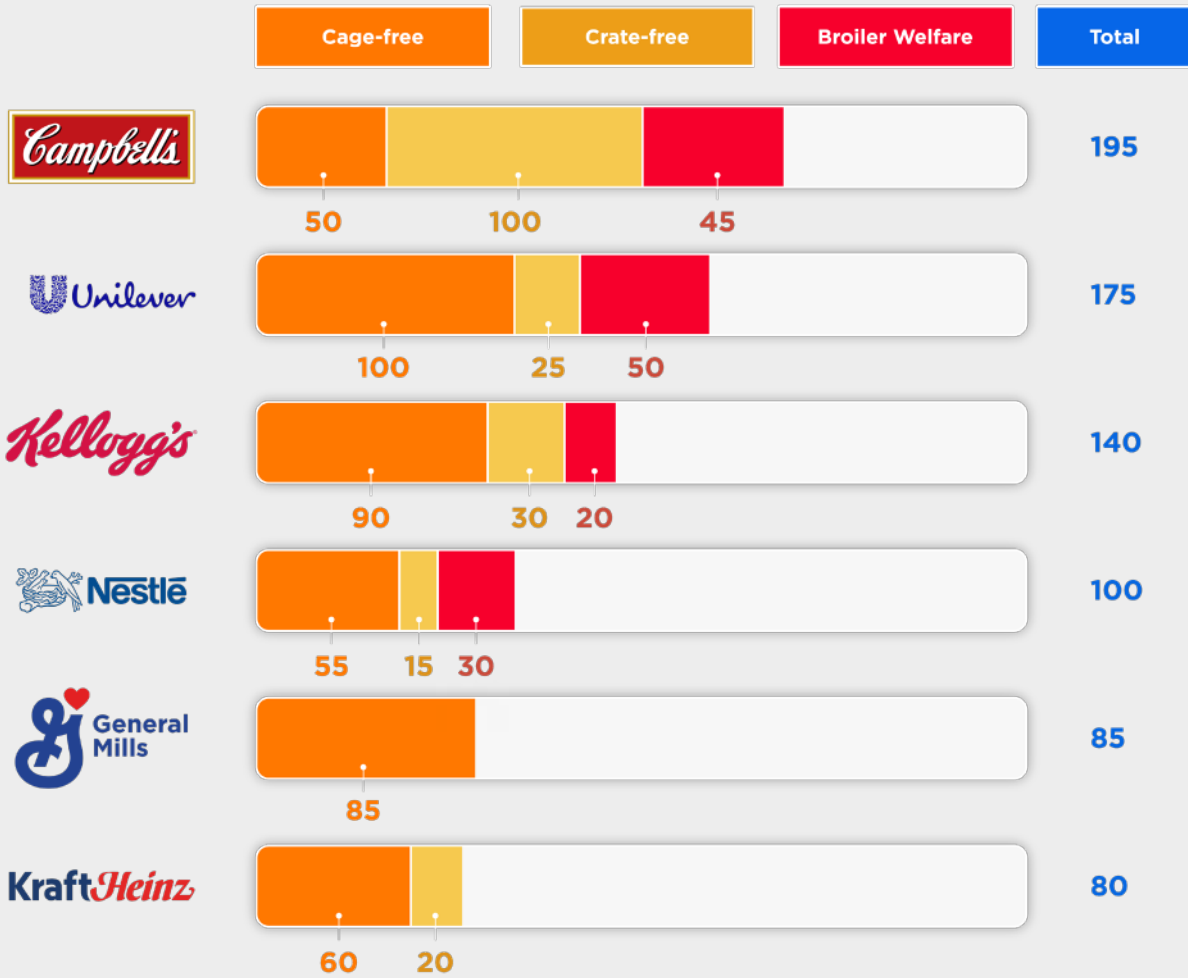
Major grocery retailers **voluntarily committed to total bans on extreme confinement** for mother pigs and laying hens in 2013 and 2016. Despite record profits in recent years, these companies have not adequately invested in these longstanding responsible-sourcing commitments.

The top five grocery retailers—responsible for more than three-quarters of food sales in Canada—have now missed crate-free transition deadlines and failed to update cage-free timelines after many announced two years ago that

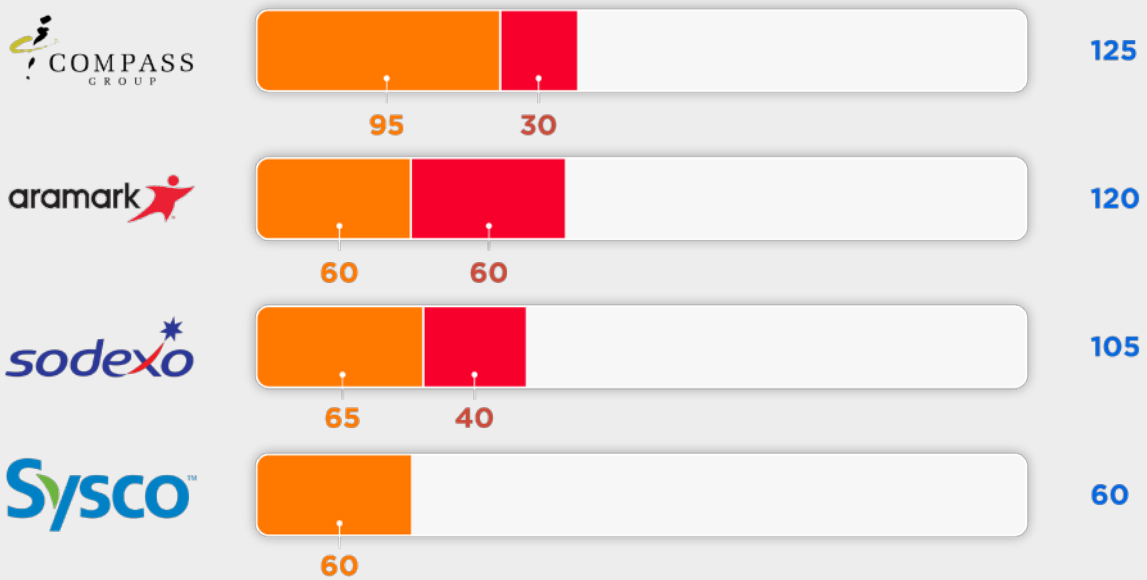
original deadlines would not be met. This has resulted in a lack of transparency on animal welfare progress and, when reported, minimal year-over-year progress in the absence of clear implementation plans.



Scores for manufacturers

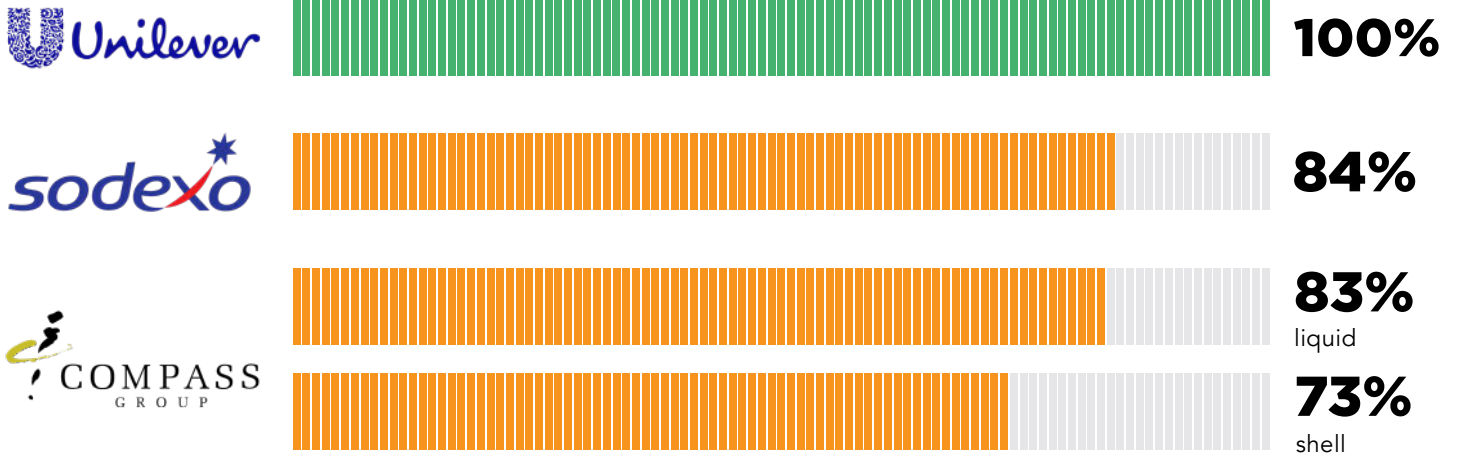


Scores for foodservice providers





Cage-Free Policies Fulfilled or Nearing Fulfillment

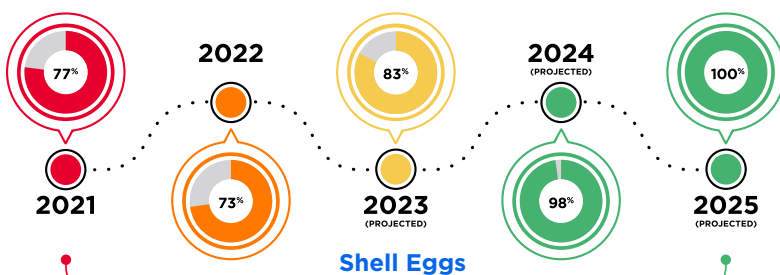


While many global companies have made significant progress toward fulfilling cage-free egg commitments, **many are lagging on progress in Canada**. Instead of investing in cage-free infrastructure to help ensure major companies can fulfill public cage-free commitments, most Canadian egg producers over the past six years

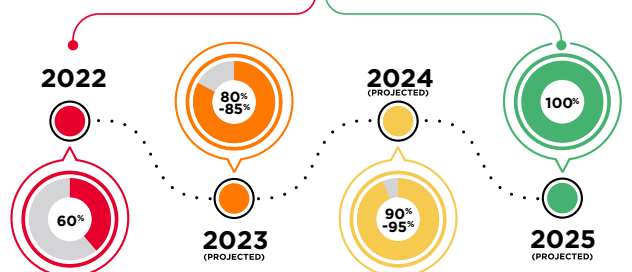
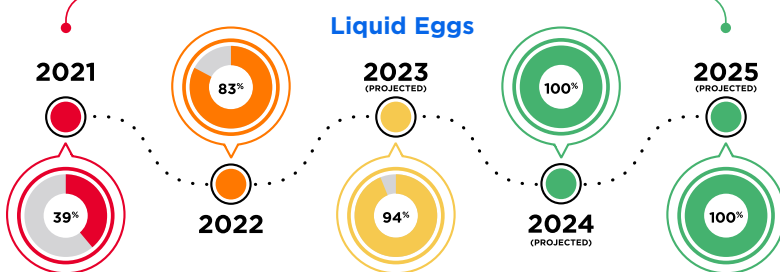
have focused on transitioning from conventional cages to “enriched colony” cages. With the majority of corporate cage-free policy deadlines rapidly approaching in 2025, companies must demonstrate their purchasing commitments to suppliers by publishing time-bound roadmaps for **transitioning to 100% cage-free eggs**.



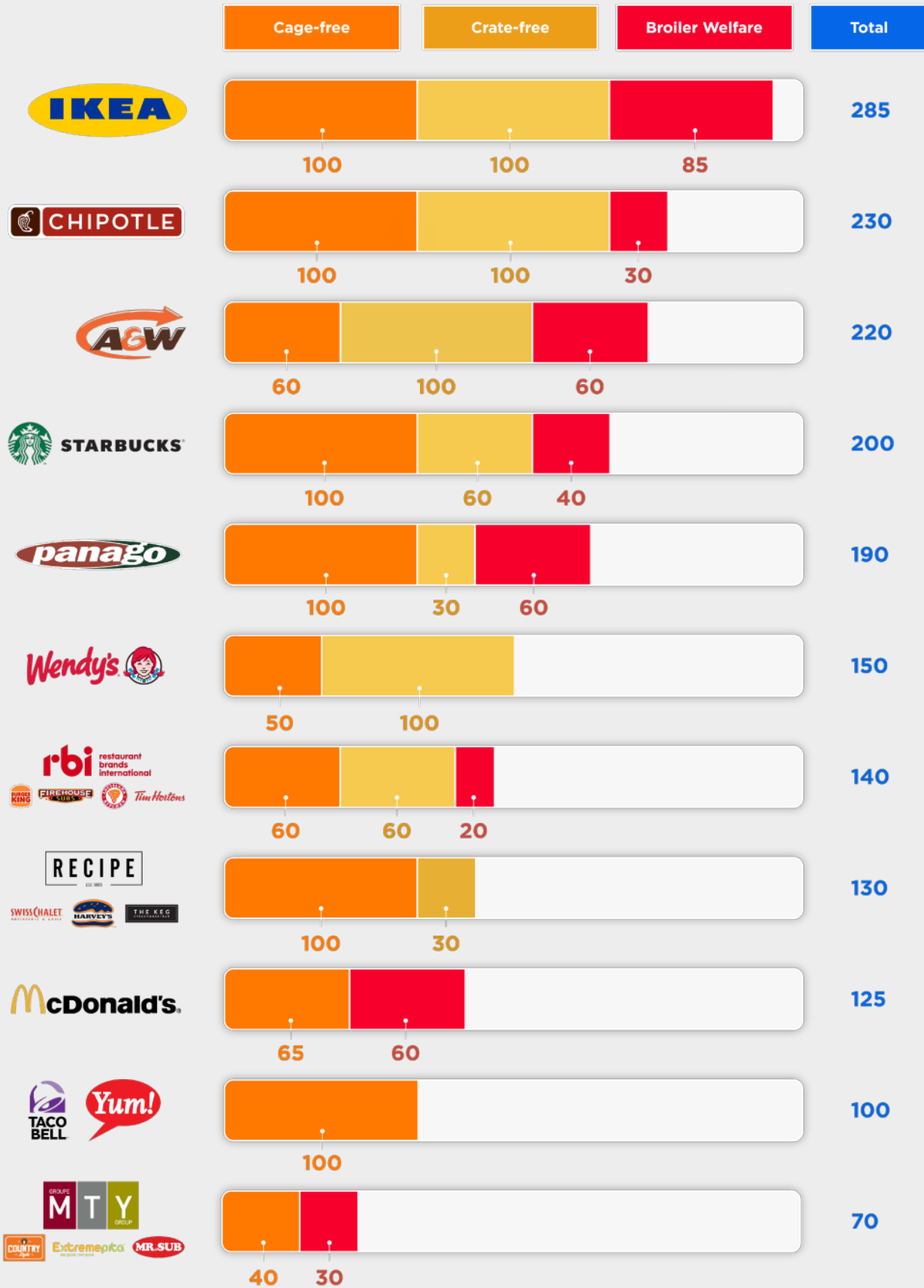
Demonstrated Leadership by Publishing Cage-Free Roadmaps



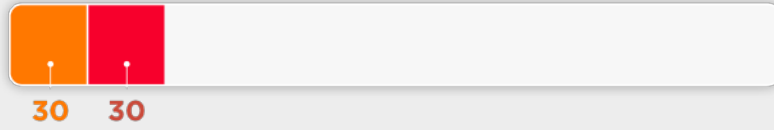
Kellogg's
 “We expect to transition about 40% of our global egg portfolio by the end of 2023 and about 65% by the end of 2024, through both egg elimination and increased cage-free egg sourcing.”



Scores for restaurants

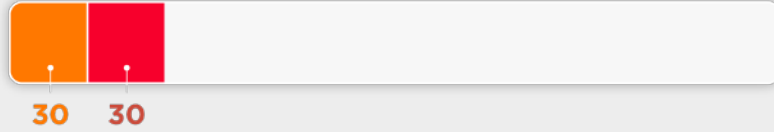


Boston Pizza



60

CHAIRMAN'S BRANDS
 coffee 24/7 eggsmart



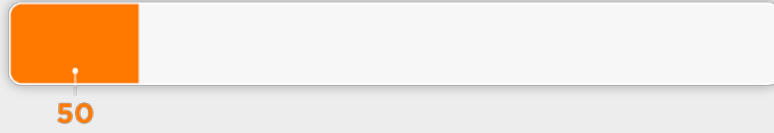
60

KFC **Pizza Hut** **Yum!**



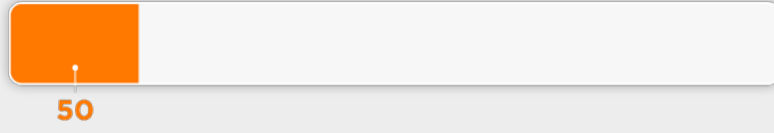
55

DQ



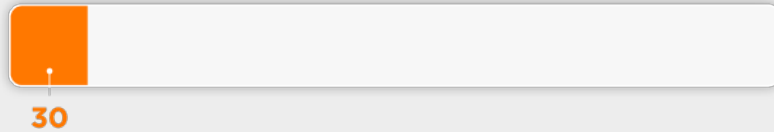
50

SUBWAY



50

PIZZA PIZZA



30

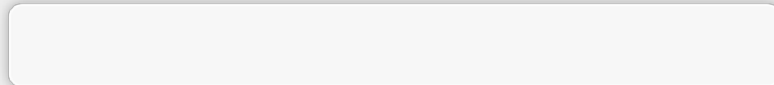
Domino's Pizza



0

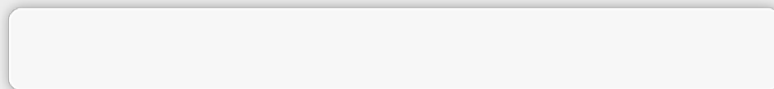
FOODTASTIC

Pita Pit milestones **SECOND CLIP COFFEE CO.**



0

Mary BROWNS CHICKEN

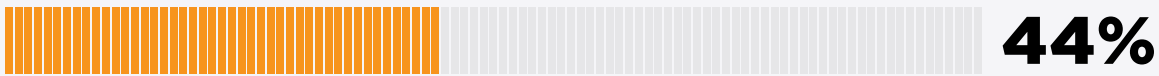


0





Leaders in Eliminating Crates for Mother Pigs



Adopted the BCC



STARBUCKS



NO TRANSPARENCY



NO TRANSPARENCY



NO TRANSPARENCY



Dozens of other companies have also adopted the BCC with 2024 or 2026 deadlines for implementation. Covering nearly 100 brands, these policies address the most critical welfare issues impacting chickens raised for meat in Canada, but most of these companies are not publicly reporting progress toward implementing them. These include Tim Hortons and MTY Group, the largest national fast-food chains, with more than 10,000 locations combined and gross sales over \$12 billion in 2022.

NO TRANSPARENCY



3,896 locations | \$8.18 billion in gross sales

NO TRANSPARENCY



6,788 locations | \$4.25 billion in gross sales

To maintain the trust of Canadian consumers and ensure that public promises result in meaningful change for animals, restaurants that have adopted the BCC must begin reporting their progress annually and establish long-term buying contracts with suppliers.

conditions to slaughter, companies are advised to report progress for each component. Initial reporting can be done with information that is already available from suppliers, with the goal of eventually reporting on all BCC components.

Because higher chicken welfare requires multiple standards that work together to reduce suffering, from breeding to farm

See appendix 3 for a BCC transparency template.

Looking Ahead

As annual reporting on ESG factors becomes increasingly expected of food businesses across Canada, animal welfare is now an established issue for responsible sourcing and sustainability. A lack of transparency, implementation plans, and follow-through can decrease consumer trust in brands that profit from marketing themselves as operating with strong business values and integrity.

To date, most producers of eggs, pork, and chicken have escaped public scrutiny for failing to meet Canadians' expectations for how animals should be treated. Producers do not typically have the brand recognition of companies that directly sell food to the public, and facilities where animals are bred, raised, and slaughtered are largely hidden from public view.

When major companies backtrack or lack transparency on fulfilling their animal welfare commitments, however, Canadians grow distrustful of corporate sustainability claims. In 2023, grocery retailers are facing mounting public pressure to justify high food costs, the treatment of workers, and sourcing practices throughout their supply chains. As consumers and investors watch closely to see whether

companies follow through on their ESG commitments, industry's role in holding back animal welfare progress in Canada may garner local and global attention.

“Investors in the food sector, or those with an eye on protein supply chains, are increasingly recognising [animal welfare] as a material investment concern. Farm animal welfare can be a source of risk (e.g. food recalls, media scandals) but can also provide potential opportunities connected with adopting higher welfare standards which can support product differentiation, foster innovation and forge entry to new markets.”

—Robert Black, Chronos Sustainability

2024 Company Recommendations

The 2024 edition of the Canada Animal Welfare Scorecard will evaluate companies on three key indicators of ESG performance in relation to animal welfare:



COMMITMENTS

Animal Welfare Policies

Is your company committed to improving animal welfare in your supply chain?



TRANSPARENCY

Public Progress Reporting

Is your company publishing annual data on animal welfare progress in your supply chain?



PROGRESS



Roadmaps for Implementation

Has your company published plans on how and when you will fulfill your animal welfare commitments?



Appendix 1:

Company Animal Welfare Policies, Progress Reporting, and Roadmaps

 Updated since the second edition (2022) of the Canada Animal Welfare Scorecard was released
 Policy fulfilled

Company	Cage-free egg policy deadline	Cage-free egg progress	Crate-free pork policy deadline	Crate-free pork progress	Better Chicken Commitment policy deadline	Better Chicken Commitment progress	Roadmaps
A&W Canada	2024	40% 	2022	Fulfilled	CAS by 2024	85% NFACC stocking density 100% enrichments 	No roadmaps
Aramark	2022 for shell, 2025 for all eggs	15% 	No policy	No reporting	Higher-welfare breeds by 2026 All other components by 2024	Commitment to beginning reporting	BCC roadmap
Boston Pizza	2025	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	2024	No reporting	No roadmaps
Calgary Co-op	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Campbell's	2025	8% 	2022	Fulfilled	Improved environment by 2024 GAP 2 standards for Pacific Foods brand by 2023	Fulfilled litter and enrichments 18% GAP 2 for Pacific Foods brand	No roadmaps
Chairman's Brands (Brands include 241 Pizza, Coffee Time, and Eggsmart.)	2025	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	2024	No reporting	No roadmaps
Chipotle	Fulfilled	100% 	Fulfilled	100% 	2024	No reporting	No roadmaps
Compass Group Canada	2025	83% liquid, 73% shell 	No policy	No reporting	2026	No reporting	Cage-free roadmap
Costco	No policy	22.7% 	No policy	2023	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Couche-Tard	2025	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Dairy Queen	2025	No updated reporting; 39% in 2021 	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Domino's Pizza	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Federated Co-operatives	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Foodtastic (Brands include Milestones, Pita Pit, and Second Cup.)	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps

General Mills	2025	60% 🌍	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	Cage-free roadmap
IKEA	2015	93% 🌍	2025	Fulfilled 🇨🇦	2025	55% 🌍	Better Chicken Programme roadmap
Kellogg's	2025	1% 🇨🇦	2025	No reporting	CAS by 2024	No reporting	Cage-free roadmap
Kraft Heinz	2025	2% 🇨🇦	No policy	25% 🌍	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Loblaws	2025 (partial, not time-bound)	17% 🇨🇦	2022 (partial, not time-bound)	PC® Free From brand 50% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Longo's (Empire Company)	2025 (partial, not time-bound)	34% 🇨🇦	2022 (partial, not time-bound)	73% (supplier average) 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Mary Brown's	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
McDonald's	2025	85% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	Third-party auditing by 2024	100% CAS 🇨🇦	No roadmaps
Metro	2026 (partial, not time-bound)	LifeSmart brand over 66% (shell) 🇨🇦	2026 (partial, not time-bound)	58% (supplier average) 🇨🇦	No policy	99.5% NFACC stocking density 62% CAS 🇨🇦	No roadmaps
MTY Group (Brands include Country Style, Extreme Pita, and Mr. Sub.)	2025	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	2025 GAP	No reporting	Commitment to cage-free roadmap (overdue)
Nestlé	2025	71.7% 🌍	No policy	No updated reporting; 56% in 2021 🌍	2024	No reporting	No roadmaps
Panago Pizza	Fulfilled	100%	2026	No reporting	GAP 2 by 2024, CAS by 2025	No updated reporting, 30% CAS in 2022 🇨🇦	No roadmaps
Pizza Pizza	2025	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Recipe Unlimited (Brands include Harvey's, The Keg, and Swiss Chalet.)	Fulfilled	100%	No policy	44% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Restaurant Brands International (Burger King, Firehouse Subs, Popeyes, Tim Hortons)	2025 (Popeyes Canada) 2026 (extension: Burger King Canada) 2027 (brand added: Firehouse Subs) 2030 (extension: Tim Hortons Canada)	3% 🇨🇦	2024	22% 🇨🇦	2024 (partial)	No reporting	No roadmaps
Save-On-Foods	2025 (partial, not time-bound)	43% 🇨🇦	2022 (partial, not time-bound)	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps

Sobeys (Empire Company)	2025 (partial)	17% 🇨🇦	2022 (partial)	62%-67% own brand lean ground pork 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Sodexo	2025	84% shell 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	Higher-welfare breeds by 2026 All other components by 2024	No reporting	Commitment to BCC roadmap
Starbucks	2020	Fulfilled (company-owned stores); 97% (other stores) 🇨🇦	2024	22% 🇨🇦	2024	No reporting	Commitment to BCC roadmap
Subway	2025	No updated reporting; 6% in 2021% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Sysco	2026	8% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Unilever	Fulfilled	100%	No policy	66% 🌐	2024	No updated reporting in Canada; 1.7% BCC stocking density and higher-welfare breeds, 8% enrichments reported globally in 2022 🌐	No roadmaps
Walmart	2025 (partial, not time-bound)		2022 (partial, not time-bound)	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Wendy's	2020 (partial, original breakfast chains)	No updated reporting; 100% for original breakfast chains in 2021 🇨🇦	2022	Fulfilled	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Whole Foods Market	Fulfilled	100% 🇨🇦	Fulfilled	100% 🇨🇦	Higher-welfare breeds and CAS by 2026 All other components by 2024	100% GAP 82% CAS 🌐	No roadmaps
Yum! Brands (KFC, Pizza Hut)	2030	90%* 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps
Yum! Brands (Taco Bell)	Fulfilled	100% 🇨🇦	No policy	No reporting	No policy	No reporting	No roadmaps

🇨🇦 Regional reporting in Canada, United States and Canada, or North America

🌐 Global reporting

*Select markets, includes Canada

Appendix 2: Scoring Methodology

POLICY /30	Full, time-bound		30
	Partial, time-bound		20
	Partial, not time-bound		10
REPORTING /40	Recency	2022–2023 update	15
		2021 or earlier reporting	5
	Scope	Regional (Canada, U.S. & Canada, or North America)	10
	Percentage Progress	90%–100%	15
		50%–89%	10
		1%–49%	5
ROADMAP* /30	Roadmap to 100% or already reporting 90%–100%		30
	Roadmap to partial fulfillment		20
	Commitment to roadmap		10

*A roadmap outlines annual-percentage-progress goals over at least two years (for example, “50% of the eggs we purchase will be cage-free by the end of 2023, 75% by the end of 2024, and 100% by the end of 2025”).



Appendix 3:

Better Chicken Commitment Transparency Template

Standards 2022	Reporting and roadmap				
	2023 projected	2024 projected	2025 projected	2026	
Stocking density < 31 kg/m2					100%
	Lighting				100%
	Litter				100%
	Enrichments				100%
Processing via controlled-atmosphere stunning					100%
Third-party auditing					100%
BCC-approved higher-welfare breeds					100%