



# THE EGG-QUITY INDEX

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Ranking Major Food Companies on the Equity  
Of Their Global Cage-Free Progress



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# Introduction

Most laying hens worldwide are confined to cramped cages, with barely any room to spread their wings. On average, hens exploited in cage systems spend **60% more time** in pain due to bone injuries and skin infections when compared to their cage-free counterparts. Additionally, cage confinement is associated with significantly higher rates of salmonella, raising serious food security concerns for consumers.

Acknowledging their responsibility to address the cruel treatment of laying hens in their supply chains, major food companies have committed to cage-free egg sourcing. These commitments require them to stop sourcing eggs from caged hens.

Many companies have progressed on their cage-free commitments. However, the equity of this progress remains unclear when commitments and progress reports fail to cover all regions comprehensively. This uneven reporting allows the egg industry to relocate animal cruelty by **exporting the use of cages** from the Global North to the Global South...

...however, consumers in the Global South **strongly reject the cruel caging of hens**.<sup>1</sup>



96.3%  
Brazil



96.7%  
Chile



72.3%  
China



71.9%  
India



73.3%  
Malaysia



77.9%  
Nigeria



93.6%  
Pakistan



77.1%  
Philippines



73.4%  
Sudan



77.7%  
Thailand

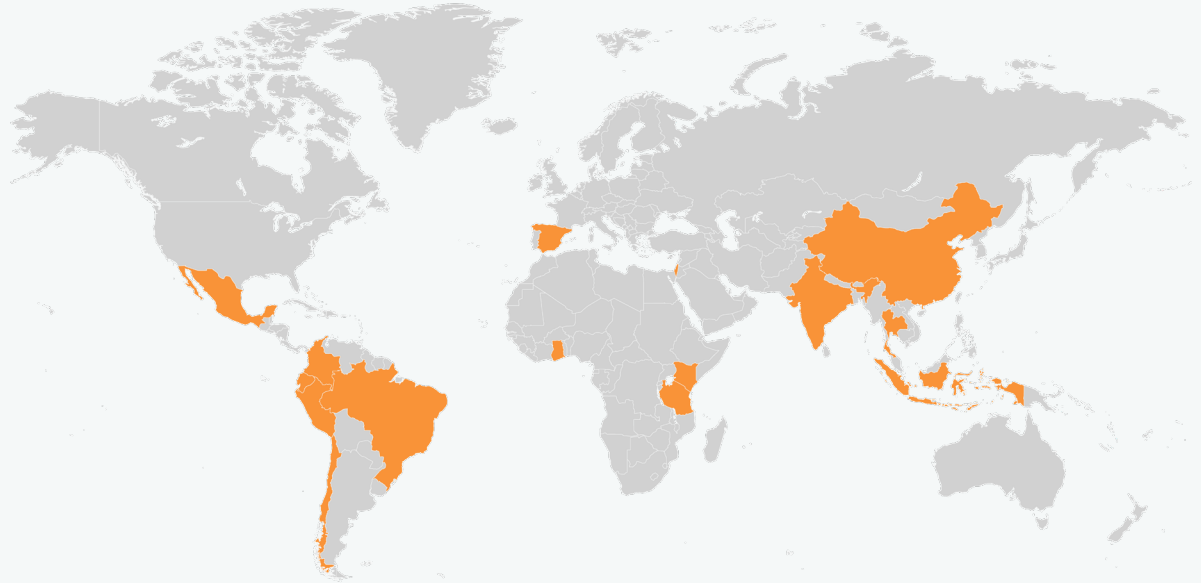
With over a thousand cage-free commitments due in 2025, companies must transition to 100% cage-free systems across all regions of operation. As this deadline approaches, it becomes critical to assess how global companies are progressing and whether their cage-free transitions are equitable and inclusive of all consumers worldwide.

**This first-of-its-kind report ranks companies based on the equity of their cage-free commitments and progress. It uses publicly available data to assess how companies fare on their cage-free transitions, reporting, and roadmapping.**

<sup>1</sup> In a [study](#) of consumer attitudes toward hen welfare around the world, most respondents in surveyed countries agreed that chickens used for eggs should not suffer.

# Partner Organizations

The Egg-quity Index is a project by Mercy For Animals in close partnership with:



# Company Ranking<sup>2</sup>

## What is Evaluated?

- Transparency and Implementation:** How do companies communicate their progress toward achieving 100% cage-free status globally by 2025? This includes evaluating their use of cage-free egg credits and Impact Incentives (see page 12 for more details).
- Roadmaps:** do companies communicate a **clear path** to being 100% cage-free in each region?

<sup>2</sup> Company categorizations reflect published commitments and progress reporting as of October 14, 2024. See appendix 1 for links to company cage-free policies, progress reporting, and roadmaps.

## Implementing Equity

These companies have adopted an inclusive approach to cage-free commitments globally, including publishing roadmaps or reporting progress for each region.



\* As the language used in Aramark's credit statement is not as committal as other companies, Aramark will receive only half the points allocated for publishing a credit statement in the scorecard.

\*\* While Newrest and Hilton have made progress by regionally reporting in all regions and developing independent roadmaps, unlike others in this tier, they have not committed to utilizing cage-free credits.

\*\*\* Krispy Kreme has been moved into the first tier due to its commitment to cage-free credits. However, it's important to note that it does not provide regional reporting, which results in a score of 60 points.

## Demonstrating Equity

These companies report progress regionally but are not as transparent as the ones listed in the first category. They also do not publish clear roadmaps.



## Lacking Equity

These companies report globally, for some regions, or not at all.



30



20



20



20



20



20



10



10



0



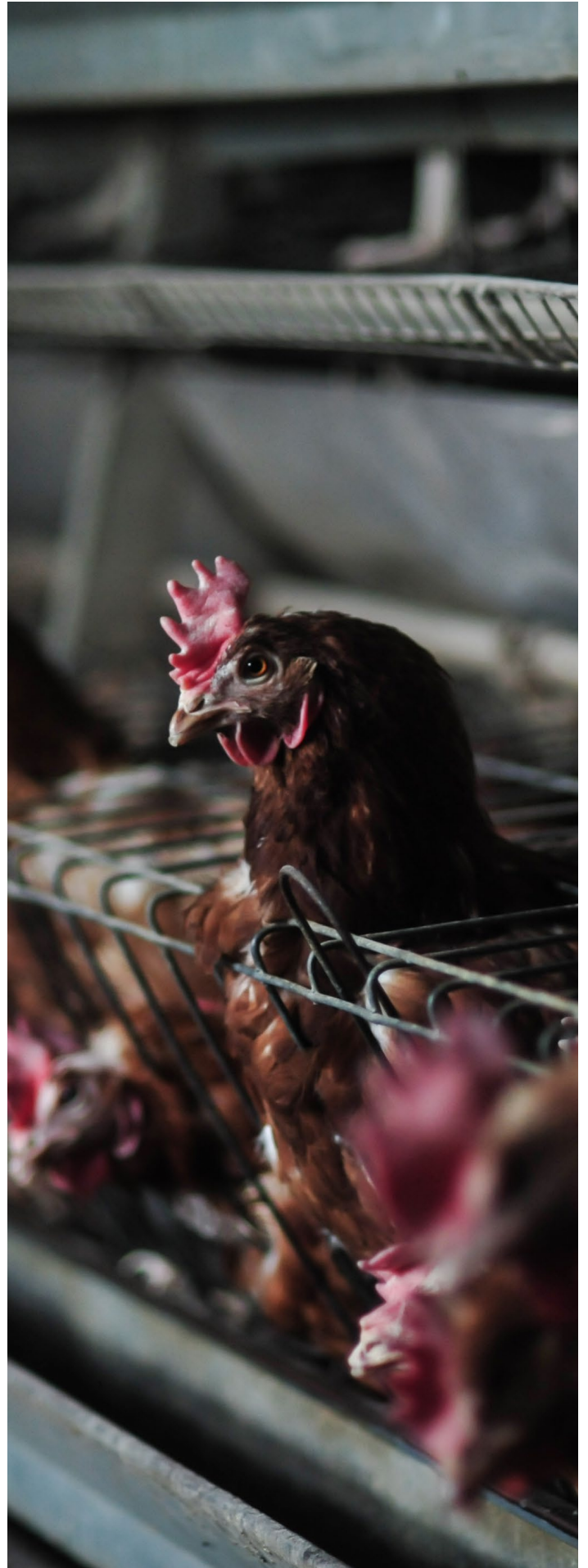
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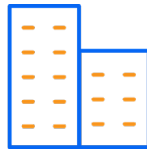
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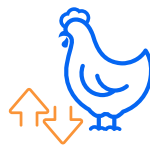
# Company Evaluation



## Company Selection

The companies featured in this report have all committed to transitioning their global egg supply chains to cage-free systems by 2025. With the deadline fast approaching, this report evaluates their progress across regions, specifically focusing on the Global South.

To fulfill their commitment within the set timelines, global companies must demonstrate and report significant progress across all regions of operation



## Evaluation Criteria

We collected publicly available information as of July 31, 2024, to analyze the cage-free transition, progress reporting, and roadmaps of companies featured in this report.



### TRANSPARENCY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Reporting cage-free progress in all regions where the company operates

#### Illustrative example of regional reporting:

"As of 2023, we procure the following percentages of eggs in our regional supply chains from cage-free hens: A% in Africa, B% in Latin America (including Mexico), C% in the US and Canada, D% in Asia Pacific (excluding China), E% in Europe (including Russia), F% in China, and G% in the Middle East."

Committing to buying cage-free egg credits whenever physical sourcing is not available to guarantee the fulfillment of the cage-free commitment by the end of 2025.

















### ROADMAPS

Communicating clear roadmaps for achieving 100% cage-free sourcing in all regions where the company operates

#### Illustrative example of roadmapping:

"By the end of 2024, in Africa / Asia Pacific / Latin America / Europe / North America / the Middle-East, 70% of the eggs we purchase will be cage-free and 100% by the end of 2025."

Company <sup>3</sup>	 <b>Transparency</b>	 <b>Roadmaps</b>	 <b>Commitment to Buying Cage-Free Egg Credits</b>	 <b>Total</b>
	Fulfilled globally	Fulfilled globally	Fulfilled globally	100
	Fulfilled globally	Fulfilled globally	Fulfilled globally	100
	Reporting in all regions independently	Partial Roadmaps		90
	Reporting in all regions independently	Roadmaps in some regions		90
	Reporting in all regions independently	Roadmaps in all regions	 *	90
	Reporting in all regions independently	Roadmaps in some regions		70










<sup>3</sup> See appendix 2 for full scoring methodology

\* As the language used in Aramark's credit statement is not as committal as other companies, Aramark will receive only half the points allocated for publishing a credit statement in the scorecard.



	Reporting in all regions independently	Roadmaps in some regions		70
	Reporting in all regions independently	No roadmaps		60
	Reporting in all regions independently	No roadmaps		60
	Reporting globally	Roadmaps in all regions		60
	Reporting in all regions independently	No roadmaps		60
	Reporting regionally	Global roadmap		50
	Reporting regionally	Roadmaps in some regions		50
	Reporting regionally	No roadmaps		40
	Reporting regionally	No roadmaps		40

	Reporting regionally	No roadmaps		40
	Reporting regionally	No roadmaps		40
	Reporting globally	Global roadmap		30
	Reporting globally	No roadmaps		20
	Reporting globally	No roadmaps		20
	Reporting globally	No roadmaps		20
	Reporting globally	No roadmaps		20
	Reporting globally	No roadmaps		20
	Reporting in some regions	No roadmaps		10

	<p>Reporting in some regions</p>	<p>No roadmaps</p>		<p>10</p>
<p>Associated British Foods plc</p>	<p>Not reporting</p>	<p>No roadmaps</p>		<p>0</p>
	<p>Not reporting</p>	<p>No roadmaps</p>		<p>0</p>
	<p>Not reporting</p>	<p>No roadmaps</p>		<p>0</p>
	<p>Not reporting</p>	<p>No roadmaps</p>		<p>0</p>



# Regional Reporting and Roadmapping

In response to the growing global demand for greater transparency and accountability, companies have started reporting their progress regionally by publishing the percentage of the total volume of eggs that are procured from cage-free hens in each region or country of operation.

Regional reporting can take the form of a paragraph on companies' website or in annual reports:

"As of X Date, we procure the following percentages of eggs in our regional supply chains from cage-free hens: a% in Africa, b% in Latin America (including Mexico), c% in the US and Canada, d% in Asia Pacific (excluding China), e% in Europe (including Russia), f% in China, and g% in the Middle East."

It can also be presented as a table:

Region	2023
Europe	a%
North America	b%
Latin America	c%
Asia	d%
Oceania	e%
Africa	f%
Middle East	g%

## Benefits of Regional Reporting:



Regional reporting provides valuable insight into the development of local cage-free egg production and helps identify high-priority regions.



Reporting progress across all regions highlights the equity of companies' commitments, particularly concerning animals and consumers in the Global South.



Demonstrating transparency through regional reporting enhances a company's trustworthiness and credibility.

Several global food companies have started reporting progress regionally:



## Roadmapping

Roadmaps, typically included in cage-free egg progress reports, outline how companies plan to increase cage-free sourcing in the coming years to meet their commitments.

By publishing roadmaps for every region of operation, global food companies demonstrate a high level of transparency and outline their strategy for achieving cage-free commitments in all regions by the end of 2025.

Examples from global food companies:

### Compass Group:

SHELL EGGS	PROGRESS			ROADMAPS		
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	End 25
North America	77%	73%	63%	95%	100%	100%
Europe & Middle East	17%	30%	41%	80%	100%	100%
UK & Ireland	44%	85%	99%	100%	100%	100%
Europe	54%	56%	74%	80%	100%	100%
Middle East & Türkiye	>5%	>5%	>5%	40%	85%	100%
Asia Pacific	9%	14%	15%	30%	75%	100%
Latin America	>5%	>5%	>5%	WIP*	WIP*	100%

\*Work In Progress

### Aramark

Country/Region	As of End of Fiscal Year 2023	Plan For End of 2024	Plan For End of 2025
U.S.	81% Cage-Free Shell 82% Cage-Free Liquid 73% Cage-Free Other	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other
Canada	80% Cage-Free Shell 6% Cage-Free Liquid 3% Cage-Free Other	100% Cage-Free Shell 75% Cage-Free Liquid 50% Cage-Free Other	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other
Europe	61% Cage-Free All Eggs	75% Cage-Free All Eggs	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other
Asia	>1 % Cage-Free All Eggs	Benchmarks in development	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other
Latin America	>1% Cage-Free All Eggs	Benchmarks in development	100% Cage-Free Shell 100% Cage-Free Liquid 100% Cage-Free Other

# Impact Incentives: A Promising Solution for the Cage-Free Transition in Asia?

Cage-free egg credits are tradable certificates that represent the production of cage-free eggs, similar to the book and claim systems used for commodities such as palm oil, soy, and cocoa. These credits allow companies to support cage-free farming even if they cannot currently source physical cage-free eggs.

When facing sourcing challenges, global food companies can purchase cage-free egg credits for the volumes they cannot source from cage-free farms. This interim approach helps develop cage-free production while eventually resulting in the purchase of physical cage-free eggs.

**Impact Incentives**, a form of cage-free egg credits, are currently available in China, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Japan, India, Singapore, and Korea. This system enables companies to develop local supply chains, accelerate their transition toward being 100% cage-free in Asia, and take immediate action to reduce the suffering of laying hens.

## Benefits of Cage-Free Egg Credits



**Make immediate progress via certified farms.** Cage-free egg credits allow companies to accelerate the transition of their egg supply chain in Asia. Global Food Partners certifies the producers' adherence to specific animal welfare standards.



**Take concrete steps toward physical sourcing.** Cage-free credits offer an interim solution for companies facing challenges in sourcing physical cage-free eggs. By purchasing cage-free egg credits, companies actively invest in the production of physical cage-free eggs, which demonstrates their determination to switch to physical cage-free sourcing as soon as possible.



**Reduce logistical costs.** While companies pay a premium for the production of cage-free eggs, logistical costs associated with transportation are reduced.



**Adhere to initial cage-free transition timeline.** Cage-free egg credits enable companies to fulfill their cage-free transition within the 2025 initial timeline.



**Demonstrate transparency and leadership.** Transparent communication on challenges and solutions demonstrates leadership and a genuine willingness to advance animal welfare around the world.

Several major food companies have committed to purchasing cage-free egg credits as an alternative solution when physical sourcing is unavailable, ensuring they can still meet their cage-free pledges by the end of 2025.



“To meet our target of transitioning to cage-free eggs by the end of 2025, we are currently prioritising physical supply. In areas where we are experiencing availability challenges, we plan to use egg credits as an alternative.”  
—Compass Group



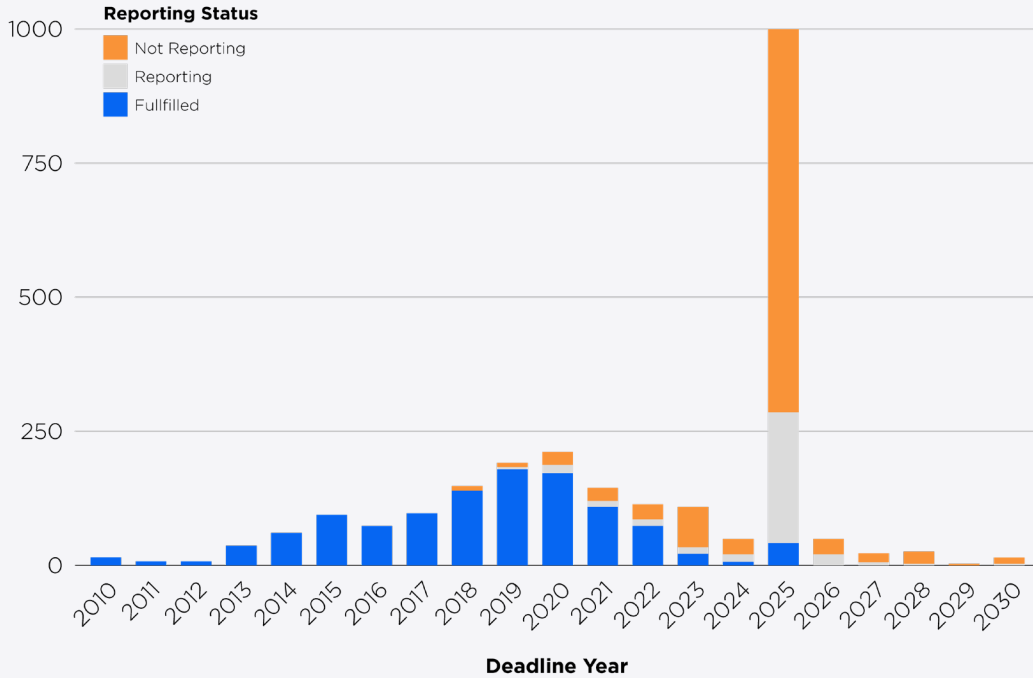
**LOOKING AHEAD**

**2025**



# Keeping an Eye on Cage-Free Commitments in 2025

In 2025, numerous global cage-free egg commitments are due. Consumers, investors, and animal protection organizations worldwide are expecting global food companies to follow through on their initial commitments and phase out the cruel confinement of laying hens.



Source: [OWA Cage-Free Egg Fulfillment Report 2024](#)

Global food companies must accelerate cage-free transitions around the world to fulfill their commitment by the end of 2025. 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.

Global food companies are critical in improving and advancing global animal welfare standards. Fulfilling their global cage-free commitments will positively impact billions of laying hens, sparing them the suffering associated with caged farming.

## Company Recommendations

To demonstrate a high level of accountability on their commitments and accelerate their cage-free transitions in both the Global North and the Global South, we strongly recommend that global food companies implement the following actions:



**Invest in cage-free production**



**Reduce egg usage**



**Buy cage-free credits**



**Collaborate with local animal protection organizations**

## Appendices 1: Company Progress Reporting and Roadmaps

Company	Cage-free egg report	Roadmaps	Cage-free egg credits
Danone	<a href="#">Fulfilled</a>		
JM Smucker	<a href="#">Fulfilled</a>		
Unilever	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Partial Roadmaps</a>	<a href="#">Credits</a>
Compass Group	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Partial roadmaps</a>	<a href="#">Credits</a>
Aramark	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Roadmaps in all regions</a>	<a href="#">Credits</a>
Newrest	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Partial roadmaps</a>	No credits
Hilton	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Partial roadmaps</a>	No credits
Sodexo	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Accor	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Krispy Kreme	<a href="#">Reporting globally</a>	<a href="#">Roadmaps in some regions</a>	<a href="#">Credits</a>
Elior	<a href="#">Reporting in some regions</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Kellanova	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Global roadmaps</a>	No credits
Gate Group	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	<a href="#">Partial roadmap</a>	No credits
Kraft Heinz	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
IHG	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
LSG Group	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Marriott	<a href="#">Regional reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Royal Caribbean	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	<a href="#">Global roadmap</a>	No credits
General Mills	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Nestle	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Pepsico	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits

Company	Cage-free egg report	Roadmaps	Cage-free egg credits
Carnival	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Costa Coffee	<a href="#">Global reporting</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
IKEA	<a href="#">Reporting in some regions</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Shake Shack	<a href="#">Reporting in some regions</a>	No roadmaps	No credits
Associated British Foods	No reporting	No roadmaps	No credits
Best Western	No reporting	No roadmaps	No credits
McCormick	No reporting	No roadmaps	No credits
Inspire Brands	No reporting	No roadmaps	No credits

## Appendices 2: Scoring Methodology

Roadmaps /20	Reporting already 100% CF in all regions OR Roadmaps for all regions to 100%	20
	Partial roadmaps: global roadmap or only roadmaps available for some regions	10
	No roadmaps	0
Transparency and Implementation /80	Fulfilled globally	80
	Reporting in all regions <b>independently</b>	60
	Committed to buying cage-free egg credits	20
	Reporting regionally (groups of regions)	40
	Reporting globally	20
	Reporting in some regions only	10
	No reporting	0