

Flexitarian Restaurant Awards Standards Guidance



Welcome to the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's Standards Guidance for restaurants, cafes or any outlet serving meals to the public. This document outlines **our standards** and **what you need to do** in order to meet them to Bronze, Silver or Gold level. It then gives a **brief explanation about why** we have included each standard, and tells you **how we will check** that you are meeting them.

We are not a certifying body and offer no accreditation; checking total compliance with our standards isn't practical for us at this stage, so we rely largely on your **good faith** and **moral obligation** to your customers and to the environment.

PLEASE NOTE: Achieving the Flexitarian Restaurant Award to any standard allows you to use the Flexitarian Restaurant Award name and logo of the appropriate colour in your restaurant and menus and in any publicity material. It does not permit you to use the name or logos from any other accreditation scheme, regardless of whether or not your restaurant uses products assured by their organisation. Please contact the specific organisation if you wish to make use of their name and logo.

Core welfare and sustainability standards

We ask all our award holders who serve animal products to meet the following standards on animal welfare and sustainability **as a minimum:**

- All **meat** certified to UK minimum welfare standards*
- All **eggs** from free range hens
- All **milk** organic or higher welfare assurance schemes*
- All **wild fish** MSC certified*

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming and fishing, meat, fish and dairy bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

Level-specific standards for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Green Awards



Bronze

More meat free and fish free mains

At least **25% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **One** or more of these contains no animal products.

Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **cheaper** on average.

Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards

Silver

More meat free and fish free mains

At least **40% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **Two** or more of these contains no animal products.

Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **10% cheaper** on average.

Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **36 out of 52** available

Gold

More meat free and fish free mains

At least **60% of mains** contain no meat or fish. At least **half** of these contains no animal products.

Price incentives on plant based dishes

Meat- and fish free mains are **15% cheaper** on average.

Welfare

Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **44 out of 52** available

Green

This award recognises the positive impacts that eateries serving completely **vegetarian or vegan** food can have on health and the environment, and the important role they play in making a more plant based diet both commonplace and more readily available.

Welfare

If serving eggs and milk, restaurants must meet the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards for relevant products, plus score at least **8 out of 11** available points for dairy on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's

Meeting our core welfare and sustainability standards (all levels)

Meat and poultry

At all levels, meat and poultry products must meet minimum UK animal welfare standards and be farm assured by one of the following schemes*:

- Assured Food Standards (Red Tractor Assurance)
- Farm Assured Welsh Livestock (FAWL)
- Quality Meat Scotland (QMS)
- Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) Northern Ireland
- EBLEX Quality Standard Mark (English Beef and Lamb Executive)
- Organic
- RSPCA Assured (formerly Freedom Food)
- British Poultry Council Duck Assurance Scheme
- SAI Global/EFSIS Assured Farm Venison Standard
- British Quality Assured Pig Standard

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming, meat bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

Eggs

At all levels, all eggs should be from free range or organic systems and labelled either with a 1 (free range) or a 0 (organic) on the shell.

Milk

At all levels, milk should be from organic systems or RSPCA Assured*.

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming, milk bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

Fish

At all levels, wild fish should be MSC certified.

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Meeting our level-specific standards

Assessment 1: More meat free and fish free mains

At **Bronze** level: At least **25% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **One** or more of these contains no animal products.

At **Silver** level: At least **40% of mains** contain no meat or fish. **Two** or more of these contains no animal products.

At **Gold** level: At least **60% of mains** contain no meat or fish. At least **half** of these contains no animal products.

How?

To qualify as a **meat- or fish free main**, dishes should contain no meat or fish, nor products derived from meat or fish. Care should be taken to check labels when making meat- and fish free mains, but ingredients that are often overlooked include meat- or fish based stocks, gelatine, fish sauce or shrimp paste and Worcestershire sauce.

When making dishes that **contain no animal products**, the dish should also exclude any ingredients that are produced by animals. This includes eggs, all dairy products and honey. E120 red food colouring is often overlooked, but does contain animal-derived ingredients.

Why?

Our aim is to encourage people to reduce their intake of meat and dairy products, and to improve the quality of the meat they do eat, in line with evidence that doing so is associated with better health^[1] and is better for the environment^[2].

By offering your customers a wider selection of meat-, fish- and animal product free options, not only are you ensuring that a wide range of diets are catered for, but you're also encouraging people to consider trying dishes they may otherwise not have and to make more positive food choices.

Assessment 2: Price incentives on plant based dishes

At **Bronze** level: Meat- and fish free mains are **cheaper on average**.

At **Silver** level: Meat- and fish free mains are **10% cheaper on average**.

At **Gold** level: Meat- and fish free mains are **15% cheaper on average**.

Why?

People can sometimes be reluctant to choose meat free mains when eating out. Incentivising your customers to choose meat- and fish free meals by making them cheaper encourages people to be more adventurous in their choices and to choose the meals that often incur a lower ingredient spend. Higher priced meat and fish dishes means that you can afford to buy higher welfare, more sustainable meat and fish and may find that you won't need to buy so much meat as people are encouraged to try alternative dishes.

Assessment 3: Welfare

At **Bronze** level: Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards.

At **Silver** level: Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **36 out of 52** available points on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's higher welfare products reward table.

At **Gold** level: Meet all Flexitarian Restaurant Award's core welfare standards, plus a score of at least **44 out of 52** available points on the Flexitarian Restaurant Award's higher welfare products reward table.

How?

See above for the minimum welfare and sustainability requirements for all levels.

For Silver and Gold, use the **Flexitarian Restaurant Award Welfare Points Calculator** to calculate your total. Points are awarded for already using or switching your entire supply of a given product over to higher welfare products. **An equal number of points are awarded for not using the product at all.** Higher welfare products are*:

- Organic
- RSPCA Assured
- Free Range (excluding eggs which must be free range at all levels)
- Wild caught (in the case of game only).

If you serve meat, you must score at least 5 points from Section 2.

Free range eggs and higher welfare milk earns no points since this is required at all levels in our core welfare and sustainability standards.

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming and fishing, meat, fish and dairy bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

Why?

The EU offers legislation for the minimum standards protecting laying hens, chicken, pigs and calves, but this is often expanded and improved upon by UK minimum welfare standards. Higher welfare systems offer still better conditions for farm animals in the UK and we believe that the [Compassionate Food Guide](#) is a good guide of the quality of these systems.

Less intensive farming systems, such as free range or organic, have a lesser impact on the environment^[3] and are thought to be a positive choice for our health^[4]. We believe that by encouraging the wider adoption of these values within the restaurant trade, we can reduce our collective environmental impact and encourage people to make more positive food choices.

Overfishing and high-yield fishing methods have left many species of fish in our oceans seriously threatened. We believe that MSC certification offers reassurance that seafood has been responsibly caught by a certified sustainable fishery.

Farmed fish are often kept in poor conditions, their feed puts strain on wild fish stocks and poorly managed farms can threaten wild fish with disease and interbreeding. Organic standards certify fisheries that, among other things, use organic fish feed and limit stocking densities.

Assessments for the Green Award

The **Green** Flexitarian restaurant is awarded to vegetarian or vegan restaurants, ie. to those whose menus are completely free of meat and fish, or to those who serve no animal products at all. We ask that, as well as meeting our core welfare and sustainability standards where relevant, you also achieve at least **8 out of 11** available points for higher welfare eggs and dairy. **An equal number of points are awarded for not using the product at all.**

How?

For vegetarian restaurants serving animal products, such as eggs and dairy, we ask you to meet the core welfare standards regarding these products. These are:

Eggs

At all levels, all eggs should be from free range or organic systems and labelled either with a 1 (free range) or a 0 (organic) on the shell.

Milk

At all levels, milk should be from organic systems or RSPCA Assured*.

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming, milk bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

Use the **Flexitarian Restaurant Award Welfare Points Calculator** to calculate your points total. Points are awarded for already using or switching your entire supply of a given product over to higher welfare products. **An equal number of points are awarded for not using the product at all.** Higher welfare products are*:

- Organic
- RSPCA Assured
- Free Range (excluding eggs which must be free range at all levels)

Free range eggs and higher welfare milk earns no points since this is required at all levels in our core welfare and sustainability standards.

*So as not to exclude small-scale, local farming and fishing, meat, fish and dairy bought through local supply chains that uphold the same principles of welfare and sustainability as the recognised accreditation schemes are accepted under the award, subject to the discretion of the Flexitarian Restaurant Award team.

References:

[1] *Healthy Planet Eating: How lower meat diets can save lives and planet*, Friends of the Earth, 2010:

http://www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/healthy_planet_eating.pdf

[2] *Livestock – Climate Change's Forgotten Sector: Global Public Opinion on Meat and Dairy Consumption*, Rob Bailey, Antony Froggatt and Laura Wellesley, 2014:

https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20141203LivestockClimateChangeBaileyFroggattWellesley.pdf?dm_i=1TY5,30JL0,BHZILT,AUGSP,1

[3] *Beyond Factory Farming: Sustainable Solutions for Animals, People and the Planet*, Compassion in World Farming, 2009:

<http://www.ciwf.org.uk/media/3817096/beyond-factory-farming-report.pdf>

[4] *Nutritional Benefits of Higher Welfare Animal Products*, Compassion in World Farming, 2012:

http://www.ciwf.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2012/n/nutritional_benefits_of_higher_welfare_animal_products_report_june2012.pdf