



ALLIANCE™

[.https://www.globalseafood.org](https://www.globalseafood.org)Health &
Welfare

New Tesco seafood procurement policy addresses welfare of farmed decapod crustaceans

20 August 2024

By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Tesco implements groundbreaking policy to improve animal welfare of farmed decapod crustaceans, setting new industry standards

Tesco, the UK's largest retailer, has announced [a new policy](https://www.tescopl.com/sustainability/documents/policies/tesco-farmed-decapod-crustacean-welfare-policy) (<https://www.tescopl.com/sustainability/documents/policies/tesco-farmed-decapod-crustacean-welfare-policy>) to improve the welfare of farmed decapod crustaceans, such as shrimp and crab. This policy, developed with support from the Aquatic Life Institute, ensures better treatment of these animals from farming to slaughter. Tesco's commitment reflects growing consumer concern for animal welfare and could encourage other retailers to adopt similar standards.

"Tesco is committed to continuous improvement in animal welfare within the markets and supply chains we operate in," said Ben Lambden, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture manager at Tesco. "As well as our market-leading 'Tesco Welfare Approved' audit program, we wanted to go further in stipulating our minimum welfare requirements for farmed decapods. It is our hope that in doing so, we can play our part in the continued improvement and development of these crucial supply chains."



Tesco has implemented a new groundbreaking policy to improve the animal welfare of farmed decapod crustaceans, setting new standards in the retail industry. Photo by [Ponsakthi Anand](https://www.pexels.com/photo/close-up-photo-of-pile-of-freshly-caught-prawns-5273798/) (<https://www.pexels.com/photo/close-up-photo-of-pile-of-freshly-caught-prawns-5273798/>).

As part of the specific improvements, the retailer will no longer sell live decapod crustaceans in stores or online. By 2026, all farmed *Penaeus vannamei* shrimp in Tesco's supply chain will be electrically stunned, and the company is exploring how to extend this practice to *Penaeus monodon* shrimp. Additionally, 100 percent of suppliers must comply with recognized farm assurance schemes like the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), Global GAP or 4-star Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP). By 2030, all suppliers will achieve a Forage Fish/Oil Dependency Ratio of less than 1, and all shrimp broodstock used by Tesco suppliers will be ablation-free by 2027.

Tesco received support from organizations like the Aquatic Life Institute in developing its new policy. The Institute advised on aquatic animal welfare, provided science-based resources and offered feedback on policy drafts. This effort is part of the Institute's Corporate Initiative, launched in 2023 to help large-scale buyers like Tesco integrate animal welfare into their procurement policies. Similar moves from Waitrose and Marks & Spencer highlight the growing trend of aligning corporate strategies with animal welfare principles.



A comprehensive solution for the wild seafood supply chain.

- ✓ Crew rights
- ✓ Food safety
- ✓ Environmental responsibility

Best Seafood Practices

LEARN MORE >

(<https://bspcertification.org/>).

As the market for decapod crustaceans grows, so does public concern over farming, transport and slaughter methods. Recent evidence suggests these animals can feel pain and have complex cognitive abilities. Coupled with the 2022 UK law (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lobsters-octopus-and-crabs-recognised-as-sentient-beings>), recognizing them as sentient beings, a need for higher industry welfare standards is emerging.

“Tesco’s public commitment to ensuring high welfare throughout the lifecycle (farming to slaughter) of farmed decapod crustaceans in their supply chain, is a bold and significant step towards recognizing the sentience of these animals,” said Sophika Kostyniuk, managing director of the Aquatic Life Institute. “This policy will no doubt ignite a positive ripple effect across the retail world, and we applaud Tesco’s leadership on this matter.”

[Read Tesco’s policy here \(https://www.tescopl.com/sustainability/documents/policies/tesco-farmed-decapod-crustacean-welfare-policy\)](https://www.tescopl.com/sustainability/documents/policies/tesco-farmed-decapod-crustacean-welfare-policy).

Author



RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE

editor@globalseafood.org (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>).

Copyright © 2024 Global Seafood Alliance

All rights reserved.