



HBCA

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR CHANGE FOR ANIMALS

CASE STUDY



Rolling out humane slaughter through supply chains

ORGANISATION YOUNGS SEAFOOD

COUNTRY GLOBAL (EMPHASIS ON VIETNAM)

DATE SUBMITTED 2 MAY 2017

CONTACT DAVID PARKER
DAVID.PARKER@YOUNGSSEAFOOD.CO.UK

KEYWORDS CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, FISH WELFARE, HUMANE SLAUGHTER, INDUSTRY, AUDITING, BUSINESS INCENTIVES, FINANCIAL INCENTIVES, CERTIFICATION, ASSESSMENTS, SUPPLY CHAINS, VIETNAM

Project Background

Youngs have been supplying seafood for over 200 years and we have a commitment to only source from responsible fisheries and aquaculture as part of our 'fish for life' program which we have initiated.

Youngs introduced welfare requirements for ethical reasons because we felt it was the right thing to do. An important part of this has been making humane slaughter mandatory within our farmed fish supply chains.

As humane slaughter in fish is a relatively new concept within the fishing industry it has not been possible to change everything at once as industry needs time to adapt so it has been done in steps. Youngs started rolling out humane slaughter with salmon. We have now done the same with the Basa fish, *Pangasius hypophthalmus*, a type of catfish commonly farmed in Vietnam and consumed in large quantities around the world and



Youngs believe that humane slaughter is an important part of ensuring good animal welfare in their supply chains and despite an absence of NGO or public pressure to do so, have been taking steps to improve the welfare of fish at slaughter in fish farms. This case study concerns the work that Youngs have undertaken with their aquaculture suppliers to introduce humane slaughter and stunning methods.

Overview of Intervention

Recognising that fish farmers were going to need to be incentivised to change their behaviour...

- Youngs had to make humane slaughter and stunning part of an audited requirement with compliance giving the farmers access to a market they wanted and the financial benefits of that.
- Youngs made humane slaughter of farmed fish a requirement in our policy.
- This requirement is supported by an auditing process that includes a traffic light system indicating if a supplier has fully met the criteria, needs to improve with clear commitments that are time bound or have not met the requirements. Non-compliance will only be sourced from if Youngs work with the supplier to improve - otherwise Youngs will stop sourcing the product.
- All potential suppliers are informed of the Youngs policy and requirements around humane slaughter, however they are given flexibility regarding how they implement it.
- Youngs have worked with the suppliers to support the changes.

As well as independent certification through schemes such as the Global Aquaculture Alliance, Youngs also has its own in-house assessment measures which include assessing the welfare of fish. The ability to be certified by a scheme is another incentive for suppliers to comply with the policy.

Welfare Concerns

No welfare requirements existed at all in the Basa farms in Vietnam so fish were being killed inhumanely, often just by being left to suffocate out of the water.

Achievements

- Youngs have ensured that every fish that is farmed within their business should now be humanely killed.
- Fish farms committing to provide good welfare to their fish from birth through to death. This will lead to the welfare improvements of tens of thousands, if not millions of fish around the world.
- Youngs is the only Seafood brand in the UK which can guarantee that all their Basa fish come from one fully integrated and independently certified supplier.

Challenges

- Within the fishing industry it can be very challenging to get the industry to make changes unless there is a market incentive for doing so and that is why the approach taken has to be to make it a requirement within the procurement policy.
- It is difficult to get industry to see the ethical benefits but not as hard to get them to see the financial benefits.
- Efforts are made to make sure suppliers clearly understand the issue but it is still the market access and threat of not being able to access it that drives the change - this is particularly true for suppliers based in regions where animal welfare

Sustainability

Unfortunately the animal welfare benefits on their own do not make this change sustainable, at least not at the moment as there is no wider public interest in fish welfare to support such a big cultural shift. However because it has been possible to demonstrate the wider benefits that can be gained from a business perspective Youngs believe this change can be sustainable. As the Youngs model has been shown to work, even in countries like Vietnam, it can be used as a basis for retailers to demand this change across their suppliers. There is also a proven increase in fish quality when they are humanely killed and not stressed at the time of slaughter and this is something which can also be used to incentivise industry wide change.

It is possible that increased investment in education could assist with ensuring sustainability. Increased interest on this issue from NGOs and improving broader public understanding and concern about the welfare of fish would drive change in the industry quicker.

Lessons to Pass On

- You have to use arguments that appeal to the audience and in businesses this is often the financial bottom line and whether it impacts their ability to access desirable markets for their products.
- Industry may resist changes that are forced upon them so if it is a policy based method used to drive change consideration needs to be given to enable people to have some sense of ownership over the actual changes they implement, for example by allowing flexibility in the details as long as they can demonstrate that they meet the requirements and allowing them to take credit for the changes they have implemented.
- Show the industry examples of what works and what kind of actions would count as meeting the criteria, i.e. give them a 'tool-kit' to choose from.



Responsibly Sourced

Our seafood is sourced only from responsible fisheries.

youngsseafood.co.uk/fishforlife



HBCA

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR CHANGE FOR ANIMALS

Valuable information is not easily accessible to those planning and involved with projects aiming to apply HBC theories and principles. Hence, HBCA is developing a resource that provides an overview of interventions and the lessons we can learn from them. If you have a case study to submit or any enquiries about this case study, please get in touch.