

One hundred brands pledge to trace imported pork

The National British Association has set up a "Wall of Fame."

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Britain's National Pig Association's Wall of Fame has reached a milestone this month, with one hundred leading brands pledging total traceability for the imported pork and pork products they sell.

"The response to our campaign for traceable higher-welfare pork for British consumers has been outstanding - far, far better than we ever envisaged," said association chairman Richard Longthorp.

The National Pig Association called on Britain's major food companies, including retailers, to check their supply lines forensically, and to boycott all pork and pork products from illegally operated continental farms.

According to recent data from Brussels, over 60 percent of European Union countries are failing to comply with new animal welfare rules and pregnant sows are still being confined in narrow individual cages known as "stalls" for most of their lives.

"The response was slow to start with but then 'Horsegate' erupted and food companies suddenly realised how vital it is that they know exactly where the raw materials they import come from," said association general manager Dr. Zoe Davies.

"It is clear from the responses we have had that these companies have taken our challenge very seriously and on behalf of British consumers we thank them for their responsible stance."

The National Pig Association is confident that the pledges on its Wall of Fame have helped reduce the flow of pork from illegally operated farms. It is now calling on all European countries to clean up their act and comply with European Union welfare legislation.

"British consumers can be confident that most of the pork and pork products on British supermarket shelves is traceable and is produced to the high welfare standards they expect," said Longthorp. "British pig farmers have, of course, exceeded European welfare requirements for many years, and British pork is traceable back to its farm of origin."

"We will continue to accept pledges for our Wall of Fame and will shortly start to conduct supply-line audits to check the pledges are being honoured. But overall we are extremely satisfied with the progress that has been made so far."

At the beginning of the year, the National Pig Association estimated as many as 40,000 pigs an hour were being delivered to continental processing plants from illegally operated pig farms. As Britain imports around 60 percent of its processed pork it was feared that many British consumers were unwittingly supporting the trade in illegally farmed pigs

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