

Callum Weir from Cambridge wins award for sustainability and farm animal welfare

In RSPCA Assured's first-ever Pig and Poultry Awards

Friday 1 October 2021

Callum Weir, formerly of Wimpole Home Farm in Cambridge, has today beaten off stiff competition from 15 nominees to win the 'excellence in sustainability and higher farm animal welfare' category for pigs, in RSPCA Assured's first-ever awards for pig and poultry members.

From work experience at the National Trust's Wimpole Home Farm as a teenager to later becoming its farm manager, Callum made it his mission to demonstrate the possibility of farming whilst restoring the natural environment.

RSPCA Assured's independent panel of judges was won over by Callum and his team achieving a 10% increase in carbon stored in the soil at Wimpole, and the estate shifting from a net source of greenhouse emissions to a net sink - all whilst farming livestock, including pigs under the RSPCA Assured scheme.

One of the judges, Dr Zoe Davies, chief executive of the National Pig Association, says:



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“We were really impressed by what Callum and his team achieved during his time at Wimpole. Through great determination, and using a variety of different methods to become more sustainable, they made huge strides in increasing the farm’s biodiversity, improving soil health and reducing their carbon footprint. Callum’s award is very well deserved.”

Commenting on his win, Callum says:

“I am really proud to receive this award but it wouldn’t have been possible without the team I had around me. I would like to thank the National Trust for their support, the volunteers who donated their time and the dedicated team at the farm who worked tirelessly, come rain or shine.

“When I first started at Wimpole, my manager jokingly said he’d give me £20 for every worm I found as I dug over the tired and lifeless soil. Fast forward 10 years and with an average of nine worms per spadeful, the challenge became not to find one! What we achieved at Wimpole shows that it is possible to bring about significant change in restoring the natural environment.

“The higher welfare reared livestock at Wimpole, including the RSPCA Assured pigs, are perfect for promoting the recovery of wildflowers in the 500 acres of parkland and hay meadows, as well as building fertility and soil health in the 1000 acres of organic arable farming.”

Callum has since taken on the position of sustainable agriculture specialist at WWF.

The RSPCA Assured awards are designed to recognise and reward pig, broiler, laying hen and turkey members for achievements in four categories:

- **Excellence in higher farm animal welfare** - going above and beyond the standards and/or expectations to help improve farm animal welfare
- **Excellence in the education of farm animal welfare** - being proactive in engaging and educating others about higher farm animal welfare
- **Excellence in sustainability and higher farm animal welfare** - demonstrating consistent dedication to caring for the environment and animals in general through sustainability efforts
- **Outstanding contribution** - to pig and poultry welfare

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RSPCA Assured news

Originally planned to be announced at the *British Pig and Poultry Trade Fair 2020*, the final winners in the other categories are being announced daily this week via the scheme's [website](#) and social media platforms [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

RSPCA Assured hopes to extend its awards programme to the rest of its membership in the near future. For more information about the awards, Callum and the other winners and runners up click [here](#).

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