



Quick Guide to the Responsible Down Standard (RDS)

The [Responsible Down Standard \(RDS\)](#) aims to ensure that down and feathers come from animals that have not been subjected to an unnecessary harm. It is our hope that the standard can be used to reward and influence the down and feather industry to incentivize practices that respect the humane treatment of ducks and geese. We believe that education – through the RDS – is a meaningful way to drive demand for strong animal welfare practices. The standard also provides companies and consumers with a tool to know what is in their products, and to make accurate claims.

Objectives

- Ensure to the highest possible extent that down and feathers do not come from animals in a supply chain that have been subjected to any unnecessary harm.
- Reward and influence the down and feather industry for practices that respect the humane treatment of ducks and geese.
- Provide companies with a tool to know what is in their products, and to make accurate claims.
- Ensure strong chain of custody for certified materials as they move through the supply chain.

Key Points in the RDS

Protecting Animal Welfare

Holistic respect for animal welfare of the birds from hatching to slaughter. The Five Provisions¹ of animal welfare are respected.

No Live-Plucking or Force-Feeding

Any removal of down and feathers from live birds (live-plucking or molt-harvesting) is prohibited; force-feeding is also prohibited.

Chain of Custody

Certification ensures that the identity of RDS down and feathers is maintained at all times: from the farm to the final product.

Credible Certification

A professional, third-party certification body audits each stage in the supply chain.

Confident Communication

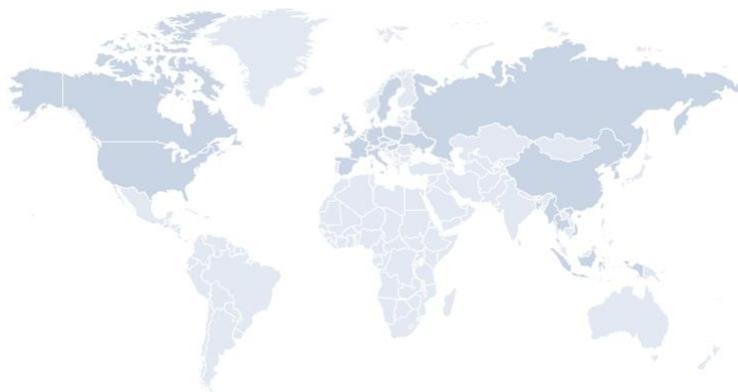
Only products with 100% certified down and feathers may carry the RDS logo.

Stakeholder Engagement

The RDS was developed with the input of farmers, animal welfare experts, land conservation experts, brands and retailers from all parts of the globe.

Adoption of the RDS

- More than **6,000 industrial farms** were certified to the RDS in 2019.
- Over **550 million birds** have been raised on RDS-certified farms.
- Almost **100 brands**, including home and bedding, sports and outdoor, and apparel, have committed to the RDS.
- From the beginning, the RDS has been designed for global use by the entire down and feather supply chain: from industrial farms to collector-based households, from Europe to Asia. It achieves a balance of rigor and practicality.



¹ The Five Provisions are internationally recognized standards for the protection of animal welfare, consisting of: 1. Good Nutrition; 2. Good Environment; 3. Good Health; 4. Appropriate Behavior; 5. Positive Mental Experiences. (Source: Farm Animal Welfare Council)



Getting Started

- The RDS requires all sites to be certified, beginning at the farm and slaughterhouse through to the seller in the final business-to-business transaction.
- Farms and slaughterhouses are certified to strict animal welfare requirements.
- Subsequent stages of the down supply chain are required to be certified against the requirements of the [Content Claim Standard \(CCS\)](#) up to the seller in the last business-to-business transaction. Facilities are certified to the standard, and each shipment of goods must be accompanied by a transaction certificate (TC).
- When requesting RDS certified products, a TC will ensure that the down and feather material came from certified farms.

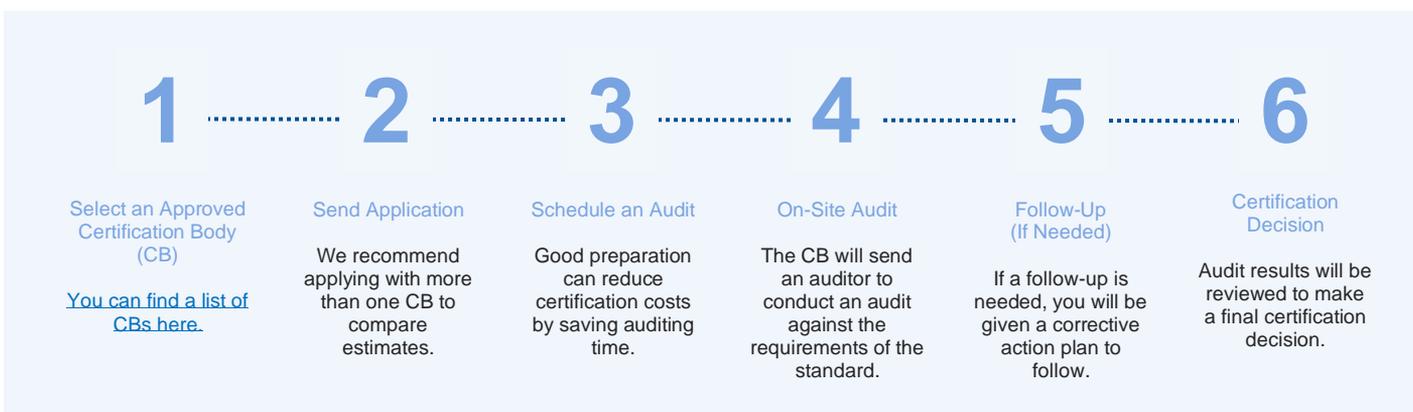
Communicating Claims

- Before labeling products, make sure to follow all requirements in the [RDS Logo Use and Claims Guide](#).
- All claims must be approved by an authorized certification body (CB).

Suppliers

Find RDS suppliers on our website: ResponsibleDown.org/for-business/find-certified-companies/. Please contact them to request RDS certified material.

How to Get Certified



Background of the RDS

The RDS was developed through an open and transparent process led by [Textile Exchange](#) and a multi-stakeholder group which included representatives from across the industry and different sectors, including animal welfare groups, industry organizations, supply chain members, brands, and area experts. All policies and procedures are based on the [ISEAL Best Practices](#), which can be found on our website.

Textile Exchange has been in existence since 2002, and plays a powerful role within the textile industry to support the understanding and use of sustainable materials and proper verification strategies. While Textile Exchange has extensive experience in standards development and ownership, we do not engage in any certification activities: all of our focus is on supporting the quality and adoption of its standards.



The staff at Textile Exchange are very accessible, and always ready to provide support to brands or companies interested in the RDS.

Learn More or Get Involved

Contact ResponsibleDown@TextileExchange.org | Visit ResponsibleDown.org