Pret Faces £1M Campaign Over Broken Chicken Welfare Commitment

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Animal welfare organisation Anima is launching a £1 million public accountability campaign targeting Pret A Manger in London as it breaks its commitment to stop selling “frankenchickens” by 2026. It is believed to be the most well funded animal welfare campaign ever directed at a UK food company.

The campaign will include ads on the London Underground, street corners, and a fleet of mobile billboards, as well as full-page newspaper ads and a stunt involving the world's biggest Pret wrap - a car-sized replica stuffed with a 4m long fast-growing chicken, feathers and all. Activists plan to visit every Pret in London over the coming months.

It comes as a direct response to Pret’s failure to phase out fast-growing chickens by 2026 - a commitment it made eight years ago in 2018. Pret claims that 'doing the right thing' is one of its core values, but its own reporting shows that 100% of the chicken in its supply chain still comes from fast-growing breeds.

"Pret is sitting on its hands whilst telling us it's committed to better chicken – that's not commitment, that's an empty promise. Pret's chickens are bred to grow so unnaturally fast that their bodies break down, leaving many unable to walk and in pain. Pret promised to spare these animals from the worst of factory farming. It broke that promise, and judging by its continued inaction, Pret has no intention of honouring its commitment. KFC is being honest about letting its chickens down, whereas Pret is still pretending and hoping its customers fall for it. This campaign is about ensuring that Pret acts rather than talks." **says Connor Jackson, Chief Executive of Anima.**

On April 17th, Pret announced a new plan to adopt 50% slower growing breeds by 2031 and 100% by 2032, following a campaign briefing from Anima two weeks earlier.

But the campaigners argue that Pret’s plan cannot be trusted as it lacks any concrete actions until 2031 - 13 years after Pret's original commitment. Pret also blames its inaction on supply challenges. Industry sources, however, confirm that Pret could make a full transition within one to two years.

Jackson continues:
"Pret now has a choice: follow Waitrose and move away from these ultra fast-growing breeds, or follow KFC and Burger King in betraying chickens and walking away from animal welfare commitments entirely. This attempt to kick the can five more years down the road tells you which direction it is heading. This campaign is about ensuring that Pret delivers a credible plan towards fulfilment of its commitment."

Fast-growing chickens typically reach slaughter weight within 35 days. Scientific research has linked this rapid growth to a range of welfare concerns, including lameness, broken bones and heart attacks. Slower-growing breeds are associated with improved welfare outcomes.

In the last eight years, Pret has reduced the maximum ‘stocking density’ for its chickens. However, whilst more space is positive for chicken welfare, the genetics of fast-growing breeds is widely regarded by scientists as the most significant factor by a wide margin.

The campaign comes at a time when Pret’s owner, JAB Holdings, is reportedly exploring a potential public listing. Anima says it will maintain sustained pressure until a credible plan with near-term implementation is in place.

Project Slingshot is supporting Anima's efforts to highlight Pret's continued use of fast-growing chickens.

ENDS

Anima is part of Anima International – a global animal organisation that has led animal welfare campaigns across Europe for over 25 years.

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Most recently, Anima celebrated a historic victory – the Norwegian chicken industry has agreed to make a total phase out of fast growing chickens by the end of next year.

Notes to editors

- Pret A Manger's own 2025 Progress Update confirms 0% adoption of slower-growing breeds in UK, US and France. The company's new plan targets 50% by 2031 and 100% by 2032, with no steps until 2031.
- JAB Holdings, Pret's owner since 2018 (acquired for £1.5bn), is reportedly still exploring IPO options according to reports in the Financial Times
- Throughout the summer, Project Slingshot will be running a major campaign challenging factory farming, including claims about fast-growing chickens, appearing across 200+ London Underground stations and 2,200 carriages.
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