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CASE STUDY  
Albert Heijn  
Shrimp Verification

# DNA TraceBack® verifies animal welfare commitments in Ecuadorian-sourced shrimp

DNA TraceBack® is a game-changing traceability solution that uses nature’s barcode — DNA — to trace every cut from farm or sea to table. Through unparalleled data insights, you gain new possibilities to increase transparency, building brand value and consumer trust.

## CHALLENGE

Albert Heijn, Ahold Delhaize’s largest supermarket chain in the Netherlands, is an industry leader with elevated sustainability and animal welfare standards. They are committed to sourcing shrimp from supply chains that do not utilize the practice of eyestalk ablation to enhance reproduction. The retailer needs a reliable, cost-effective partner who can verify its finished shrimp products were sourced in accordance with their “better for” animal welfare criteria.

## SOLUTION

In collaboration with Dutch processor Klaas Puul and its Ecuadorian shrimp producer group, a DNA TraceBack® verification program is implemented, and a DNA archive is established by sampling all deceased breeding non-ablated female brood shrimp at the end of their breeding cycle, verifying both eyes are intact at the point of sampling. Samples are collected from finished products to verify they originate from non-ablated female brood shrimp. Results are delivered on a digital platform accessible by both the retailer and the processor who can monitor compliance, identify issues, and drive accountability.

## RESULTS

The cost-effectiveness of this model is evident, considering a single breeding female can produce hundreds of thousands of progenies. Working together to ensure consistent, verifiable, and sustainable product sourcing helps reduce the risk of mislabeling, while enhancing Klaas Puul’s and Albert Heijn’s reputations as leaders in global animal welfare standards for shrimp.

“ The story behind a product must match the label. Thanks to DNA TraceBack® verification, we can trace products back to the hatcheries of origin, who are working to our improved animal welfare standards and ensures we maintain the highest standards to foster trust with our customers.

**Emiel Beekwilder**  
Food Quality Manager  
Albert Heijn



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