Carrefour's chicken blockchain set to lay eggs

PARIS, France - French supermarket group Carrefour said on Tuesday it would expand its blockchain-based food traceability programme, which is currently in place for some chickens, to eight other products including eggs by the end of the year.

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Blockchain is the technology behind cryptocurrencies including bitcoin, but companies and public authorities are rapidly creating new applications which allows for the secure and transparent sharing of almost any kind of information.

Carrefour turned to blockchain technology to trace production of chickens in France's Auvergne region. Consumers can use a smartphone to scan a code on the package to obtain information entered by farmers and producers at each stage including where and how the chickens were raised and what they were fed as well as where the meat was processed.

Carrefour said it plans to expand the blockchain to eggs, cheese, milk, oranges, tomatoes, salmon and hamburgers by the end of the year. The supermarket group said in a statement that it believes blockchain technology applications for the food chain are numerous as it allows for secure sharing of information between producers and consumers.

"For consumers, it responds to the need for greater and greater transparency, for producers, it allows them to obtain more value from their production and know-how."

Carrefour announced in January a major overhaul of its business given increased competition from traditional rivals as well as online retailers. One initiative includes increasing its offering of organic foods amid growing sensibility among consumers concerning food production methods.

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Carrefour, which was the world's second-biggest retailer at the start of the century after US giant Wal-Mart, has since slipped to ninth position, according to the Deloitte consultancy, having been overtaken by the likes of Amazon and Costco.

Source: AFP

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