

Agricultural Manual

Catalogue of Criteria - Poultry Production

Programme 2021 – 2023



Structure

Foreword.....	2
1 Requirements.....	3
1.1 Basic criteria for livestock production, hygiene, animal health	3
1.2 Origin and Marketing: <i>Procurement of day-old-chicks</i>	4
1.3 Monitoring and Care of Livestock: <i>Measures to improve foot pad health</i>	4
1.4 Handling of livestock when loading: <i>Instructions for preliminary destocking (only for broilers)</i> ..	4
1.5 Proof of proficiency of the livestock farmer: <i>Proof of annual training of livestock farmer</i>	5
1.6 Documentation of Results from the Slaughtering Process: <i>Participation in animal welfare control plan</i>	5
1.7 Additional activity options	5
1.8 Bigger space allowances	6
1.9 Shed climate check	6
1.10 Drinking water check.....	7
2 Definitions and related documents	7
3 Annexes	8
3.1 Annex 1 – Shed climate check.....	8
3.2 Annex 2 – Drinking water check, Programme	9

Foreword

As part of the Animal Welfare Initiative for poultry "**Initiative Tierwohl Geflügel**" companies and associations from agriculture, the meat industry and grocery retail have together made it their objective to promote humane and sustainable meat production.

In the future too they want to offer consumers poultry of exceptional quality and great variety whilst at the same time focusing even more on animal welfare as the foundation of their business.

To this end, the initiators - together with participants from the economy, science and other stakeholder groups have developed a comprehensive program to promote animal welfare at livestock producer agricultural production level and for this purpose have defined scientifically substantiated, measurable and verifiable requirements for livestock production. Livestock producers who decide to participate in the Animal Welfare Initiative shall implement these requirements. Independent, accredited certification bodies shall regularly check that the requirements are being complied with.

The Animal Welfare Initiative for poultry is being continually developed. The committees of the Animal Welfare Initiative will further on focus its attention on this intended development and make the necessary decisions.

1 Requirements

1.1 Basic criteria for livestock production, hygiene, animal health

The livestock producer must meet basic criteria for welfare-friendly rearing, hygiene and animal health. The below mentioned basic criteria are determined as part of the **QS Agricultural Manual - Poultry Production** in the chapters listed below. The main emphasis of the animal welfare audit is on the monitoring of production within the livestock housing. A comprehensive document check shall only be carried out should there be signs of any deviations.

Note: the rev 01 only relates to the editorial changes of the assignment of chapters in the QS-Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production. There were no content-related changes in this Catalogue of Criteria – Poultry Production.

Welfare-friendly rearing, hygiene and animal health:

- 3.2.1 Monitoring and Care of Livestock
- 3.2.2 General Farming Requirements
- 3.2.3 Handling sick and injured animals
- 3.2.4 Shed Floor
- 3.2.5 Shed Climate, Temperature, Noise Pollution, Ventilation
- 3.2.6 Lighting
- 3.2.8 Alarm System
- 3.3.1 Feed supply
- 3.3.2 Hygiene of feeding facilities
- 3.3.3 Storage of feeds
- 3.4.1 Water supply
- 3.4.2 Hygiene of drinking facilities
- 3.6.1 Buildings and equipment
- 3.6.2 Hygiene on the farm
- 3.6.3 Handling litter, dung and feed leftovers
- 3.6.4 Carcass storage and pick-up
- 3.6.5 Pest monitoring and control
- 3.6.6 Cleaning and Disinfection Measures

If anomalies are established - in particular with regard to injuries, feather pecking or beast skin lesions - countermeasures must be determined together with the veterinarian responsible for the livestock (plan of measures including deadlines). The livestock producer must implement this plan of measures by the deadlines set and document this.

 If required, plan of measures and its implementation

1.2 Origin and Marketing: *Procurement of day-old-chicks*

For rearing of chicken and turkey all day-old chicks or hatching eggs must be obtained from hatcheries with QS eligibility to deliver.

Turkey

For obtaining young fattening turkey from rearing companies these companies must be eligible to deliver into QS.

Verification of eligibility (e.g. hatcheries or rearing farms) to deliver in the QS Scheme is performed in the software platform (www.qs-plattform.de).

 Livestock register, livestock record cards, hatchery delivery notes, excerpts from the QS database

1.3 Monitoring and Care of Livestock: *Measures to improve foot pad health*

The aim is the preservation of foot pad health in broilers and fattening turkeys. To this end, livestock producers commit to participate in an animal welfare monitoring programme. Slaughterhouse operations forward any company-specific results of the monitoring of foot pad lesions to their suppliers.

In order to protect foot pads and guard against diseases, measures are to be taken that ensure permanently loose, dry and soft bedding until the day livestock is moved out (depopulation day).

 measures implemented by the company

1.4 Handling of livestock when loading: *Instructions for preliminary destocking (only for broilers)*

Doors, gates and windows in the animal housing have to be darkened against the ingress of light. Depending on location or site, this can be achieved for example by using strip curtains or tunnels. Direct ingress of sunlight must be effectively prevented. Depending on location, time of day and orientation to the sun, measures shall need to be taken based on these. Covers must be attached in such a way that an adequate supply of fresh air is still guaranteed. When opening the loading doors, ventilation short-circuits are to be avoided where possible.

Appropriate means must be employed when thinning - for example use of partitions - to ensure that stress is kept to a minimum both for the animals being removed and those that remain.

The last dark phase provided for in the animal housing management plan is to be adapted to coincide with loading time. The supply of drinking water for the animals must be guaranteed until immediately before loading commences.

The loading doors are to be closed immediately after completion of pre-loading. New bedding is to be spread on the area from which the depopulated animals have been moved out. The same bedding material is to be used for this as had been spread at the start of the rearing period. Appropriate bedding material shall be kept in stock. Finally, prior to the continuation of the rearing process of the remaining animals, all alarm equipment shall be activated and checked.

 Records pertaining to the concept specific to the operation for implementing the handling instructions.

1.5 Proof of proficiency of the livestock farmer: *Proof of annual training of livestock farmer*

In addition to proof of competence, each livestock farmer must attend relevant, subject-specific further training measures at least once every calendar year. Appropriate certificates must be kept in this regard. The proof has to be provided for the first time to the initial audit.

 Certification relating to further training measures, such as confirmation of participation at specialist lectures

1.6 Documentation of Results from the Slaughtering Process: *Participation in animal welfare control plan*

Livestock owners are obligated to take part in the animal welfare control programme. The central element of the animal welfare control programme is the systematic recording of indicators both in livestock and in slaughterhouse operations. Indicators are:

- Mortality in the livestock housing (transmission of livestock owner to slaughterhouse)
- Foot pad changes (Acquisition is carried out at the slaughterhouse)
- Fatalities due to transportation (Acquisition is carried out at the slaughterhouse)

The details are defined in the QS Guideline "Diagnostic Data in Poultry Slaughtering". The slaughterhouse notifies the indicators to the central database. The livestock owner must document the determined diagnostics (indicators). Therefore the diagnostic database can be used. The livestock owner gets the login data by the coordinator.

With progress of the project this criteria might get more detailed.

 Records regarding participation in animal welfare monitoring programme, documentation of data from slaughterhouse findings, results of the indicators recorded

1.7 Additional activity options

In addition to a loose and dry bedding, that must be furnished that way, that animals can pick, paw and dust bath in partition, at least one other changeable, consumable material must be constantly on offer as additional manipulable material from the second week of life, e.g. straw or hay in hay racks or baskets, other bedding material (such as granulated straw or wood shavings in bales) or other peckable objects (such as pecking blocks).

The changeable manipulable materials must provide an incentive for the livestock to engage with. This shall be given, if one of the following criteria is met:

- Peckable
- Movable

The behavioural enrichment materials have to be designed and affixed that they pose no increased injury risk to the animals.

For broilers a minimum of one object or item of manipulable material has to be provided for every or every part of 150 m² of usable floor space and for Turkeys every or every part of 400 m² usable floor space.

Should behavioural deviations occur (such as feather pecking and/or cannibalism) additional suitable materials must be offered immediately above and beyond those already available, which were not provided until the point in time, where behavioural deviations occurred in the flock. This material can be chosen freely and must be available on site at all times. Though these activity options are not allowed to be the identical activity options which are already used in the shed (litter as well as peckable and moveable activity options).

1.8 Bigger space allowances

The livestock producer must choose the amount of available space so that during the entire rearing process all livestock has easy access to feed and drinking water and the animals can move and exercise normal behavioural patterns such as dust bathing and wing beating and any animal which would like to move from a tightly restricted to a free area always has the opportunity to do so. The ventilation capacity is taken into account when calculating available space.

Broilers and turkeys

For broilers and turkeys the specifications listed in the following must be met and they must be evidenced for three successive rearing cycles using live weights and slaughter weights.

Broilers

Livestock producers must have evidence to show that they plan and maintain stocking densities in such a way that 35 kg live weight per m² of usable floor space is not exceeded on average over three successive rearing cycles.

Turkeys

Livestock producers must have evidence to show that they plan and maintain stocking densities in such a way that 48 kg live weight per m² of usable floor space for hens and 53 kg live weight per m² of usable floor space for cocks are not exceeded on average over three successive rearing cycles.

 Reports of slaughter results, details concerning usable livestock housing floor space, livestock record cards, plan calculation for stock density, measures to control available space for existing stocks

1.9 Shed climate check

Before the programme audit (first audit) or rather first confirmation audit (applies from 1. January 2021) and afterwards at least once every calendar year there must be implemented a standardised shed climate check and the result must be documented.

The shed climate check has to be implemented in accordance with the implementation instructions by external experts, which are registered at the Animal Welfare Initiative. Shed climate checks must be implemented in occupied sheds.

Persons of for instance consulting organisations or companies for shed air conditioning implement the shed climate check with a checklist with appropriate implementation instructions, after they have registered at the operating company.

The persons approved in this way for the shed climate check will be published with their contact data in the internet, so that each livestock owner is able to find an expert in its proximity.

Procedure and extent of the shed climate checks → Annex 1.

If deficiencies are found during this check, the expert must list the deficiencies specifically. Together with the experts the livestock owner has to determine corrective actions (plan of measures including deadlines). The livestock owner has to implement and document the plan of measures.

In the audit, the certificate for the shed climate check (issued by an approved expert) must be shown; in addition, if applicable, the list of defects with a plan of action as well as proof that the corrective actions have been implemented in accordance with the deadline.

 Certificate for shed climate check, if applicable plan of measures and its implementation

1.10 Drinking water check

Before the programme audit (first audit) or rather first confirmation audit (applies from 1. January 2021) and afterwards at least once every calendar year there must be implemented a standardized drinking water check and the result must be documented. The drinking water check includes sampling and water analysis.

Sampling must occur by an external sampler in accordance with the implementation instructions. Relevant persons implement sampling with implementation instructions provided by the operating company, after they have registered at the operating company. The samples for microbiological analyses must be taken in occupied sheds.

The persons approved in this way for sampling will be published with their contact data in the internet, so that each livestock owner is able to find an expert in its proximity.

Procedure and extent of the drinking water check → Annex 2.

With excess of the orientation values the livestock owner must determine corrective actions (plan of measures including deadlines). The livestock owner must implement and document the plan of measures.

In the audit, the certificate for drinking water analysis (issued by a laboratory) must be shown, as well as the sampling protocol of the sampler. The following information must be documented in the sampling protocol: Name, address, location number of the company, sampling point (location of the tap or drinking nipple/drinking trough), name of the sampler, date of sampling. If these details are completely included in the certificate for drinking water analysis from the laboratory, this can be used as a protocol. In addition, if applicable, the list of defects with a plan of action as well as proof that the corrective actions have been implemented in accordance with the deadline must be available.

 Certificate for drinking water check incl. sampling protocol, if applicable plan of measures and its implementation

2 Definitions and related documents

Definition:

Locations are always considered to comprise of: Unit with one location number (e.g. after VVVO-number) in conjunction with the type of production, regardless of the number of livestock housing units/sheds/barns.

Related documents:

QS Agricultural Manual - Poultry Production, as amended

Animal Welfare Initiative *Initiative Tierwohl* programme manual, as amended

3 Annexes

3.1 Annex 1 – Shed climate check

Extent and procedure of the shed climate check

The shed climate check contains

1. Functional test of the technology

- a. Actuators and fans: damper position, direction of rotation
- b. Airflow: cross sections and cleanliness
- c. Affixing and comparison of the temperature sensors: Position, $\Delta\theta$ max. ± 2 °K
- d. Air cooling device (if applicable)
- e. Ventilation computer
 1. Required temperature (possible curve)
 2. Minimum and maximum airflow
 3. Control range
 4. Alarm values

2. Test alarm

- a. Functionality of the emergency systems: battery status, actuators and similar
- b. Forwarding of the alarm to the telephone

3. Sensory evaluation of the shed climate

If required (e.g. in case of sensory detection of deviations in pollutant gas concentration or temperature):

- Inspection of the dimensioning of the ventilation system
- Implementation of further test (fog sample, measurements of corrosive gas etc.)

4. In case of detection of defects preparation of a list of deficiencies

3.2 Annex 2 – Drinking water check, Programme

Overview of the target values for the drinking water check

Extent and procedure of the drinking water check

The drinking water check contains a physical-chemical and a microbiological analysis. At least the listed parameters contained in the following both tables have to be examined. The orientation values may not be exceeded or fall below.

a) Physical chemical analysis

When using an own well at least one sample per water source (corresponding well) has to be examined physically/chemically. If more locations (= several location numbers or several production scopes) come from a common water source, a physical chemical analysis of this well by the registered sampler is sufficient. This analysis can then be used for several locations.

When using water from the public water supply a physical/chemical analysis is not necessary.

Table 1: Assessment values for drinking water (physical chemical parameters)

Parameter	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
pH value		5-9
Degree of hardness	°D	< 20
Iron (Fe)	(mg/l)	< 3,0
Nitrite (NO ₂ ⁻)	(mg/l)	< 30
Manganese (Mn)	(mg/l)	< 4,0

Source: following BMEL recommendations

b) Microbiological analysis

At least one drinking water analysis per shed is necessary. The sampling must be carried out on the last through respectively.

Table 2: Assessment values for drinking water (microbiological parameters)

Parameter	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
Bioburden	KbE/ml	≤ 100.000
Yeasts and moulds	KbE/ml	≤ 10.000
Escherichia coli	KbE/ml	≤ 100

Source: following IKB kip

Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Tierwohls in der Nutztierhaltung mbH

(Company for the Promotion of Animal Welfare in Livestock Production Ltd.)

CEO: Dr. Alexander Hinrichs

Schedestraße 1-3

53113 Bonn

Tel +49 228 336485-0

Fax +49 228 336485-55

Info@initiative-tierwohl.de