

Explanatory notes on the Animal Welfare Initiative

Poultry – Peking ducks

Programme 2021 – 2023

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The implementation of requirements of the Animal Welfare Initiative gets monitored by an unannounced audit at least every year of the duration of the certificate. In line with QS- regular or spot audit the requirements of the Animal Welfare Initiative Poultry – Peking ducks can be audited.

In the context of audits that are exclusively performed for the Animal Welfare Initiative besides the package animal welfare poultry – Peking ducks, also the 18 basic criteria from the QS Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production must be audited.

The specific requirements and therefore the basis for auditing is determined in the Catalogue of Criteria Poultry – Peking ducks of the Animal Welfare Initiative and in the QS Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production.

1. Requirements

1.1 Basic criteria for livestock production, hygiene, animal health

What is evaluated?

It is ensured at all times that the keeping of animals is in compliance with the law, and corresponds to the QS requirements and good professional practice. During a tour of operations, the animals and their housing conditions are observed; Records and documents shall only be checked if there are indications of deviations (see QS spot-audit).

The requirements correspond to the QS requirements, see Agricultural Manual - Poultry Production.

Important: All requirements pertain to all animals and sheds within a participating company. The company is defined as comprising of the "disease control unit (SE)" (registration number in accordance with livestock movement regulations ViehVerkV) and type of production (peking ducks). Companies that conduct rearing and fattening **in one shed**, meet all requirements and animal welfare criteria at all times - in the peking duck rearing phase as well.

How are the basic criteria evaluated?

The implementation of the basic criteria is evaluated and documented in the audit report with the evaluations "fulfilled" (A), "not fulfilled" (K.O.) and – conceivable for some basic requirements – "inapplicable" (E). The evaluation "not fulfilled" will not inevitably lead to a withdrawal of the Animal Welfare Initiative. At basic criteria corrective actions with deadlines can be agreed. The deviations must be solved immediately by the livestock owner, wherefore the deadlines for the implementation of the corrective actions must be appropriately short.

Important to note: From the point of time where the audit was released until the point of time where the certification body has resolved the corrective action, the location is blocked and therefore not eligible to deliver for the Animal Welfare Initiative and not entitled of payment.

Important: If injuries (such as feather pecking), lameness or heavy soiling occur in the livestock which indicate a problem in the stock, countermeasures must be agreed with the veterinarian responsible for the stock [farm vet] (including deadlines). These corrective measures must already have been initiated and documented by the time the animal welfare audit is conducted.

1.4 Daylight

Can light from the roof space be counted?

Every shed must have daylight incidence, whereby the light should fall as evenly as possible into the animal area. The light incidence area must be at least 3 % of the shed floor area. The light can enter through windows, light bands or translucent surfaces in the roof or ridge. The prerequisite is always that daylight actually enters the shed.

1.6 Organic manipulable material

What is to be considered?

The organic manipulable material provides a stimulus for the animals to engage with it. Hay or straw are suitable for this.

In addition to loose and dry litter, which is re-spread daily, additional organic manipulable material is offered in racks or nets. **The organic material must be hay or straw or similar material that can be plucked and fed by the animals.**

The amount of manipulable material provided is sufficient in relation to the usable shed area. The manipulable material is evenly distributed in the shed and easily accessible for every animal. For this purpose, at least one rack or net is to be installed for every 250 m² of usable shed area.

How must the manipulable material be offered?

The material must be offered in racks or nets. The material must be offered in such a way that the animals can occupy themselves with it in a normal body posture.

1.7 Additional troughs

How large is a drinking place?

The animals must be provided with additional drinking troughs that allow the entire head to be immersed. These drinking places must be available in a ratio of at least 1: 250 animals. One drinking place can be counted as one animal width. Care must be taken to ensure that the drinking place to animal ratio is maintained even at the end of the fattening period when the animals are already larger.

1.10 Shed climate check

What is the longest period that may have passed between the last shed climate check and the programme audit?

Shed climate checks that date back a maximum of 1 year (= 365 days) at the time of the audit can be accepted in the programme audit.

Shed climate checks must be carried out in occupied sheds. Especially in the case of new sheds, the implementation date must be chosen in such a way that the shed climate check can be carried out after the first housing, but before the implementation date. If not all sheds or compartments are occupied at the implementation date, the necessary checks must be carried out as soon as the animals are housed. The audit must prove that the sheds had not actually been used before the date of housing and that the checks had been ordered in a timely manner. If results are not yet available, they must be submitted at short notice.

When and how often must shed climate checks be performed?

Prior to the initial audit (programme audit) and then once every calendar year a shed climate check must be conducted. If the check was conducted in the year prior to the programme audit (max. 365 days ahead of the programme audit), for the calendar year of the audit a check must be conducted as well. The result must be documented and in case of deviations measures must be determined and initiated.

If a confirmation audit to the termination of the participation in the Animal Welfare Initiative will be performed, the shed climate check must be available for the current calendar year at the time of the confirmation audit.

Locations that end the participation until the 15th February of a calendar year (expiration of the certification period or deregistration) must not conduct a shed climate check for this calendar year. If the certification period is longer than the 15th February the shed climate check must be conducted for the running calendar year.

Who implements the shed climate checks?

External, qualified specialists, which have registered at the operating company of the Animal Welfare Initiative. All for the shed climate check registered experts will be published on a list under www.initiative-tierwohl.de; from this list can be chosen freely. Experts with a license for poultry are also allowed to carry out shed climate checks for Peking ducks.

How many shed climate checks must be implemented?

At least one check per shed is necessary.

Will shed climate checks be accepted, which were implemented by experts before their registration and publication in the list of registered shed climate experts?

In general a check can only be accepted from the registration date of the respective expert. Experts with a license for poultry are also allowed to carry out shed climate checks for Peking ducks.

How does the shed climate check work exactly?

The expert has a detailed description with the corresponding checklist. The focus is the sensory evaluation with the assessment of the shed air and the observation of the animal behavior. Subsequently, a functional test of the ventilation system (actuators, temperature sensors etc.) will be performed in accordance with the specifications. Furthermore the alarm systems will be examined.

What happens, if deviations will be determined?

If deviations will be detected, they must be listed and if applicable further measurements and if applicable an inspection of the dimensioning of the ventilation system must be made. In case of deviations a plan of measures (incl. deadlines) must be set up with the expert. Corrective actions must be already initiated and documented before the first programme audit or confirmation audit.

What must be submitted in the audit?

In the audit the certificate for the shed climate check (issued by a registered expert) must be shown; furthermore if applicable the list of deficiencies with plan of measures as well as the evidence, that the corrective actions were started or implemented on time.

Does the original checklist must be used mandatory for the shed climate check?

It is possible to extent the original checklist (e.g. with the self-assessment). However, basic structure and -form must remain unchanged and must be identifiable.

If plan of measures is necessary, deadlines (either definition of the period or of the date of the implementation) must be determined.

Note: for the exact implementation of the shed climate check (e.g. sampling distribution), see "Implementation instructions of the shed climate check".

What type of alarm system must be present in a company?

For electrically operated ventilation systems, a functioning alarm device must be present in every company. For this purpose, for example, either a signal horn or a signal lamp or a phone dialer must be present. Which type of device (or which combination of devices) makes sense for a particular company must be decided on a case-by-case basis. It is fundamental that a power failure or failure of the ventilation system is noticed immediately in any case (e.g. also during the night hours or in remote sheds).

1.11 Drinking water check

What is the longest period that may have passed between the last drinking water check and the programme audit?

Drinking water checks that date back a maximum of 1 year (= 365 days) at the time of the audit can be accepted in the programme audit.

The samples for the microbiological tests of the drinking water check must be taken in occupied sheds. Especially in the case of new stables, the implementation date must be chosen in such a way that the drinking water check can be carried out after the first housing, but before the implementation date. If not all sheds are occupied at the implementation date, the necessary checks must be carried out as soon as the animals are housed. The audit must prove that the sheds had not actually been used before the date of housing and that the checks had been ordered in a timely manner. If results are not yet available, they must be submitted at short notice.

When and how often must the drinking water checks be performed?

Prior to the initial audit (programme audit) and then once every calendar year a drinking water check must be conducted.

If the check was conducted in the year prior to the programme audit (max. 365 days ahead of the programme audit), for the calendar year of the audit a check must be conducted as well. The result must be documented and in case of deviations measures have to be determined and initiated.

If a confirmation audit for terminating the participation in the Animal Welfare Initiative will be performed, the drinking water check must be available for the current calendar year at the time of the confirmation audit.

Locations that end the participation until the 15th February of a calendar year (expiration of the certification period or deregistration) must not conduct a drinking water check for this calendar year. If the certification period is longer than the 15th February the drinking water check must be conducted for the running calendar year.

Who implements the sampling?

External, qualified specialists, which have registered at the operating company of the Animal Welfare Initiative. All for sampling registered experts will be published on a list under www.initiative-tierwohl.de; from this list can be chosen freely. Experts with a license for poultry are also allowed to carry out drinking water checks for Peking ducks.

If water from own well is also used as drinking water (use for human and animals), the official drinking water monitoring can be drawn for the physical chemical drinking water check as well, as long as the prescribed parameters have been examined and on the examination result it becomes clear, that it is an official sample. In this case the sampler must not be registered at the Animal Welfare Initiative.

The Catalogue of criteria (Annex 2) describes, on which point and how many water samplings must be drawn. The amount of samples as well as the respective location and the date of the sampling must be documented in a protocol by the sampler.

Will drinking water checks be accepted, which were performed by experts before their registration and publication in the list of registered drinking water experts?

In general a check can only be accepted from the registration date of the respective expert. Experts with a license for poultry are also allowed to carry out drinking water checks for Peking ducks.

Can an official drinking water check be accepted (chemical physical examination)?

The drinking water check can be accepted with the appropriate evidence of an official sampling, which was drawn to a maximum of 365 days before the chosen implementation date or afterwards once in a calendar year.

Note: for the exact implementation of the drinking water check (e.g. sampling distribution), see "Implementation instructions of the drinking water sampling".

How exactly does the drinking water check work?

The drinking water analysis can be commissioned in each qualified laboratory. An admission of the laboratories is currently not necessary.

The Catalogue of Criteria (Annex 2) describes on which parameters the drinking water must be examined.

For the parameter bioburden the analysis at 30 °C is recommended.

What happens, if deviations are determined?

If overruns or shortfalls of the values will be determined in the analysis, a plan of measures for troubleshooting must be established (including deadlines). These corrective actions must be initiated and documented for the first audit. The aim is to provide best suitable drinking water (as most important feed). If the orientation values will not be observed, measures have to be initiated, so that the values will be achieved as quickly as possible. In the meantime negative consequences for the animals have to be minimised as much as possible.

If the limit value for degree of hardness (<20°D) is not meet, the veterinarian has to check the animals. If the veterinarian determines a health impairment or a reduced water intake of the animals, which can be attributed to water quality, measures have to be taken, to meet the limit value for degree of hardness. If the veterinarian does not determine a health impairment or a reduced water intake there is no further action required.

Does each water source and each location number (e.g. after VVVO) need an own examination?

Each location number and production scope must have a physical chemical examination (or also more when having several water sources). If more locations (= several location numbers or several production scopes) receive water from the same water source, a physical chemical analysis is sufficient.

This does not apply for the microbiological examination: here one sample per shed must be drawn and analysed from each location number and production scope by the sampler. When several sheds belong to one location number, one sample must be drawn in every shed.

What has to be submitted in the audit?

The certificate for the drinking water check (issued by a laboratory) must be shown in the audit, as well 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), name of the sampler, date of sampling. If this information is completely included in the confirmation of the drinking water analysis by the laboratory, it can be used as a protocol. Furthermore if applicable the plan of measurements for the corrective actions as well as the evidence, that the corrective measurements were implemented on time must be present.

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