

Manual Agriculture

Catalogue of Criteria Poultry Production



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Foreword

As part of the Initiative Tierwohl Geflügel, companies and associations from agriculture, the meat industry and grocery retail have jointly set themselves the goal of promoting animal-friendly and sustainable meat production.

In the future, too, they want to offer consumers poultry meat of excellent quality and great variety, but at the same time make animal welfare even more the basis of their actions.

To this end, the initiators- together with participants from the economy, science and interest groups, have developed a comprehensive programme to promote animal welfare at the agricultural production level of livestock owners and have defined scientifically sound, measurable and verifiable requirements for livestock farming for this purpose. Livestock owners who choose to participate in the Initiative Tierwohl Poultry will implement these requirements. Independent, accredited certification bodies regularly check compliance with the requirements.

The Initiative Tierwohl Poultry is continuously developed by its bodies.

1. Requirements

1.1 Basic criteria livestock farming, hygiene, animal health

The livestock owner must comply with basic criteria on animal welfare, hygiene and animal health. The basic criteria listed below are laid down in the **QS Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production** in the chapters listed. In the animal welfare audit, the focus is on checking production in the shed comprehensive document check is only carried out if there are indications of nonconformities.

Animal welfare, 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 Feed Storage
- 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 abnormalities are detected, in particular with regard to injuries, feather pecking or breast skin lesions, countermeasures (plan of measures including deadlines) must be determined with the involvement of the stock care veterinarian. The livestock owner must implement the corrective actions report in due time and document it.



If applicable, corrective actions report and its implementation

1.2 Origin and marketing: procurement of day-old chicks

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

Turkeys

When purchasing young turkeys for fattening from rearing companies, these companies must be eligible to deliver into QS.

The verification of the eligibility of delivery into the QS scheme is performed in the QS database.



Livestock register, livestock record cards/sheets, delivery notes from the hatchery, extract from QS database

1.3 Monitoring and care of livestock: measures to improve foot pad health

The aim is to maintain the foot pad health of broilers and fattening turkeys. Livestock owners undertake to participate in the monitoring of diagnostic data. For this purpose, abattoirs forward the results of foot pad lesion monitoring to their suppliers.

In order to protect the foot pads and guard against diseases, measures must be taken to ensure that the bedding is permanently loose, dry and soft until the day of destocking.



Measures initiated by the company, if applicable

1.4 Handling livestock during loading: Handling instructions for pre-destocking (only for broilers)

Doors, gates and windows in the shed have to be darkened against the ingress of light by light filters, blackout sheets or curtains. Depending on the location, this can be achieved e.g. by using strip curtains or tunnels. Direct sunlight must be effectively prevented. Depending on the location, time of day and orientation to the sun, site-specific measures result. Covers must be fitted in such a way that a sufficient supply of fresh air remains guaranteed. When opening the loading doors, ventilation short circuits must be avoided as far as possible.

Appropriate means must be used when thinning, e.g. partitioning, to minimise stress both for the animals being removed and those that remain.

The last dark period provided for in the shed management plan should be adapted to the loading time. The drinking water supply must be guaranteed until immediately before the start of loading.

Immediately after the completion of preliminary destocking and loading, the loading gates must be closed. The shed area where the depopulated animals were located must be littered with suitable bedding. Appropriate bedding material must be provided. Before continuing the rearing of remaining animals, all alarm devices must be activated and checked.



Records of farm-specific concept to the operation for implementing the handling instructions

1.5 Lighting programme for sheds with artificial lighting: *twilight phases (only for broilers)*

Livestock owners using artificial lighting in their sheds must start and end the uninterrupted darkphase of at least six hours with a twilight phase of at least 15 minutes before and after the lighting and must ensure this through an appropriate lighting programme.

1.6 Proof of proficiency of the livestock owner: Proof of annual training of livestock owner

In addition to providing proof of their expertise, livestock owners must participate in relevant, specialised training measures at least once per calendar year. Appropriate evidence of this must be provided. The evidence must be available for the first time for the initial audit.



Proof of further training measures, e.g. confirmation of attendance at specialist lectures

1.7 Documentation of diagnostic data from slaughtering: Participation in diagnostic data monitoring

Livestock owners are obliged to participate in diagnostic data monitoring. The central element of the diagnostic data monitoring is the systematic collection of indicators both in livestock farming company and in the abattoir. The indicators must be suitable for identifying the need for action to improve animal welfare. The indicators are at least:

- Mortality in the livestock farming (transmitted by the livestock owner to the abattoir)
- Foot pad changes (recording takes place at the abattoir)
- Transport-related losses (recording takes place at the abattoir)

The details are laid down in the **QS guideline on diagnostic data in poultry slaughtering**. The abattoir registers these indicators in the central database. The livestock owner must document the findings from the systematic collection of indicators (e.g. changes in parameters) and the measures derived from them. The findings database can be used for this purpose. The livestock owner receives the access data from his coordinator.

Broiler

Measures in the event of abnormal evaluation results from diagnostic data monitoring

Livestock owners for whom the systematic collection of diagnostic data reveals a conspicuous evaluation result indicating a need for action must immediately after notification of the need for action (cf. information letter, e-mail) take advantage of individual farm counselling by external experts (e.g. fattening supervisors, veterinarians, feed advisors, etc.). The farm-specific advice must be aimed at finding and eliminating the causes of the findings. The deficiencies identified as the cause must be documented and remedied by means of suitable measures which must be set out in writing in a plan and the completion of which must be documented there.



records for participation in the monitoring of diagnostic data, documentation of the abattoir's diagnostic data, results of the recorded indicators, evidence of advice in case of indicated need for action (only broiler), evidence of identified deficiencies and corrective actions report (only broiler)

1.8 Additional activity options

In addition to loose and dry bedding, that must be furnished that way, that the animals can pick, scratch and in some areas dust-bathe, at least one other changeable, consumable material, such as straw/hay in hay racks/baskets/bales or other litter materials (e.g. straw granulate/wood shavings in bales) or other peckable objects (e.g. pecking stones) must be permanently offered as activity material by the beginning of the second week of life at the latest.

The modifiable materials must provide an incentive for the animals to occupy themselves with them. This is given by the fulfilment of one of the following criteria:

- Pickability
- Mobility

The materials used to keep the animals occupied must be of such a nature and placed in such a way that they do not pose an increased risk of injury to the animals.

Broiler

For broilers, at least one pecking element or activity material must be provided per 100 m² or part thereof of usable floor space (sufficient for approx. 2,000 birds).

Turkeys

For turkeys, at least one pecking element or activity material must be provided per 400 m² or part thereof of usable shed space.

Broiler and turkey

When behavioural abnormalities occur (e.g. feather pecking and cannibalism), additional activity materials beyond the usual supplementary activity materials must be offered, which have not yet been made available to the flock at the time of the occurrence of the behavioural abnormalities. These materials may be freely chosen and must be available on the company at all times. However, these materials must not be identical to the materials already in use (bedding and additional pickable or moveable exercise opportunities).

1.9 Bigger space allowance

The livestock owner must choose the amount of available space so that during the entire rearing process all animals can easily reach feed and water, the animals can move and perform normal behavioural patterns (e.g. dust bathing and wing flapping) and any animal wishing to move from a confined area to an open area has the opportunity to do so. Ventilation capacity is taken into account when calculating space allowance.

If, due to legal requirements at home and abroad, a higher or identical space allowance must be complied with on a farm-by-farm basis, these requirements also apply within the framework of the Initiative Tierwohl poultry. The individual stocking densities to be observed for the participating company must not be exceeded at any time.

Broiler and turkey

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. The upper limits of live weight per m² of usable shed area laid down in the **QS Guidelines for Poultry Production** may not be exceeded at any time, even in individual runs.

Broilers

Livestock owners must demonstrably plan and comply with stocking densities in such a way that 35 kg live weight per m² of usable shed area is not exceeded on average over three consecutive cycles.

Turkeys

Livestock owners must demonstrably plan and comply with stocking densities that do not exceed 48 kg live weight per m² usable house area for female and 53 kg live weight per m² usable shed area for male turkeys on average over three consecutive cycles.



Reports of slaughter result, details concerning usable floor space of each shed, livestock record cards/sheets, plan calculations for stocking density, measures to control the space allowance of existing flocks

1.10 Shed climate check

Before the first programme audit and at least once per calendar year thereafter, a standardised shed climate check must be carried out and the result documented.

The shed climate check must be carried out by external experts registered with the Initiative Tierwohl in accordance with the implementation instructions. Shed climate checks must be carried out in occupied stables.

Persons from e.g. advisory organisations or companies for shed climate technology carry out the shed climate check on the basis of a checklist with corresponding instructions for execution after they have registered with the operating company.

The persons approved for the shed climate check are published with their contact details on the website of the Animal Welfare Initiative, so that every livestock owner can find an expert near him.

Procedure and scope of the shed climate check → Appendix 1.

If deficiencies are found during this inspection, the expert must list the deficiencies specifically. The livestock owner must define corrective actions together with the expert (corrective actions report including deadlines). The livestock owner must implement the corrective actions report in due time and document it.

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 deficiencies with corrective actions report as well as proof that the corrective actions were implemented in due time.



Reports of slaughter result, details concerning usable floor space of each shed, livestock record cards/sheets, plan calculations for stocking density, measures to control the space allowance of existing flocks

1.11 Drinking water check

Before the first programme audit and at least once per calendar year thereafter, a standardised drinking water check must be carried out and the result documented. The drinking water check passes through sampling and water analysis.

Sampling must be carried out by an external sampler in accordance with the implementation instructions. Appropriate persons shall carry out the sampling according to the implementation instructions provided by the operating company after they have registered with the operating company. The samples for microbiological examinations must be taken in occupied stalls.

The persons approved for sampling in this way are published with their contact details on the website of the Animal Welfare Initiative so that every livestock owner can find an expert in their area.

Procedure and scope of the drinking water check → Appendix 2.

If the orientation values are exceeded, the livestock owner must define corrective actions (action plan including deadlines). The livestock owner must implement the corrective actions report in due time and document it.

In the audit, the certificate for the drinking water analysis (issued by a laboratory) must be presented, 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 basin), name of the sampler, date of sampling. If this information is included in the laboratory's drinking water analysis certificate, it can be used as a record. In addition, the corrective actions report and proof that the corrective actions have been implemented in due time must be available.



proof of the drinking water check incl. sampling protocol, corrective actions report if applicable and its implementation

2 Definitions and related documents

Definition:

The location is always considered: unit with an official registration number as location number (e.g. in Germany according to the German Livestock Transport Regulation) in combination with production scope, regardless of the number of stalls.

Related documents:

QS Guideline Agriculture Poultry Production, as amended

Programme manual of Initiative Tierwohl, as amended

3 Annexes

3.1 Annex 1 - Shed climate check

Scope 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 (possibly curve)
 2. Minimum and maximum airflow
 3. Control range
 4. Alarm values

2. Test alarm

- a. Functionality of the emergency systems: Battery status, actuators, etc.
- b. Forwarding the alarm to the telephone

3. Sensory testing of the stable climate

If necessary (e.g. if nonconformities in pollutant gas concentration or temperature are detected by sensors):

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

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

3.2 Annex 2 - Drinking water check

Overview of the target values for the drinking water check

Scope and procedure of the drinking water check

The drinking water check comprises a physical chemical and a microbiological examination. At least the parameters listed in the following two tables must be examined. The values must not exceed or fall below the orientation values.

a) Physical chemical examination

If an own well is used, at least one sample per water source (respective well) must be analysed physical chemically. If several locations (= several location numbers or several production scopes) are fed 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, no physical chemical analysis is necessary.

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

Parameter	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
pH value		5-9
Hardness level	°dH	< 21
Iron (Fe)	(mg/l)	< 3,0
Nitrite (NO ₂ -)	(mg/l)	< 30
Manganese (Mn)	(mg/l)	< 4,0

Source: based on BMEL recommendations

b) Microbiological examination

At least one drinking water test is required per stall. Sampling is carried out at the drinking trough.

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

Parameter	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
Total germ count	CFU/ml	≤ 100.000
Yeast and mould	CFU/ml	≤ 10.000
Escherichia coli	CFU/ml	≤ 100

Source: based on IKB kip

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