

Questionnaire on the Initiative Tierwohl

Poultry production

The following is a compilation of frequently asked questions and the corresponding answers on participation in the Initiative Tierwohl for poultry farmers.

How can I register to participate in the Initiative Tierwohl?

Registration for the Initiative Tierwohl must always be done via a coordinator. This requires the declaration of participation together with the annexes, which can be found in the [download area](#) of our website. The coordinator then registers the livestock owner in the database. The basic prerequisite for participation is successful participation in the QS scheme or in a comparable recognised quality assurance system.

Is there a list of coordinators who are participants in the Initiative Tierwohl?

Yes, all coordinators who have registered for the Initiative Tierwohl are published on a list in the [download area](#). A coordinator can be selected from the list. It is up to the companies whether they want to work with the same coordinator as for QS scheme participation or whether they choose a different coordinator.

When can I register for the Initiative Tierwohl?

Poultry farming companies can be registered at any time from 1st September 2023. Livestock owners wishing to participate in the Initiative Tierwohl (also applies to companies that are already participating) should register as soon as possible with their marketer and coordinator. Participation requires the signing of a new declaration of participation (incl. annexes). This is available on the website of the Initiative Tierwohl.

Once the coordinator has received the signed declaration of participation, he will register the location in the Initiative Tierwohl database. Approval for the Initiative Tierwohl takes place after release of the successfully passed programme audit.

Do companies already participating in the 2021-2023 programme also have to register again?

Yes, all companies wishing to participate must re-register with their coordinator by signing a new declaration of participation for the respective locations. This applies to all companies that have already participated in the Initiative Tierwohl as well as to companies that decide to participate for the first time.

This new registration is necessary because new agreements for participation will be concluded that take the new framework conditions into account. Due to the change of the terms, no further new registration will be necessary thereafter for already participating companies (except after failed audits) - the participation of the livestock owners will be extended by one calendar year at a time (until 31st December of the following year), unless the participation is terminated. Termination of agreement by the livestock owner is possible at any time with three months' notice.

Which implementation date can I choose?

For companies that are new participants, the earliest possible implementation date is 1st January 2024.

For all companies that have already participated in the Initiative Tierwohl in the 2021-2023 programme, the implementation date should be set to the date three months before the end of the previous certificate term. In this way, the last confirmation audit for the 2021-2023 programme and the new programme audit can be carried out on the same date. The earliest possible implementation date for these companies is 1st October 2023. The live-

stock owners will then continue to participate in the old programme after the audit until the end of their respective term and will then start directly in the new programme. If the implementation date is chosen after the end of the term of the old programme (2021-2023), the audits will be carried out separately and there may be a gap in participation.

When do the criteria have to be complied with?

When registering for the Initiative Tierwohl, each livestock owner indicates the date from which he or she will comply with the criteria (implementation date).

Note: compliance with the criteria is not yet required for registration.

I am already an ITW participant. Can I combine the new audit with the final audit?

Yes, to reduce the audit effort and save time, the last confirmation audit 2021-2023 and the first programme audit can be combined.

How many audits are carried out?

At the start of participation, an initial programme audit takes place. After release of the programme audit, the company is approved for the Initiative Tierwohl. Subsequently, the companies are audited twice per calendar year: A programme audit and a stock check are carried out in each case. If a livestock owner does not begin participation until 1st July of a calendar year, no stock check will take place in that calendar year. In the next calendar year, the twice-yearly audit cycle for the location begins.

Note on programme transition for companies already participating: If the first programme audit for 2024 in combination with the final confirmation audit for the 2021-2023 programme is already carried out in 2023, this already counts for the year 2024.

Are the audits unannounced?

Yes, all animal welfare audits are unannounced (contact maximum 24 hours in advance). This also applies to the first audit at the beginning of participation, whereby the livestock owner himself indicates when he will comply with the criteria and is thus ready for the audit (cf. implementation date). Stock checks are completely unannounced.

How is the price surcharge paid out?

From 2024, the fixed animal welfare fees will be changed to recommended prices. In future, the price surcharge will be paid directly by the abattoirs to the livestock owners. Usually, payment will be made with the slaughter invoice. The price surcharge must be shown separately on the slaughter invoice.

In order to facilitate the changeover, the animal welfare payment for animals **marketed until 31st March 2024** will **still be paid via the operating company**. Payment directly via the abattoirs will start from 1st April 2024.

The bodies in the ITW have agreed on a recommendation on the level of the price surcharges:

- 2.75 ct per kilogram live weight for broilers
- 3.25 ct per kilogram live weight for turkey hens
- 4.0 ct per kilogram of live weight for turkey cocks

No recommendations were made for peking duck production. The price surcharge is to be freely negotiated between the market participants.

How long can you participate in the Initiative Tierwohl?

Participation in the Initiative Tierwohl is unlimited in time. After registration for the ITW, participation is automatically renewed for one calendar year at a time (until 31st December of the following year), unless the livestock owner terminates participation. An ordinary termination of agreement is possible at any time with a notice period of three months.

What needs to be taken into account when participation in the Initiative Tierwohl is terminated?

To terminate participation from the Initiative Tierwohl, a final programme audit must be carried out to confirm compliance with the criteria until the end of participation. For this audit, the shed climate and drinking water check as well as the proof of further training must already be available for the current calendar year. The sheds must also (still) be occupied. If a company deregisters without a final programme audit, a contractual penalty may be imposed. The audit must be carried out between three months before the date of deregistration at the earliest and two weeks after the date of deregistration at the latest. If a regular programme audit with all the necessary evidence has already been carried out during this period, this can be used as the final audit.

In the case of termination of agreement at the end of the year - especially if, for example, new requirements apply from 1st January of the following year - the audit should be carried out in the current calendar year if possible.

What happens if an audit is not passed?

If a livestock owner does not pass an audit, the participation in the Initiative Tierwohl is terminated. From the day of the failed audit onwards, the entitlement to a price surcharge ceases. In addition, the operating company may impose a contractual penalty. The amount of the penalty is based on the recommended price surcharge that the livestock owner received for implementing the requirements of the ITW. The period of time that has elapsed since the last successful audit (programme audit, stock check, if applicable) is decisive for the assessment of the contractual penalty if the livestock owner is unable to prove the implementation of the requirements at a later point in time (reversal of the burden of proof). In determining the contractual penalty, the operating company assumes that the livestock owner has received the livestock welfare payment determined in the ITW or the price surcharge recommended in the ITW. The livestock owner has the possibility to appeal both the certification decision (to the certification body) and the contractual penalty (to the operating company), inter alia if the amount actually received was lower. In the event of a failed audit, the operating company shall provide written information on the possibilities of appeal.

After a failed audit, livestock owners with the locations concerned can potentially re-register for the Initiative Tierwohl.

Corrective actions for QS basic criteria - what needs to be considered?

Corrective actions with deadlines can be agreed for all basic criteria. If a corrective action is agreed, the company continues to participate in the ITW. The corrective actions must be implemented in a timely manner. The nonconformities must be corrected immediately by the livestock owner, which is why a correspondingly short deadline must be set for the implementation of the actions.

Please note: From the release of audit report until the certification body has completed the corrective action, the location is blocked and therefore not eligible to deliver for the Initiative Tierwohl and not entitled to payment. If a corrective action is not remedied (in due time), the audit will be deemed as "failed" after the deadline has expired and the company will lose its approval for the ITW.

What applies to companies that are obliged to comply with higher requirements due to national legal requirements (e.g. abroad)?

Livestock owners who are obliged to comply with higher requirements, e.g. abroad due to national legal requirements, must of course comply with them. If these requirements also affect the ITW criteria (e.g. space allowance), they are checked accordingly in the ITW audit. Non-compliance can lead to a knock-out evaluation.

Who is allowed to carry out the shed climate check?

External experts who have previously registered with the operating company of the Initiative Tierwohl. All experts approved for the shed climate check are published on a list in the [download area](#). Please note that in addition to the shed climate experts for the Initiative Tierwohl poultry, the list also includes the shed climate experts of the Initiative Tierwohl for the pig sector and that you must select shed climate experts for the poultry sector.

Who is allowed to carry out the drinking water check?

External competent persons who have previously registered with the operating company of the Initiative Tierwohl. All samplers approved for the drinking water check are published on a list in the [download area](#). Please note that the list also includes samplers for drinking water for the Initiative Tierwohl for the pig sector and that you must select samplers for drinking water for the poultry sector.

What happens if a registered location expands its livestock farming, or the livestock is increased?

All criteria must always be complied with for all animals and all areas of the registered locations (Registration number + production scope), i.e. also for the new parts of the farm and the additional animals.

If the stock increases due to the addition of a new shed/compartment, this must be reported to the coordinator. A new programme audit must be carried out to check whether the ITW requirements are complied with in the entire company. If, according to the inspection system, a programme audit must be carried out for the calendar year anyway, this can also be used - if carried out promptly - for the certification of the operational changes to livestock farming.

What is the procedure to be followed when there is a change of operator of a registered company?

All changes that have an effect on the contract, the size of the livestock or the criteria must be reported immediately to the coordinator. The coordinator can adjust the data in the database.

In case of rental or sale of the company, it is possible to transfer the participation in the Initiative Tierwohl to the next owner. However, the new owner must have an audit carried out after the takeover, as the person responsible and, if applicable, the husbandry management will change.

What happens if a registered company is split or two participating companies are merged?

Company divisions or mergers can be requested via the coordinator in the database.

Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Tierwohls in der Nutztierhaltung mbH (Society for the Promotion of Animal Welfare in Farm Animal Husbandry)

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