

Manual Agriculture

Catalog of criteria piglet rearing

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Note: The Manual Agriculture Catalog of Criteria piglet rearing is written in German and translated into English. In case of discrepancies between the translation and the German version, the German original is valid.

Foreword

In the Initiative Tierwohl Pig, companies and associations from agriculture, the meat industry and food retail have jointly set themselves the goal of promoting more animal-friendly and sustainable meat production.

They want to continue to offer consumers pork of excellent quality and great variety in the future, but at the same time make animal welfare an even stronger basis for their actions.

To this end, the initiators have developed a comprehensive programme to promote animal welfare at the agricultural production level of livestock owners (piglet production, piglet rearing, sow production) with the involvement of industry, science and interest groups and have defined well-founded, measurable and verifiable requirements for livestock farming. Livestock owners who voluntarily decide to participate in the Initiative Tierwohl Pig will implement these requirements.

The Initiative Tierwohl Pig is being continuously developed. Furthermore, the additional promotion of innovative measures is an important part of the programme. The advisory board will continuously deal with the intended further development and make the necessary decisions.

Requirements

1.1 Basic criteria livestock farming, hygiene, animal health

The livestock owner must comply with basic criteria for animal welfare, hygiene and animal health. The basic criteria are defined in the **QS guideline Agriculture Pig Farming** in the chapters below. In the animal welfare audit, the focus is on the inspection of production in the sty. Records and documents are consulted for support if this makes sense or is necessary to check the criterion.

If abnormalities regarding injuries, lameness or heavy soiling are detected, corrective actions (action plan including deadlines) must be defined with the involvement of the stock care veterinarian. The livestock owner must implement the action plan in a timely manner and document this.

Note: Since sow production and piglet rearing are to be seen as a unit, implementing the requirements of "10% more space allowance" in sow production reduces the number of sows, so that the number of piglets in piglet rearing also decreases and more space is offered to the animals in piglet rearing.


Animal welfare, hygiene and animal health:

- 3.2.1 Monitoring and care of the animals
- 3.2.2 General husbandry requirements
- 3.2.3 Handling sick and injured animals
- 3.2.4 Sty floors
- 3.2.5 Sty climate, temperature, noise pollution, ventilation
- 3.2.6 Lighting
- 3.2.7 Space allowance
- 3.2.8 Alarm system
- 3.2.14 Activity material
- 3.3.1 Feed supply
- 3.3.2 Hygiene of the feeding systems
- 3.3.3 Storage of animal feed
- 3.4.1 Water supply
- 3.4.2 Hygiene of the watering systems
- 3.6.1 Buildings and annexes
- 3.6.2 Industrial hygiene
- 3.6.3 Handling litter, manure and feed residues
- 3.6.4 Carcass storage and collection
- 3.6.5 Pest monitoring and control
- 3.6.6 Cleaning and disinfection measures
- 3.6.7 Special hygiene requirements

 Action plan and its implementation, if applicable

1.2 Participation in antibiotics monitoring

The livestock owner must participate in antibiotics monitoring. The requirements are set out in the **QS guideline antibiotics monitoring pigs**.

 Antibiotics monitoring info letter; access to data in antibiotics database

1.3 Health plan

The company must maintain a health plan. This includes records of the loss rates and their development over the past two years in the company (history is built up from the start of participation in the ITW).

⇒ In addition, the health status must be checked by an annual screening (⇒ see annex 3).

Finally, the consequences and resulting measures from the records, the screening results and the findings of the veterinary stock care must be recorded in an action plan (vaccination plan, measures, etc.).

Both the records of the health plan (quarterly) and the results of the screening (once a calendar year) must be available in the confirmation audit, but not yet in the program audit.

 Health plan, action plan if applicable and its implementation

1.4 Sty climate check

A standardized sty climate check must be carried out before the initial audit and then once in each subsequent calendar year and the results documented.

The sty climate check must be carried out by external experts registered with the Initiative Tierwohl prior to their deployment in accordance with the implementation instructions. The persons registered for the sty climate check are published on the Internet with their contact details so that every livestock owner can find an expert in their area. Sty climate checks must be carried out in occupied sties.

Procedure and scope of the sty climate check ⇒ Annex 1.

If deficiencies are identified during this inspection, the technical expert must list the deficiencies in detail. The livestock owner must define corrective actions together with the technical expert (action plan including deadlines). The livestock owner must implement the action plan on time and document this.

The certificate for the sty climate check (issued by an approved expert) must be shown at the end of the audit; in addition, the list of deficiencies with an action plan and proof that the corrective actions have been implemented on time.

 Certificate for the sty climate check, action plan and its implementation, if applicable

1.5 Drinking water check

A standardized drinking water check must be carried out before the initial audit and then regularly once every following calendar year and the result must be documented. The drinking water check passes sampling and water analysis.

The sample must be taken by external samplers registered with the Initiative Tierwohl prior to their deployment in accordance with the implementation instructions. The persons registered for sampling are published on the Internet with their contact details so that every livestock owner can find an expert in their area.


Samples for microbiological testing must be taken in occupied sties.

Appropriately registered persons carry out the sampling in accordance with the instructions.

Procedure and scope of the drinking water check ⇒ Annex 2.


If the guidance values are exceeded, the livestock owner must define corrective actions (action plan including deadlines). The livestock owner must implement the action plan on time and document this.

The certificate for the drinking water analysis (issued by a laboratory) must be shown at the end of the audit, as must the sampler's sampling protocol. 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 contained in full in the certificate for drinking water analysis from the laboratories, this can be used as a protocol. In addition, the action plan for remedying defects and proof that the corrective actions were implemented on time must be available.

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

1.6 Training

Every livestock owner must take part in relevant, specialist training measures at least once per calendar year. Proof of this must be provided. Proof must be provided for the first time for the initial audit.

 Certificate of further training

1.7 Daylight

Each sty must have daylight incidence. The size of the light openings must be at least 3% of the compartment floor area according to the German Law. Exceptions are approved for sties that were put into company before August 4, 2006 or where the 3% value cannot be achieved for reasons of construction technology and design. Therefore, the Initiative Tierwohl also applies to these companies in that the average light-permeable area of the company (location number) must be at least 1.5% of the compartment floor area.

Compensation is only possible across sties within a location number and production scope. For individual compartments, the light-permeable area may be reduced by a maximum of 20%.

Proof (documentation of window area, reference area and percentage) must be available.

 Proof of daylight incidence per compartment and on average for the company

1.8 Purchase of ITW piglets

Piglet rearing companies must purchase piglets from companies authorized to supply ITW. The eligibility of delivery of the sow owner must be checked on a daily basis for the delivery of piglets, e.g. using the public search function (<https://datenbank.initiative-tierwohl.de/QSTierwohl/start/do>).

 Stock books, delivery notes

1.9 Roughage

The animals must have access to roughage that is safe for their health. Roughage is feed that is rich in raw fiber and structure. It must be edible, chewable, inspectable, moveable and workable.

Supplementing the normal feed ration by adding e.g. maize silage to the liquid feed or increasing the crude fiber content does not meet the requirements.

In littered sties (straw housing), no additional roughage is necessary, provided the litter is of feed quality.

The roughage must be offered in addition to and separately from the actual feed. The roughage can be presented on the ground, close to the ground, in a rack or in another suitable form (also above the trough). To ensure that the roughage always provides an incentive, it can be fed at intervals by taking short breaks. It must be ensured that it is available day and night and especially during the animals' activity times.

The roughage must be a different material than the legally required activity material (e.g. straw and hay; different types of straw are considered one material). In addition, the roughage and the activity material must be offered separately (e.g. not via shared hay and straw racks).

The following requirements apply to access to roughage (number of animals per feeding place).

Width or diameter, cm	Maximum number of animals per object (rack, trough, etc.)				
	a) Racks, troughs, wall-mounted, closed side walls	b) Racks, troughs, wall-mounted, open side walls	c) Racks, troughs, free-standing or suspended, closed side walls	d) Racks, troughs, free-standing or suspended, open side walls	e) Round containers, free-standing, suspended or floor feeding
Up to 20	25	50	50	80	100
> 20 - 30	30	60	60	80	100
> 30 - 40	35	70	70	100	100
> 40 - 50	45	80	90	120	130
> 50 - 60	55	90	110	120	130
> 60 - 70	65	100	130	140	140
> 70 - 80	75	110	140	140	140
> 80 - 90	85	120	160	160	160
> 90 - 100	95	130	160	160	160


1.10 Marketing to ITW fatteners for original piglet rearers

The criterion applies to original piglet rearers and is mandatory from July 1, 2024. These are piglet rearers who already participated in the Initiative Tierwohl before November 1, 2022 and registered during the registration phase in September 2023.

Original piglet rearers who can prove that they deliver their piglets to an ITW fattening company will receive a higher animal welfare payment for these piglets from July 1, 2024. The eligibility of delivery of the recipient fattening company must be verified for each delivery to the fattening company (date of destocking at the piglet rearing company). The procedure for checking the eligibility of delivery must be comprehensible.

There is no obligation to deliver to ITW fatteners, but the animal welfare payment per reared piglet is reduced for those piglets that were not delivered to an ITW fattener.

When reporting reared piglets to the coordinator, a distinction must be made between piglets that have been marketed to an ITW fattener and piglets that have not been marketed to an ITW fattener.


 Notification of livestock movements/overview of delivery notifications, approval by operating company for individual notifications if necessary

1.11 Marketing to ITW fatteners for identity piglet rearers

The criterion applies to identity piglet rearers. These are piglet rearers who have been participating in the Initiative Tierwohl since November 1, 2022, or piglet rearers who are registering to participate for the first time.

Identity piglet rearers only receive the animal welfare payment for piglets that have been verifiably delivered to an ITW fattening company. The eligibility of delivery of the recipient fattening farm must be verified for each delivery to the fattening farm (date of destocking at the piglet rearing farm). The procedure for checking the eligibility of delivery must be traceable.

There is no obligation to deliver to ITW fatteners, but only those piglets that have been delivered to an ITW fattener may be reported to the coordinator for payment of the animal welfare payment.

 Notification of livestock movements/overview of delivery notifications, approval by operating company for individual notifications if necessary

Definitions and related documents

Definition:

The location is always considered: epidemiological unit per location number in combination with production scope, regardless of the number of sties

Related documents:

QS Guideline Agriculture Pig farming

QS guideline on antibiotics monitoring in pigs

Initiative Tierwohl program manual

Annexes

1.12 Annex 1 - Sty climate check

Scope and procedure of the sty climate check

The sty climate check includes

1. Function test of the technology

- a. Actuators and fans: damper position, direction of rotation
- b. Air ducting: cross-sections and cleanliness
- c. Installation and adjustment of the temperature sensors: Position, $\Delta\theta$ max. ± 2 °K
- d. Ventilation computer
 1. Set temperature (possibly curve)
 2. Minimum and maximum air rate
 3. Control range
 4. Alarm values

2. Test alarm

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

3. Sensory testing of the sty climate

If required (e.g. in the event of sensory detection of nonconformities in the concentration of harmful gases or temperature):

- Checking the dimensioning of the ventilation system
- Carrying out further tests (fog sample, pollutant gas measurements, etc.)

4. If defects are identified, preparation of a list of defects and an action plan including deadlines for remedying the defects

The minimum number of checks to be carried out per sty is as follows:

- for conspicuous sty compartments, detected by visual inspection of all sty areas/compartments with sensory testing, a sty climate check must always be carried out and
- at least one check per sty (i.e. one building envelope) and at the same time
 - At least one check per functional area (mating area, waiting area, farrowing area)
 - At least one check per compartment/functional area if compartments/functional areas are equipped with different ventilation technology
 - At least two checks if up to eight compartments/functional areas are equipped with the same ventilation technology
 - At least three checks if more than eight compartments/functional areas are equipped with the same ventilation technology

1.13 Annex 2 - 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 reference values. If the analysis reveals nonconformities with the assessment values, an action plan must be drawn up to rectify the problem (including deadlines). Once the measures have been implemented, a new water sample does not have to be taken to check the effectiveness of the measures.

a) Physical-chemical examination

When using your own well, at least one sample per water source (respective well) must be physically/chemically analyzed.

No physical/chemical analysis is required when using water from the public water supply.

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

Parameters	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
pH value		5-9
Electrical conductivity	µS/cm	< 3000
Iron (Fe)	(mg/l)	< 3
3Nitrates (NO ⁻)	(mg/l)	< 200
42Sulphate (SO ⁻)	(mg/l)	< 500

Source: Based on BMEL orientation framework for the assessment of the hygienic quality of drinking water under feed law, as of 19.07.2019; selection

b) Microbiological examination

The sample size must include one sample for up to 1,500 piglet rearing places and one additional sample for each additional 5,000 places or part thereof. The water samples must be taken at the last drinkers of each batch. In the case of a ring main, the sample can be taken at any point in the ring main.

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

Parameters	Unit	Suitable for drinking water
Colony count at 20°C	in 1 ml	≤ 10.000
Colony count at 36°C	in 1 ml	≤ 1.000
Escherichia coli	in 100 ml	0

Source: Based on BMEL orientation framework for the assessment of the hygienic quality of drinking water under feed law, as of 19.07.2019; selection

1.14 Annex 3 - Screening

Scope and procedure of the screening

At least 10 piglets must be sampled once a calendar year for screening as part of the health plan for piglet rearers. It is the responsibility and decision of the stock care veterinarian on the farm to adapt the examinations to the actual incidence of infection, depending on the region or individual company situation.

The laboratory tests should focus in particular on the infectious diseases typical for the region, such as PRRS and PCV2. The decisive factor here is that these are lead infections that generally reflect the health situation of the herd and thus allow the company veterinarian and the farmer to see whether the preventive measures (e.g. vaccinations) are working in the respective herd.

Passed screening programmes (e.g. BayPHV, TIGA, Westfalenpass, EVH or EGF screening, etc.) can be recognized in this sense.

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