

KAT – Verein für kontrollierte alternative Tierhaltungsformen e.V.

KAT-Guide Administrative Audits in Laying Farms

on traceability and assurance of origin -
rearing and selection procedures

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Part I: Basic principles

1 Preamble

The Verein für kontrollierte alternative Tierhaltungsformen e.V. (Association for Controlled Alternative Animal Husbandry, KAT) is the most important inspection body in Germany and neighbouring EU countries for the inspection of eggs from alternative forms of hen keeping (free-range, barn and organic egg production). Virtually all eggs offered for sale on the German food retail market bear the KAT conformity seal. The number of member establishments has grown continually since the association was founded in 1995.

The chief objectives of KAT are:

- to ensure full traceability, assurance of origin, and quality assurance of eggs and egg products from barn, free-range and organic rearing produced, traded or placed on the market by Members;
- to lay down and implement uniform requirements for the barn, free-range and organic rearing of laying hens, taking account of animal welfare issues;
- to lay down and implement uniform requirements for the keeping of male laying hybrids, taking account of animal welfare issues;
- transparency for the consumer by providing information (e.g. through the www.was-steht-auf-dem-ei.de).

2 Rearing and selection procedures in the KAT system

The aim of the assurance of origin and traceability system, based on the quantity reports for each production stage (hatchery, rearing, slaughterhouse, laying farm, packing station, marketer) that must be submitted to the KAT database, is to guarantee a plausible link between the laying hen and the corresponding reared male laying hybrid/selected male hatching eggs. In this way, for eggs produced under these conditions, transparent traceability of the rearing and selection procedures is provided, and added value is created for consumers as a result.

3 Scope of application

This Guide was developed for the production stage of “Laying farms” within the KAT traceability system and describes the requirements that laying farms must meet in order to systematically guarantee assurance of origin and traceability of eggs that are marketed under the KAT logo with a label stating “Rearing of male chicks” or a similar message. This Guide applies with effect from 1 January 2022.

With effect from 1 January 2022, eggs may only be marketed using the KAT logo subject to compliance with the requirements in relation to the KAT traceability system “Rearing and selection procedures” and if all of the necessary production and distribution systems are integrated into the KAT system.

4 Participation in the system

Any establishment that wishes to be part of the KAT value chain must register with KAT at www.anmeldung.kat.eu and – if not already a participant in the KAT system – enter into a KAT participant contract.

Once the KAT Office has been provided with all of the necessary registration documents and signed participant contract, the establishment will be given access details for the KAT database and the database instructions.

5 Responsibilities

Every stage in the value chain is responsible for complying with the described requirements and for correctly reporting the necessary data to the KAT database.

6 Data protection

The data entered by the system participant in the KAT database system are stored on the internet server and computer system and on data storage media. All data are protected against tampering and access by third parties through state-of-the-art technology. Master data are not transferred to third parties and are used exclusively by KAT for participant administration.

Only the KAT Office and the participants themselves have access to the data entered in the system. The disclosure of data to entities outside the system (“the public”) is fundamentally excluded.

For the purpose of plausibility checks, the KAT Office has comprehensive access rights to participant data and can also access information on bird movements at all production and sales stages included in the KAT system.

7 Internet portal

In order to create greater transparency, KAT offers a special service on the query page at www.was-steht-auf-dem-ei.de: By entering the number printed on the egg (stamp number), consumers can find out the name and location of the laying farm and view pictures of the henhouse and birds. The query function is also available in the form of a smartphone app.

Further information on the KAT system can be found at www.kat.eu Every KAT participant can register for the internal area of the website and download the documents held there (circulars, forms, member lists, etc.).

Part II: List of requirements

1 Official licence

- 1.1.1 **[K.O.]** The farm must have an official licence.

2 Labelling

The establishments that participate in the KAT system must keep KAT stocks completely separate from third-party stocks at all times both physically and in accounting terms, and with documentation of the separation available at all times. Any risk of KAT goods being mistaken for or mixed up with third-party goods must be excluded. KAT and non-KAT stocks must therefore be clearly labelled to ensure that they can always be identified.

2.1 Labelling in documents

- 2.1.1 KAT stocks must be clearly assigned and labelled.

- 2.1.2 All of the relevant documents (collection slips/delivery notes) must at least include the following information:

- ✓ Name and address of the producer
- ✓ Name and address of the recipient
- ✓ Stamp number
- ✓ Number of eggs – broken down by form of production, laying date/period
- ✓ Dispatch date
- ✓ Clear KAT labelling

If the goods are class B goods, this should also be stated on the delivery note.

2.2 Use of the KAT logo

- 2.2.1 The KAT logo may be used as a general logo on delivery notes and invoices provided that the items are also clearly marked as KAT goods or non-KAT goods before or after the item name or are exclusively KAT goods.

 *KAT logo design rules*

3 Batch designation

In order to ensure the traceability and allocation of flocks of cockerels to the marketed eggs, batch designations that clearly define the birds included in that batch are assigned by both the hatcheries and the rearing farms when entering the livestock data into the KAT database.

Two procedures for the traceability of the rearing of male laying hybrids are possible in the KAT system:

- **Hatch equivalents:** Male chicks are reared that come from the same hatching and hatchery as the female chicks.
- **Head equivalents:** The male chicks that are reared have different hatching dates from the female chicks and may also have been hatched in other hatcheries. The male chicks must, however, come from laying hybrid breeds. Measures must be in place to guarantee that the hatching date of the males is a maximum of 12 months before the hatching date of the young hens, and that the males are slaughtered before the young hens are stocked in the laying house. Several flocks of cockerels may be assigned to one flock of laying hens.

3.1 Batch designation in hatchery

Tab. 1: Batch designation in hatchery

Information	Explanation	Example
KAT ID	Identification number assigned to hatchery by KAT	PL/B-999
Date	YYYYMMDD	20210711
Sex	Abbreviation for male or female	M or F
Form of production	Information on whether hatching is from organic (0) or conventional (2) production.	0 or 2
Process used for male chicks	No process applied = B100 Male chicks are reared = B200 Selection process = B300	B100 B200 B300
Blank spaces	All blank spaces are marked with an underscore (“_”).	_

Examples

Brood batch: PL/B-999_20210118F_2_B300

Organic brood batch: PL/B-999_20210118M_0_B200

Abbreviations for the labelling of selection processes

B301	Seleggt
B302	In Ovo
B303	Plantegg (genetic testing)
B304	Chegg (hyperspectral analysis)

Information: the list is correct as at September 2021. An up-to-date list of the selection processes can be viewed in the internal members' area under "DOCUMENTS → Information and Leaflets".

3.2 Batch designation in rearing farm

Tab. 2: Batch designation in rearing farm

Information	Explanation	Example
KAT ID	Identification number assigned to hatchery by KAT	PL/A-999
Henhouse	The henhouse can be selected when entering the livestock reports. The database automatically inserts the henhouse name when creating the batch.	1-(organic)
Section	Individual sections can be selected when entering the livestock reports. The database automatically inserts the henhouse name when creating the batch.	1-(organic)_1
Date	YYYYMMDD	20210711
Sex	Abbreviation for male or female For mixed flocks	m or f G
Form of production	Information on whether hatching is from organic (0) or conventional (2) production.	0 or 2
Process used for male chicks	No process applied = A100 Male chicks are reared = A200 Selection process = A300 Mixed processes = A400	A100 A200 A300 A400
Blank spaces	All blank spaces are marked with an underscore (“_”).	_

Examples

PL/A-666_1-(Bio)_20210127M_0_A100

PL/A-666_3-(FH)_1_20210128F_2_A200

4 Database reports and documentation requirements

4.1 Database reports


The goods reports are entered weekly – by no later than midnight on Wednesday of the following week – into the KAT database at <https://datenbank.kat.eu>.

Every establishment is responsible for correctly inputting the required data in the KAT database itself.

The database reports include all data necessary for traceability and plausibility checks. The access details are treated as confidential.

 *Procedural instruction VA-LB-06-EN_Database_instructions*

4.1.1 **[K.O.]** All goods reports to the database must be submitted in accordance with Procedural instruction.

 *Procedural instruction VA-LB-08-EN_Submission_of_goods_reports*

- 4.1.2 **[K.O.]** The stocking of the laying hen flock is entered in the KAT database per henhouse within one week.
- 4.1.3 The data for outgoing eggs are reported to the KAT database on a weekly basis.
- 4.1.4 Outgoing KAT goods are reported per stamp number to the KAT database for each customer stating the recipient's KAT ID.
- 4.1.5 **[K.O.]** If a flock of cockerels is assigned to the flock of laying hens, the corresponding brood batch for the cockerels is also entered in the database with the stocking report for the laying hens.

Information: If head equivalence is applied during the transitional period, the rearing batch of the young cocks is entered into the KAT database instead of the brood batch.

- 4.1.6 Flock destocking operations are reported fully and correctly.

4.2 Documentation requirements

- 4.2.1 All relevant documents (collection slips/delivery notes) are kept for at least 12 months.
- 4.2.2 **[K.O.]** A unique stamp number is assigned to each flock of housed laying hens. In addition, at least one procedure to avoid the killing of chicks is assigned to this stamp number.
- 4.2.3 The head equivalence procedure ensures that the hatching date of the males is no more than 12 months before the hatching date of the pullets and that the males have been slaughtered before the pullets are placed in the laying house.

Information: the head equivalent approach will still be permitted by KAT up until 31 December 2021, i.e. only the hatch equivalent approach will be accepted in the KAT system with effect from 1 January 2022. Male laying hybrids reared up until 31 December 2021 under head equivalent conditions may be counted in the figures for a new stocking of laying hens up to 31 December 2022.

- 4.2.4 The collection slips/delivery notes must at least include the following information:
- ✓ Quantity (units) per stamp number
 - ✓ Form of production
 - ✓ Laying date/period
 - ✓ Recipient (including KAT ID)
 - ✓ Dispatch/delivery date
 - ✓ Rearing/selection procedure per stamp number
 - ✓ Clear KAT labelling

5 Quantity balance

5.1 Plausibility check

- 5.1.1 **[K.O.]** The number of eggs per stamp number reported to the KAT database matches the laying lists, and the documented efficiency of egg production is plausible.
- 5.1.2 The number of animals reported to the KAT database by the rearing farm and the number of animals delivered documented on the delivery notes agree with the documented number of animals housed.

- 5.1.3 The number of female birds in a flock matches the number of reared and/or selected male birds.
- 5.1.4 The stocking data for the laying hen flock reported to the KAT database are complete and correct and match the information on the delivery notes.
- 5.1.5 The number of collection slips/delivery notes for outgoing eggs is complete.
- 5.1.6 All outgoing goods invoices for the eggs are available.
- 5.1.7 The data reported to the database are correct. The quantities, types and times on all of the outgoing goods reports for the eggs match the information on the collection slips/delivery notes and laying lists.

5.2 Traceability


- 5.2.1 **[K.O.]** The establishment has a system that ensures and makes traceable through documentation the identification of delivered pullets and the associated procedure for avoiding the killing of chicks for each print number.
- 5.2.2 The establishment has a system that guarantees and documents the link between outgoing eggs and the respective stamp number.
- 5.2.3 All of the documents and database reports needed to ensure traceability of the stated rearing/selection procedures are plausible and comprehensible.

Part III: Appendix

1 Explanation of symbols

[K.O.] Knock-Out-criteria

 References to other applicable documents

 Documents to be provided or submitted

2 Abbreviations

EU	European Union
F	Female
FB	Form
K.O.	Knock-out
KAT e.V.	Verein für kontrollierte alternative
KAT ID	KAT identification number
LB	Laying farm
LEH	Food retail trade
M	Male
VA	Procedural instruction

3 Explanation of terms

Term	Definition/explanation
Rearing farm	Farm in which young hens are reared commercially for subsequent egg production
B goods	Eggs that lack the quality characteristics of class A eggs or that are downgraded from class A
Stocks	Quantity/number of birds and goods
Hatchery	Establishment in which eggs are artificially hatched
Third-party stocks	Alternative stocks from establishments/establishment sections that are not part of the KAT system and that do not have KAT certification
Cockerel flock	Name for a group of male laying hybrid chicks (Gallus gallus)
KAT stocks	Stocks from establishments that are KAT-compliant and are subject to compliance checks across all stages
Head equivalent	Process by means of which a male chick is reared for every female chick but with a different hatching date from the female chick

Laying farm	Agricultural business that keeps laying hens for the purposes of egg production
Male laying hybrid	The male of the hybrid of the Gallus gallus species; laying hybrids are optimised for poultry farming based on hybrids and are bred specifically for their laying performance
Packing station	Any establishment that is licensed pursuant to Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 589/2008 and in which eggs are sorted and packed by weight class, with the packaging being labelled accordingly
Slaughterhouse	Establishment in which fresh meat is obtained from the slaughter of animals or birds
Hatch equivalent	Process by means of which a male chick is reared for every female chick with the male chick originating from the same hatching and the same hatchery as the female chick

4 Applicable documents

Applicable documents (in the respective applicable version) include:

The documents are available to download from the internal area at www.kat.eu.

KAT-dokuments

- ✓ KAT logo design rules
- ✓ Procedural instruction VA-LB-06-EN_Database_instructions
- ✓ Procedural instruction VA-LB-08-EN_Submission_of_goods_reports