

KAT – Verein für kontrollierte alternative Tierhaltungsformen e.V.

KAT Guide Hatcheries

Traceability and assurance of origin
– Rearing and in-ovo sexing methods –

Version 2023.02



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Version 2023.02

Released on 15 February 2023

Status: valid from 1 March 2023

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Teil 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 market by the food retail trade 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 husbandry produced, traded or placed on the market by Members;
- to lay down and implement uniform requirements for the barn, free-range and organic husbandry of laying hens, taking account of animal welfare issues;
- to lay down and implement uniform requirements for the husbandry of male laying hybrids, taking account of animal welfare issues;
- transparency for the consumer by providing information (e.g. via the internet portal www.was-steht-auf-dem-ei.de).

2 Rearing and in-ovo sexing methods 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, 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/in-ovo sexed male hatching eggs. In this way, for eggs produced under these conditions, transparent traceability of the rearing and sex identification methods 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 “Hatchery” within the KAT traceability system and describes the requirements that hatcheries 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 2023.

With effect from 1 January 2022, it has only been permitted to market eggs using the KAT logo subject to compliance with the requirements in relation to the KAT traceability system “Rearing and in-ovo sexing methods” and if all of the necessary production and distribution systems have been 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 Guaranteeing no killing of chicks in the KAT system

The killing of chicks has been prohibited by law in Germany since 1 January 2022. Hatcheries outside Germany that participate in the KAT system must be able to submit documentary evidence proving that no chicks (m/f) hatched for the KAT system are killed.

The rearing of male laying hybrids and the use of legally approved in-ovo sexing methods are accepted in the KAT system.

To ensure traceability to the marketed eggs in the KAT system, batch-based livestock reports are entered in the KAT database at every stage.

5.1 Batch designation in hatchery

Tab. 1: Batch designation in hatchery

Information	Explanation	Example
KAT ID	Identification number assigned to hatchery by KAT	DE/B-999
Hatch date	YYYYMMDD	20220711
Hybrid variety	Laying hybrid breed identification, comprising a G and sequential number (three-digit)	G000
Sex	Abbreviation for male or female	M or F
Type of production	Information on whether hatching is from organic (0) or conventional (2) production	0 or 2
Method used to avoid culling chicks	No process applied = B100 Male chicks are reared = B200 In-ovo sexing method = B300	B100 B200 B300
Sequential numbering	Three-digit sequential numbering for clear identification of a batch	000
Blank spaces	All blank spaces are marked with an underscore (“_”).	_

Examples

Breeding batch: DE/B-999_20220118_G010_F_2_B300_000

Organic breeding batch: DE/B-999_20220118_G010_M_0_B200_000

Abbreviations for the labelling of in-ovo sexing methods

B301	Seleggt
B302	Ella (In Ovo)
B303	Plantegg
B304	Cheggy

Information: this list is correct as at November 2022. An up-to-date list of the in-ovo sexing methods and hybrid varieties can be viewed in the internal members' area

under “DOCUMENTS → Procedural instructions → VA-B-01”. All in-ovo sexing methods that are permitted by law may be used in the KAT system.

6 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.

7 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. Data is only disclosed to entities outside the system (“the public”) after consultation with the system participants or on official instruction.

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.

8 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 method used (rearing of cockerels, in-ovo sexing method) to comply with the ban on killing chicks is also stated. The query function is also available as 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.).

Teil II: List of requirements

1 Clear separation of KAT goods and non-KAT goods

The requirements under Chapter 1 are audited directly in the hatchery during the audit.

1.1 General requirements

- 1.1.1 The number of hatching eggs set and the start of the incubation process are documented for each KAT hatch.
- 1.1.2 The incubators and incubating trolleys used for a KAT hatch are marked in such a way that confusion with non-KAT hatches is excluded.
- 1.1.3 After completion of the pre-hatching process, the candling result and the candling date of the KAT hatches should be documented.
- 1.1.4 After hatching, the hatch date and the number of male and female chicks in a KAT hatch are documented.
- 1.1.5 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place to ensure that all chicks (m/f) destined for the KAT system are moved to a KAT rearing farm and that no healthy chicks are killed.
- 1.1.6 The chick boxes are clearly labelled for KAT and non-KAT chicks at all times.

1.2 Additional requirements for hatchings with in-ovo sexing methods

- 1.2.1 The total number of hatching eggs used and the start of the incubation process of the eggs are documented for each KAT hatch.
- 1.2.2 After performing the in-ovo sexing procedure, at least the following parameters should be documented for each KAT hatch:
 - ✓ Date on which in-ovo sexing was carried out
 - ✓ Indication of the incubation day on which the in-ovo sexing was carried out
 - ✓ Number of hatching eggs detected as female
 - ✓ Number of hatching eggs detected as male
 - ✓ Number of hatching eggs that could not be identified


2 KAT database reports and documentation requirements

All bird reports are entered into the KAT database at <https://datenbank.kat.eu> no later than three weeks after the hatch date.

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

The access details are treated as confidential. The establishments are responsible for the accuracy of the input data.

The KAT database reports include all data necessary for traceability and plausibility checks.

 *Procedural instruction VA-B-04 Quick Quick_guide_to_stock_management_abroad*

2.1 General requirements for database reports

- 2.1.1 **[K.O.]** All chicks (m/f) hatched in the hatchery and destined for the KAT system (KAT hatchings) are reported in the KAT database using the recipient's KAT ID no later than three weeks after the hatch date.
- 2.1.2 **[K.O.]** All chicks (m/f) hatched in the hatchery on KAT hatch dates that are not intended for the KAT system are reported in the KAT database using the recipient's KAT ID or the general recipient address K000.9 no later than three weeks after the hatch date.
- 2.1.3 **[K.O.]** All chicks (m/f) for the KAT system that are traded between hatcheries are reported in full using the dealer ID for the receiving hatchery.

2.2 KAT database reports when in-ovo sexing methods are used

- 2.2.1 All hatched female chicks delivered into the KAT system are entered in the KAT database with information on the in-ovo sexing method used.
- 2.2.2 In the case of KAT hatchings, all male chicks hatched due to errors in the in-ovo sexing procedure (mis-sexed) are also entered in the KAT database with information on the sexing method used.

2.3 Additional requirements for database reports for hatcheries outside Germany


- 2.3.1 For days on which a KAT hatching takes place, all non-KAT hatchings must also be entered in the KAT database.
- 2.3.2 For each planned hatch day with KAT hatchings, all hatching eggs (KAT/non-KAT) set for the hatching day are entered in the KAT database in full as breeding batches.
- 2.3.3 The breeding batches are entered in the KAT database no later than 14 days after the hatching egg has been set.
- 2.3.4 For each breeding batch, the marketable hatched female and male chicks are entered in the KAT database (hatching report) no later than seven days after the hatch date.
- 2.3.5 All birds in a KAT breeding batch (m/f) are reported in the KAT database to the respective receiving farms no later than three weeks after the hatch date.
- 2.3.6 For days on which a KAT hatching takes place, all birds in a non-KAT breeding batch (m/f) are reported in the KAT database using the recipient's KAT ID or the general recipient address K000.9 no later than three weeks after the hatch date.

3 Documentation requirements

- 3.1.1 The establishment description is complete and up to date. Any changes to the establishment description are reported to the KAT Office immediately.

 *Form FB-A-01-EN_Establishment description*

- 3.1.2 Contingency plans with clearly defined responsibilities are in place in the event of an emergency or critical situation. These contain the names and contact details of all key contact persons.

 *Form FB-A-02-EN_Emergency plan*

 *KAT Crisis Management Guide for Member Establishments*

- 3.1.3 All relevant documents are kept for at least 12 months (invoices/delivery notes, hatch planning, hatch reports, record of in-ovo sexing procedures).
- 3.1.4 The documents referred to under 3.1.3 relating to hatch dates with KAT hatches are filed on the basis of accounting requirements and by hatch.
- 3.1.5 The delivery notes for the chicks at least include the following information:
- ✓ KAT ID (hatchery site)
 - ✓ KAT hatching batch number
 - ✓ No. of birds per KAT hatching batch number
 - ✓ Genetics
 - ✓ Recipient including KAT ID
 - ✓ Dispatch/delivery date

4 Quantity balance

4.1 Plausibility check

- 4.1.1 A delivery note can be uniquely assigned to each chick delivery that refers to a KAT hatching day.
- 4.1.2 If necessary, these delivery notes can be clearly substantiated by means of invoices or, in the case of internal deliveries, by means of meaningful documents (stall card, slaughter report, etc.).
- 4.1.3 **[K.O.]** All hatchings relevant to the KAT system are plausibly recorded on the basis of the available documents and evidence.


4.2 Traceability

- 4.2.1 **[K.O.]** The establishment has a system that guarantees the identification of breeding batches and for tracing and documenting how these relate to the number of birds sold.

Teil III: Annex

1 Signs and symbols

[K.O.] Knock-out criteria

 *References to applicable documents*

 *Required documents/documents for submission*

2 Abbreviations

EU	European Union
F	Female
FB	Form
JA	Rearing of young hens
K.O.	Knock-out
KAT e.V.	Verein für kontrollierte alternative Tierhaltungsformen
KAT ID	KAT identification number
LEH	Food retail trade
M	Male
m	Male
VA	Procedural instruction
w	Female

3 Definition of terms

Tab. 2: Definition of terms

Term	Definition/explanation
Rearing farm	Establishment in which pullets and/or cockerels from laying hybrid breeds are reared commercially
Stocks	Quantity/number of birds and goods
Hatchery	Establishment in which eggs are artificially hatched
Breeding batch	Number of hatching eggs set per day and genetics for a given hatch
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 (<i>Gallus gallus</i>)
Dealer (hatchery)	Hatchery site that delivers chicks into the KAT system that are not hatched at its own site

KAT stocks	Stocks from establishments that are KAT-compliant and are subject to a conformity assessment across all stages
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
Hatching batch	All chicks of the same sex and same laying hybrid breed subject to the same procedure to avoid killing chicks hatched on one day in a hatchery
Day hatch	All chicks, irrespective of laying hybrid breed, sex and procedure to avoid killing chicks, hatched on one day in a hatchery (00:00 to 24:00)

4 **Applicable documents**

The documents can be downloaded from the internal area of the KAT website www.kat.eu.

Applicable documents (in the currently valid version) include:

KAT documents

- ✓ KAT logo design rules
- ✓ Procedural instruction VA-B-04_ Quick_guide_to_stock_management_abroad
- ✓ Form FB-A-01-EN_Establishment description
- ✓ Form FB-A-02-EN_Emergency plan
- ✓ KAT Crisis Management Guide for Member Establishments