

KAT – Verein für kontrollierte alternative Tierhaltungsformen e.V.

KAT Guide for Rearing Farms

Conventional and organic rearing of pullets
Conventional and organic rearing of brother roosters

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Teil I: Introduction

1 Basic principles

1.1 Scope of application

This Guide has been developed for rearing farms and applies with effect from 1 July 2020 to all rearing farms that supply conventionally reared pullets to KAT laying farms and with effect from 1 January 2021 to the organic rearing of pullets, and to the conventional and organic rearing of male birds from the laying line (rearing of brother roosters).


These rearing farms must register with the KAT system and, after successful certification, conclude a participation contract. Since 1 January 2022, it has only been possible to supply pullets from KAT-certified rearing farms to KAT laying farms. With effect from 1 January 2024 it will no longer be permitted for eggs from KAT laying hens whose male chicks were culled after hatching to be marketed within the KAT system.

The farm is generally responsible for ensuring that the statutory requirements are met at all times. Responsibility for compliance with KAT requirements and for the complete and correct documentation of self-monitoring also lies with the farm.

The general requirements set out in Part II, Section A1 to A6 apply to all rearing farms. The conventional rearing of pullets is also subject to Section B7, while the organic rearing of pullets is additionally governed by Sections C8 and C9. The conventional rearing of brother roosters is also covered by Section D10, while the organic rearing of brother roosters is governed by Sections E11 to E12.

1.2 General establishment data

Every establishment must register independently to participate in the system using the online registration tool and draw up an establishment overview.

- *Online registration tool (<https://anmeldung.kat.eu>)*
-  *Evidence/documentation (overview of establishment)*

The master data are stored in the KAT database. The system provider KAT is notified immediately of any changes to the master data.




2 General information about the KAT certification protocol

For an initial certification and/or to perform the annual certification audits, the KAT participant commissions a certification agency from the list of KAT-approved inspection institutes. Moreover, the system provider KAT reserves the right to carry out verification audits at given intervals as an additional means of checking that the farms are complying with the KAT criteria. These verification audits are, as a general rule, conducted unannounced. During all audits, auditors must be granted access to the operating units that are the subject of the audit.

During the initial certification and/or the annual certification audits, the “KAT rearing farms” checklist and assessment criteria are used as the basis for checking whether the farm can be awarded a KAT certificate. The audit will be passed and a KAT certificate may be issued if a result of at least 75% is achieved and provided that there are no K.O. assessments. The KAT certificate is valid from the date of the certification decision and expires at the end of the following calendar year. Farms that are not awarded a certificate will be given a fixed period by the certification agency in which to implement corrective measures, after which a follow-up audit will be conducted.

If the auditor awards a K.O. or more than one Major during a certification audit and/or the minimum level of 75% of the KAT requirements is not achieved, the previous certificate immediately becomes invalid.

Digital images are made during the checks. These are for documentation purposes only and are not published.

-  KAT Certification Protocol
-  KAT checklist “Rearing farms”
-  List of approved KAT certification bodies

3 Guaranteeing the avoidance of chick killing in the KAT system

Since January 2022, the killing of chicks has been legally prohibited in Germany. Hatcheries outside Germany that wish to continue supplying their female chicks to the KAT system after 1 January 2022 must be able to submit documentary evidence proving that the corresponding male chicks are also either hatched and reared or selected before hatching using an in-ovo sexing method.

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

In order to avoid the killing of chicks and to ensure the traceability and allocation of flocks of brother roosters to the marketed eggs in the KAT system, 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.

With effect from 1 January 2022, the KAT system exclusively accepts the **hatch equivalent**, which means that a procedure for avoiding killing must be applied for all chicks that are hatched on or after 1 January 2022 and documented in the KAT database.

- **Hatch equivalent:** Male chicks are reared that come from the same hatching and hatchery and are of the same breed (genetics) as the female chicks.

Information: Hatches in which the male laying hybrids were killed immediately after hatching were still permitted in the KAT system up until 31 December 2021. The female birds from these hatches may still be assigned male laying hybrids in 2022.

3.1 Batch designation in the hatchery or rearing farm

Tab.1: Batch designation in hatchery

Information	Explanation	Example
KAT ID	Identification number assigned to hatchery by KAT	DE/B-999
Hatching date	YYYYMMDD	20210711
Hybrid variety	Breed identification, comprising a G and sequential number (three-digit)	G000
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
Method used to avoid killing chicks	No process applied = B100 Male chicks are reared = B200 Selection procedure = B300	B100 B200 B300
Sequential numbering	Three-digit numbering for clear identification of a batch	000

Information	Explanation	Example
Blank spaces	All blank spaces are marked with an underscore (“_”).	_

Examples:

Breeding batch: DE/B-999_20210118_G010_F_2_B300_000

Organic breeding batch: DE/B-999_20210118_G010_M_0_B200_000

Abbreviations for the labelling of selection procedure

B301 Seleggt

B302 Ella (In Ovo)

B303 Plantegg

B304 Cheggy

Information: The list is correct as at August 2022. An up-to-date list of the selection procedures and hybrid varieties can be viewed in the internal members' area of the KAT website (System participants login under “DOCUMENTS → Procedural instructions/VA-B-01”). All selection procedures that are permitted by law may be used in the KAT system.

Tab.2: Batch designation in rearing farm

Information	Explanation	Example
KAT ID	Identification number assigned to hatchery by KAT	DE/A-999
Henhouse	The henhouse can be selected when entering the livestock reports. The KAT database automatically inserts a multi-digit numerical code as the henhouse designation when creating the batch.	1234
Section	Individual sections can be selected when entering the livestock reports. The KAT database automatically inserts a multi-digit numerical code as the section designation when creating the batch.	5678
Stocking 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
Indication of the method used to avoid killing chicks	No process applied = A100 Male chicks are reared = A200 Selection procedure = A300 Mixed procedure = A400	A100 A200 A300 A400

Information	Explanation	Example
Blank spaces	All blank spaces are marked with an underscore (“_”).	_

Examples

DE/A-666_1234_20210127_M_0_A100

DE/A-666_1234_5678_20210128_F_2_A200

Information: When birds are being re-stocked (e.g. after pre-rearing), a new rearing batch number is automatically created.

Teil II: List of requirements

A General requirements for the conventional and organic rearing of pullets and brother roosters

1 General condition of rearing farm (henhouse and external areas)

1.1 Physical condition of henhouse building

The henhouse building, as well as doors and gates, are all in a good structural condition. The areas used for loading and unloading the chicks/pullets or cockerels have a sealed floor plate (e.g. concrete, plaster or similar) and are easy to clean and disinfect.

1.2 Physical condition of housing equipment

The housing equipment is in a sound structural condition and good working order, and is designed to minimise any risk of injury to the birds.


Feed conveyor belts and drinking-trough systems are arranged in such a way that they are easy to clean and disinfect.

1.3 Building security, controlled access

Controlled access to the henhouse building is guaranteed. External doors and gates to the henhouse have been designed to prevent non-authorised persons entering the premises unnoticed.

1.4 Visitor registration

Visitors and external service providers are registered upon arrival. Visitors are recorded in lists. These records are kept for at least one year and presented upon request.

 *FB-LB 14: Visitor list form*

1.5 Sanitary facilities

The rearing farm site is equipped with appropriate sanitary facilities taking into account the number of staff.

2 Organisation, cleanliness and hygiene

2.1 Organisation and cleanliness of the henhouse and external areas

2.1.1 Accumulated waste, dirt, excessive dust deposits, cobwebs and dead flies are all removed on a regular basis or as necessary from the entire premises.

 *Evidence/documentation*

2.1.2 The rearing farm has a clean and tidy appearance overall. The premises are in a non-defective, well-maintained and tidy condition.

2.2 Storage of feed

2.2.1 Feed silos and storage containers are kept clean and in particular free of chemical, physical (e.g. shards of glass) and also microbial contamination (e.g. mould). The materials and coatings used for storage containers are cleaned and pose no risk to health. The type and frequency of cleaning are set for the individual farm.

2.3 Staff hygiene

2.3.1 Non-establishment persons represent a hygiene risk. Non-establishment persons are only granted access to the henhouses and housing equipment when absolutely necessary. Henhouses are entered only by those wearing company-owned clothing or appropriate disposable clothing. Measures are in place to ensure that non-establishment persons can only enter the henhouse or other area in which the birds are being kept with the agreement of the keeper.

2.3.2 A hygiene lock is compulsory in all farms. Depending on the site layout, the lock is situated in the most logical location taking into account animal health and the prevention of disease, e.g. at the entrance to the henhouse complex. The process within the hygiene lock includes at least a change of footwear.

The following requirements apply to hygiene locks:


- Clear separation into a black and a white area: street clothes are stored in the black area, work clothing in the white area.
- The black and white areas are separated by a wooden bench or low wall. The material must be easy to wipe down with a smooth surface.
- The bird area is only entered and exited via the hygiene lock.

2.3.3 Each henhouse anteroom or hygiene lock is fitted with at least a washbasin with running water, soap dispenser and paper towels. Hand washing is compulsory before and after entering the hygienic area. Measures are also in place to ensure that hands can be disinfected after washing and drying.

2.3.4 The establishment has defined appropriate hygiene rules. These rules are clearly displayed on the premises and are familiar to all staff.

3 Animal health


In accordance with Section 11 of the German Animal Welfare Act (Tierschutzgesetz), any person who keeps animals commercially must carry out in-company self-monitoring to ensure that the requirements of Section 2 are observed. In particular, for the purposes of assessing fulfilment of the requirements of Section 2, appropriate animal-related characteristics (animal welfare indicators) must be surveyed and evaluated.

 *German Animal Welfare Act (Tierschutzgesetz) of 19 June 2020*

3.1 Documentation system for flock assessments

3.1.1 The farm has an appropriate system in place for assessing flocks based on animal-related characteristics. Using this system, the rearing farm introduces and documents appropriate remedial measures in the event of significant problems affecting the flock. As a minimum, the system encompasses a review and documentation of weight development and a plumage score.

 *VA-JA 1: Weight development in the rearing of pullets*

 *FB-JA 3: Flock record form – Pullets*

Information: Since 1 January 2022, it has been possible to assess flocks using either the KAT tool for laying hen husbandry (pullets) or an alternative tool with comparable content (M-Tool, KTBL)

Further information is available on the KAT website / Login System participant / Animal welfare assessment

 *FB-JA-03: "Flock record/Animal health in rearing" form*

 *KAT Tool*

3.1.2 The birds and equipment are inspected at least twice per day, with documentation. The minimum information documented includes date, time and any abnormalities.

3.1.3 All farm staff who come into contact with the birds are given in-house training at least once per year. This training may be given by the manager provided that he or she is suitably qualified to do so.

3.2 Care by a veterinary surgeon

3.2.1 An agreement is in place with a veterinary surgeon regarding care of the birds. The vet is appointed by the farm.

3.2.2 A vaccination plan is in place, including at least all of the vaccinations required by law. The vaccination plan is prepared by the farm in consultation with the vet.

 *Evidence/documentation of vaccination plan*

3.2.3 All of the vaccinations listed in the plan are carried out and documented. The minimum information documented includes the date of vaccination and name of the vaccine.

3.2.4 In the event of medicines being administered, the minimum information documented is as follows:

- Name of the drug and the quantity administered
- Drug batch number
- Date administered
- Waiting period, where applicable
- Name of person who administered the drug
- Number of veterinary drug administration record

 *Evidence/documentation*

3.2.5 There is documentary evidence of the vaccinations already administered at the hatchery site.

3.3 Establishment hygiene

3.3.1 Pest control

In poultry houses special attention is paid to the prevention of pests (rats, mice, insects etc.). All henhouses and production facilities are protected against infiltration or contamination by domestic animals or by other farmed animals and birds so that the transmission or introduction of pathogens is eliminated as far as possible.

3.3.1.1 The establishment has a suitable pest control system in place. The frequency of pest control measures is dependent on the type of pest and extent of the infestation.

3.3.1.2 Pest control measures may be taken by the farm itself if the manager can demonstrate an appropriate level of specialist expertise and provided that the documentation requirements (→ 3.3.1.3) are met. With regard to agricultural operations, proof of expertise as defined in the German Crop Protection Expert Knowledge Ordinance (Pflanzenschutz-Sachkunde-VO) is sufficient.

In the event of an external service provider carrying out pest control measures, the provider meets the documentation requirements (→ 3.3.1.3).

3.3.1.3 The minimum documentation requirements are as follows:

- Bait plan with numbered pest detectors
- List of all biocides used
- Safety datasheets for all biocides used

- Defined inspection intervals (toxic baits: at least monthly)
- Documentation of infestation checks (trend analysis)


 Evidence/documentation

3.3.2 Cleaning and disinfection

3.3.2.1 **[K.O.]** After destocking, the henhouse and the feed silos are cleaned thoroughly, and all housing equipment with which the birds come into contact is also disinfected. This includes disinfection of the drinker lines. These processes are documented.

 Evidence/documentation

3.3.2.2 Only disinfectants included in the list published by the German Veterinary Society (DVG) are used. Establishments with organic production must also exclusively use disinfectants in accordance with the currently valid inputs list for organic agriculture in Germany. The relevant certificates and safety datasheets are available for all disinfection agents used.


 *Inputs list for organic agriculture in Germany (published by Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, FiBL)*

 Evidence/documentation

3.3.2.3 For each stocking, the name and manufacturer of the disinfectant used is recorded in the KAT database.

3.3.2.4 The establishment has an appropriate system in place to prove that its cleaning and disinfection measures have been effective.

Note: A possible procedure is described in the procedural instruction VA-LB 3. Within 24 months, at least one henhouse must be checked for the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfection prior to a new stocking of birds.

 *FB-LB-07: "Cleaning and disinfection documentation" form*

 *VA-LB-03: "Inspecting disinfection" procedural instruction*

 Evidence/documentation

3.3.2.5 If a single henhouse contains several pens, different age groups are only housed in the same building if the pen has been sufficiently cleaned and disinfected in advance without posing any hazard to the health of the birds or to the rearing equipment in the other pens that are still occupied.

3.3.3 Storage of manure

3.3.3.1 Manure is temporarily stored in a separate area that is not accessible to the pullets. This does not include manure in the litter.

3.3.4 Storage of dead birds

3.3.4.1 Birds that have died are removed from the henhouse as quickly as possible (daily). The carcasses are stored separately from other waste and are protected from weather conditions in refrigerated carcass boxes. Measures are also in place to ensure that stored carcasses cannot be accessed by any unauthorised persons.

4 **In-company self-monitoring**

4.1 **Establishment data collection**

4.1.1 An appropriate establishment description has been prepared for each rearing farm.

4.1.2 The data in the establishment description match the master data in the KAT database. The establishment enters any changes to the data on a timely basis using the KAT registration tool.

Note: The establishment is responsible for the accuracy of the master data.

- 4.1.3 The current **certification area** is documented in the establishment description. Changes to the certification area are communicated in advance to the KAT Office without delay.

4.2 Stocking and destocking

Stocking and destocking must always be carried out in compliance with Section 1 of the Animal Welfare Act. During destocking the lighting is reduced and/or windows covered so as to calm the birds down, and care is taken to avoid any incidence of light when opening and closing the doors.

4.2.1 General stocking and destocking requirements


- 4.2.1.1 The chicks come from KAT-approved hatcheries or KAT-approved pre-rearing facilities.
- 4.2.1.2 It is possible to prove for all KAT flocks of pullets housed after 1 January 2022 that the male chicks from the hatch were either reared in accordance with KAT rules or selected before hatching using an in-ovo sexing method.
- 4.2.1.3 The establishment holds documentary evidence (delivery notes and/or invoices from the hatchery/pre-rearing facility) showing the stocking date and exact number of chicks delivered.

 Evidence/documentation

- 4.2.1.4 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place to ensure that no beak trimming is carried out on any birds in henhouses covered by the KAT certification area.

Note: During the audit, the auditor will check this for all occupied KAT henhouses and document the findings in the audit report.

- 4.2.1.5 Documentary evidence is on file showing that during rearing the chicks/pullets were conditioned to the subsequent form of production in the laying hen farm. The rearing operation encloses confirmation of this conditioning when delivering the pullets to the laying farm.

 Evidence/documentation (see FB-JA 1 "Handover record")

- 4.2.1.6 The delivery notes for deliveries to a KAT laying farm include at least the following information:

- KAT ID (rearing site)
- Rearing batch number(s)
- No. of birds per rearing batch number
- Age of birds in weeks and days
- Total number of delivered birds

- 4.2.1.7 The persons involved in stocking and destocking can provide proof of their expertise. If external service providers (professional catchers) are used for the destocking process, the foreman must have a recognised qualification. The relevant certificate is presented to the rearing farm. This similarly applies to stocking and destocking by the rearing farm itself. The supervisor has a recognised qualification and the workers used are trained internally at least once per year.

 Evidence of proper expertise/Documentation of training

4.2.2 Specific requirements if KAT and non-KAT flocks are to be housed together in the same henhouse

4.2.2.1 If KAT and non-KAT flocks are to be housed together in the same henhouse, measures are in place to ensure that the flocks are kept in physically separate pens, that mixing is excluded and that the criteria according to the current KAT Guide for Rearing Farms are observed for the entire henhouse.

4.2.2.2 Measures are also in place to ensure that no KAT flocks are housed together with a flock with treated beaks.

4.3 **Obligation to inform KAT**


4.3.1 **[K.O.]** All events that must be reported by law are reported to the responsible authority and to the KAT Office at the same time.

 Evidence/documentation

4.4 **Crisis management**

4.4.1 Emergency plans with clearly defined responsibilities are in place in the event of an emergency or critical situation. These include the names and telephone numbers of all key contact persons (e.g. veterinary surgeon, veterinary inspection office, suppliers/buyers, KAT).

Information: The KAT Crisis Management Guide for Member Establishments contains the most important information for critical situations and recommended ways of tackling different situations.

 FB-A-02: “Emergency Plan/Contact List” form

 KAT Crisis Management Guide for Member Establishments

4.5 **Flock documentation**

4.5.1 The establishment records the **number of birds** per henhouse daily. The resulting **loss ratio** (in %) is calculated at least weekly.

 Evidence/documentation

4.5.2 A system is in place to record **feed and water consumption** per bird and also the **temperature** in the henhouse. Consumption is documented daily.

 Evidence/documentation

4.5.3 The **average weight of the birds** is recorded at least every 4 weeks. There is either a standardised plan to hand-weigh the birds or the henhouse is fitted with automated weighing equipment, also guaranteeing comparable results.

 Evidence/documentation

4.6 **Handover record**

4.6.1 A handover record is prepared upon each destocking of the pullets, at least containing the data required in form FB-JA-01.

Note: The data is recorded at the time of the destocking.

 FB-JA-01: “Handover record for stocking of pullets” form

4.7 **Analysis**

4.7.1 Analysis to be carried out upon delivery of day-old chicks:

- Collection of a meconium sample from a minimum of 300 day-old chicks from at least three different transportation containers.

- Collection for salmonella analysis of 10g of chicken paper contaminated with manure from each of 25 different chicken boxes.
- 4.7.2 Analysis to be carried out before moving birds to the laying farm:
- Implementation of a sock swab for salmonella at least 14 days before moving the flock to the laying farm.
- 4.7.3 Drinking water quality is reviewed once **per site and calendar year** by means of a microbiological quality test carried out by an accredited laboratory. The sample for analysis is drawn directly from the drinker lines in the henhouse.
- The analysis includes the following required parameters:

Tab.3: Drinking water analysis parameters

Parameter	Unit	Insignificant
E.coli	in 1 ml	< 1 cfu
Coliforms	in 1 ml	< 1 cfu
Total number of aerobic bacteria at 20°C	in 1 ml	< 10,000 cfu
Total number of aerobic bacteria at 37°C	in 1 ml	< 1,000 cfu

Source: BMEL "Hygienische Qualität von Tränkwasser" [Hygienic quality of drinking water], July 2019


 Documentary evidence of drinking water analysis

4.8 Origin and procurement of feed

4.8.1 Feedstuff supplier

4.8.1.1 **[K.O.]** The feed for the chicks or pullets/cockerels is procured exclusively from KAT-approved feedstuff suppliers.

4.8.1.2 The feed for pullets/cockerels has a fibre content of at least 4%. The birds are also offered additives such as grit or other materials to promote digestion.

 Documentary evidence/analysis

4.8.2 Self-mixers/users of own crop

Self-mixers are establishments that produce mixed feed (all-in-one feed for laying hens) for their own needs up to a maximum total annual quantity of 5,000 t. Users of own crop are establishments that produce finished feed on the basis of a feedstuff supplement made in a mixed feed factory, regardless of whether the crop used is the establishment's own or bought in. Responsibility for the components used as well as for the proper production of the feed mixes rests with the farmer.






4.8.2.1 At least one sensory incoming goods inspection must be performed prior to every raw material storage. Records must be kept of all inspections and measures taken.

 Evidence/documentation

4.8.2.2 Measures are in place to ensure that the raw materials stored on-site are stored properly in accordance with product requirements and in a way that prevents any negative impact on and contamination of the raw materials during storage.

4.8.2.3 **[K.O.]** Reference samples are available from all raw material batches (incl. feedstuff supplements) used for the production of feedstuff, regardless of whether these were bought in or produced in-house. The reference samples are kept for a period of at least 6 months.

 Evidence/documentation

- 4.8.2.4 Documentary evidence is available for all bought-in components and contains at least the product name, quantity and seller.
 Evidence/documentation
- 4.8.2.5 **[K.O.]** All raw materials and additives used for the production of feed are stored in the KAT database.
 VA-LB 05: Database instructions for laying farms/rearing farms and self-mixers
- 4.8.2.6 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place to ensure that any feedstuff supplements used are procured exclusively via a KAT-certified feedstuff manufacturer.
- 4.8.2.7 **[K.O.]** The finished feed recipes used by self-mixers are based on ration calculations prepared by qualified persons/companies. The production of finished feed based on feedstuff supplements is traceable to the mixing instructions provided and production is carried out exclusively in accordance with such instructions.
 Evidence/documentation
- 4.8.2.8 The feed for pullets/cockerels has a fibre content of at least 4%. The birds are also offered additives such as grit or other materials to promote digestion.
 Documentary evidence/analysis
- 4.8.2.9 The production process for the finished feed is documented comprehensibly. In the case of self-mixers and the use of mobile milling and mixing equipment, a mixing protocol is also available for each batch in accordance with the “Mixing protocol for mobile milling and mixing equipment” form.
 FB-LB-13: “Mixing protocol for mobile milling and mixing equipment” form

5 Database/plausibility checks

All establishment and henhouse data are documented in the KAT database, along with all process stages.

5.1 Database reports

- 5.1.1 **[K.O.]** The stocking of all KAT rearing flocks is recorded in the KAT database per henhouse/compartment. The stocking reports are entered in the KAT database no later than 21 days after stocking.
- 5.1.2 The physical compartments in a given henhouse match the compartments recorded virtually in the database for that henhouse.
- Note: A physical compartment is not required if the birds can be separated on the basis of plumage colour (brown/white).
- 5.1.3 **[K.O.]** The destocking of all KAT rearing flocks is recorded in the KAT database per henhouse/compartment. The destocking reports are entered in the KAT database no later than 21 days after destocking.
- 5.1.4 **[K.O.]** In addition to the destocking of the cockerels, the average weights upon destocking at the rearing farm and the cumulative mortality rates for the cockerels are entered in the database at the end of the rearing period.
- 5.1.5 The feed quantities purchased by the farm are reported to the database every 2 weeks as required (feedstuff supplier, quantity and delivery date).

6 Rules with regard to existing facilities

Existing operations or farms that applied for planning permission before the Guide entered into force are as a general rule allowed to continue to operate. The duration of the respective transitional period will be set on a case-by-case basis. This permission will cease to apply as soon as an operation implements structural measure to modernise its

facilities (e.g. installation of a new aviary) prior to the expiry of the rules on existing facilities, or if the transitional period applicable to that operation has expired.

The following transitional periods apply as of the date on which this Guide enters into force:

- Transitional period during which buildings have protected status: maximum of 15 years
- Transitional period during which system installations/entire systems have protected status: maximum of 10 years

Operations that applied for planning permission after the Guide entered into force are not permitted to continue operating, and the maximum stocking rate of 18 birds/m² as well as all further requirements contained in the Guide apply with immediate effect.

Rearing henhouses must as a general rule be fitted with perches in accordance with the KAT Guide for Rearing Farms. Protected status cannot be applied to existing houses for other types of bird/animal that are also used for rearing broiler roosters. The same applies to houses for the rearing of pullets in cases where such houses are structures with a partial aviary or with floor rearing. The transitional period referred to above may only be applied to full aviary designs.

Note: The rules on existing facilities will be revised again with effect from 1 January 2024.

B Special criteria – Conventional rearing of pullets

7 Requirements of housing equipment and housing conditions

7.1 Hen stocking rate

7.1.1 Stocking rate rules if no pre-rearing

For stocking as of 1 January 2022 until 30 June 2024:

- As of the 35th day of life: maximum of 20 birds/m² total usable area.
In henhouses in which the usable area is distributed across several levels: a maximum of 40 birds/m² total usable floor area.

Note: hatch date = 1st day of life

For stocking from 1 July 2024 onwards:

- As of the 35th day of life: a maximum of 18 birds/m² total usable area.
In henhouses in which the usable area is distributed across several levels: a maximum of 36 birds/m² total usable floor area.

7.1.2 Stocking rate rules with pre-rearing

- From the 35th to the 49th day of life: a maximum of 30 birds/m² total usable area.
- From the 50th day of life, the stocking rates listed in Chapter 7.1.1 apply.

The birds must have permanent access to perches, litter and pecking stones.

7.1.3 **[K.O.] Measures are in place in the respective henhouses to ensure that the stocking rate stipulated in Chapters 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 is never exceeded.**

7.2 Usable areas

These are areas, the side length of which is never <30 cm, that have headroom of at least 40 cm and the floor of which slopes by no more than 14%, including the areas under feeding and drinking facilities, perches and landing perches, and fixtures for claw rubbing that the pullets can pass over or under.

7.2.1 In multi-tier housing equipment, there are no more than 4 levels on top of each other, with the henhouse floor counting as the first level.

7.2.2 Only those levels from which the manure can only fall one level lower are counted towards the usable area. Further levels only count towards the usable area if the manure is collected.

7.2.3 System-related usable areas*) may be counted towards the usable area even if not fitted with a manure belt provided that they are available during the entire daylight period, are at least 30 cm wide, have headroom of at least 40 cm and provide the birds with a firm surface.

*) see Annex 1.3 Definition of terms

7.3 Cold scratching area (conservatory)

A cold scratching area (conservatory) is not a requirement for conventional rearing. If it is provided, however, it may be counted towards the usable area subject to the following conditions.

- 7.3.1 The cold scratching area (conservatory) is at least 2 m high and has a wind-breaking net with perforations that ensure permanent light and air permeability. The height of the wind-breaking net is at least 70% of the height of the external wall of the cold scratching area (i.e. a minimum of 1.40 m). Installations that have the same features as a wind-breaking net are also permitted. The cold scratching area has an outdoor climate and a roof. It is separated from the warm henhouse by a solid wall and is designed in such a way that wild birds cannot gain access.
- 7.3.2 Measures are in place to ensure that the cold scratching area (conservatory) is available to the birds as of the day on which this is required to maintain compliance with the stocking rate.
- 7.3.3 The birds have access to the cold scratching area (conservatory) at least during the entire light phase, and outdoor periods during the light phase are documented.

 Evidence/documentation

7.4 Scratching area

The scratching area is deemed to be that part of the henhouse with a flat compacted floor, the whole of which is covered with material to be manipulated by the pullets and that offers scope for dust baths.

- 7.4.1 At least 25% of the usable henhouse floor area is a scratching area. The scratching surface is located only on the lowest level.
- 7.4.2 The pullets are given access to the scratching area as early as possible and by no later than the 35th day of life.
- 7.4.3 The scratching area is always fully covered with a suitable type of litter.

7.5 Enrichment material/dust baths

In addition to litter, the birds are always provided with other manipulable and alterable material to help keep them occupied. When selecting the materials, care is taken from a biosecurity perspective to ensure that they are hygienically safe.

- 7.5.1 As of the 1st day of life, the birds are offered enrichment material.

Note: Feedstuff scattered over the chicken paper is an acceptable form of enrichment material.

- 7.5.2 In addition to litter, the birds are also provided with enrichment material and the chance to have a dust bath from as early a stage as possible.

Examples of enrichment material: bales of hay or straw, alfalfa, pecking stones etc.

7.6 Perches

Perches must provide the birds with a secure footing and not damage the foot pads. Perches must also be at least 17 cm away from the wall, with a minimum distance of 25 cm from the centre of each perch to the centre of the next perch. There must be at least 40 cm free space above perches that the birds can reach by flying and at least 20 cm of free space above those that the birds can climb on to.

- 7.6.1 The birds are given access to perches from their first day of life. At least one third of the perches are raised.
- 7.6.2 Measures are in place to ensure a minimum perch length of 6 cm/bird as of the 50th day of life and a minimum length of 10 cm/bird as of the 64th day of life.

7.7 Feeding and drinking facilities

The feeding and drinking equipment is designed to provide all birds with access to perfect quality feed and water at all times and to minimise any contamination of the water or feed as far as technically possible.

7.7.1 Feeding equipment

7.7.1.1 If linear feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4.5 cm per bird is provided as of the 50th day of life. If circular feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4 cm per bird is guaranteed as of the 50th day of life.

7.7.2 Drinking equipment

7.7.2.1 With nipple or cup drinkers there must be at least one drinker for every 10 birds as of the 50th day of life. Where circular drinkers are used for watering, an edge length of at least 1 cm per bird is guaranteed.

7.7.2.2 The drinkers must be installed at an appropriate height for the pullets to reach.


7.8 **Light conditions**

Buildings must be lit so that the birds can see each other and the person who feeds and looks after them. The lighting must be designed to ensure an even distribution of light.


7.8.1 The availability of natural daylight is obligatory. The henhouse has light openings that correspond to at least 3% of the usable floor area.

7.8.2 If **artificial lighting** is used, an even distribution of light across the birds' activity area is guaranteed.

7.8.3 A permanent blackout of the light openings (e.g. using paint, covering with coloured films) or the use of monochromatic light is only permitted in exceptional cases on **sound veterinary grounds** (which must be confirmed in writing).

 *Evidence of veterinary grounds*

7.8.4 The light phase must last for at least 8 hours/day as of the 15th day of life, with an uninterrupted dark phase of eight hours. The dark phase should always be preceded by a dusk phase. The light programme is documented.

 *Evidence of light programme*

7.9 **Henhouse environment**

7.9.1 A henhouse environment (ventilation system, ambient temperature) corresponding to animal health requirements, the hen stocking rate and the age of the pullets must be guaranteed in the henhouse area.

7.10 **Live electrical wires**

7.10.1 **[K.O.]** Pullets are not directly exposed to electricity anywhere in the area in which they are kept.

7.10.2 The area in which they are housed also does not contain any other installations that act like electricity wires if simply connected to a source of electricity. If wires are used as deflectors above feed and drinker lines, no isolators are used to attach them.

7.11 **Emergency power supply**

7.11.1 The farm has a suitable emergency power supply to guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds in the event of a power outage.

7.11.2 This emergency power supply is regularly tested (at least six-monthly) and the function tests are documented.

7.11.3 Alternatives to an emergency power supply may be accepted if it can be proven that they will also guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds.

 *Evidence/documentation*

C Special criteria – Organic rearing of pullets

8 Requirements of housing equipment and housing conditions

8.1 Origin of the birds

8.1.1 Since 1 January 2022, organic chicks have, as a general rule, been required to originate from organic parent stock/organic hatcheries.

Note: If not enough organic hatching eggs are available, chicks from conventional parent stock may be used. The exemptions currently applicable in Germany will then take effect, and an exemption certificate issued by the responsible authority must be submitted.

8.2 Hen stocking rate

8.2.1 Stocking rate rules without pre-rearing

The following has applied to all stocking in organic rearing since 1 January 2022:

- From the 35th day of life: 14 birds/m² total usable area or, in housing equipment in which the usable area is distributed across several levels, a maximum of 28 birds/m² total usable floor area applies.

8.2.2 Stocking rate rules with pre-rearing

- From the 35th to the 49th day of life: a maximum of 30 birds/m² total usable area.
- From the 50th day of life, the stocking rates listed in Chapter 8.2.1 apply.

The birds must have permanent access to perches, litter and pecking stones.

8.2.3 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place in the respective henhouses to ensure that the stocking rate stipulated in Chapters 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 is never exceeded.

8.3 Usable areas

These are areas, the side length of which is never <30 cm, that have headroom of at least 40 cm and the floor of which slopes by no more than 14%, including the areas under feeding and drinking facilities, perches and landing perches, and fixtures for claw rubbing that the pullets can pass over or under.

8.3.1 In multi-tier housing equipment, there are no more than **3 levels** on top of each other, with the henhouse floor counting as the first level.

Note: For existing establishments that were built before the entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2018/848, any regulations of the competent authorities regarding existing facilities are recognised provided that the establishment holds them in writing.

8.3.2 The only levels counted towards the usable area are those designed in such a way that no droppings can fall down onto the birds below and that are fitted with an efficient system for removing the manure.

Note: Exemption certificates issued by the authorities are recognised provided that the establishment holds a written copy.

8.4 Group size/spatial separation of flocks

8.4.1 All henhouses including cold scratching areas are sectioned off so as not to exceed the maximum permitted group size of 10,000 birds pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

8.4.2 The separating elements are designed to reliably prevent any mixing of groups. Any doors in the separations must be kept closed.

8.5 Scratching area

The scratching area is deemed to be that part of the henhouse with a flat compacted floor, the whole of which is covered with material to be manipulated by the pullets and which offers scope for dust baths.

- 8.5.1 The scratching area makes up at least 1/3 of the henhouse floor area. The scratching area is located only on the lowest level.
- 8.5.2 The scratching area is opened as of the 22nd day of life and all birds must have access to the scratching area as of the 28th day of life at the latest.
- 8.5.3 The area is always completely covered with suitable litter.

8.6 Enrichment material/dust baths

- 8.6.1 As of the 1st day of life, the birds are offered manipulable material.
- 8.6.2 In addition to litter, the birds are also offered enrichment material as early as possible, including for example hay racks, balls of straw, alfalfa, pecking stones etc. (with added grit in some cases).
- 8.6.3 The enrichment material is permanently accessible. A corresponding plan/documentation of the quantity and type of enrichment material used is in place.
- 8.6.4 Sufficient facilities for dust bathing are provided.

8.7 Perches

- 8.7.1 Perches are provided from the 1st day of life, with at least one third taking the form of raised perches.
- 8.7.2 Measures are in place to ensure a minimum perch length of 10 cm/bird as of the 35th day of life or at least 100 cm² raised perch area/bird.

Where pullets/cockerels are being pre-reared together:

From the 50th day of life: 10 cm/bird or 100 cm² raised perch area/bird.

8.8 Feeding and drinking facilities

8.8.1 Feeding equipment

- 8.8.1.3 If linear feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4.5 cm per bird is provided as of the 50th day of life. If circular feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4 cm per bird is guaranteed as of the 50th day of life.

8.8.2 Drinking equipment


- 8.8.2.1 With nipple or cup drinkers there must be at least one drinker for every 10 birds as of the 50th day of life. Where circular drinkers are used for watering, an edge length of at least 1 cm per bird is guaranteed.
- 8.8.2.2 The drinkers are set at an optimal height for the pullets.

Note: Cup drinkers are not circular drinkers and are treated in the same way as nipple drinkers.


8.9 Light conditions

- 8.9.1 The availability of **natural daylight** is obligatory. The henhouse has light openings that correspond to at least 3% of the usable floor area.
- 8.9.2 The daylight openings guarantee an even distribution of light.
- 8.9.3 If **artificial lighting** is used, an even distribution of light across the birds' activity area is guaranteed.

- 8.9.4 A permanent blackout of the light openings (e.g. using paint, covering with coloured films) or the use of monochromatic light is only permitted in exceptional cases on **sound veterinary grounds** (which must be confirmed in writing).

 *Evidence of sound veterinary grounds*

- 8.9.5 The light phase must last for at least 8 hours/day as of the 15th day of life. There must be an uninterrupted dark phase of at least eight hours. The dark phase should always be preceded by a dusk phase. The light programme is documented.

 *Evidence of light programme*

8.10 Henhouse environment

- 8.10.1 A henhouse environment (ventilation system, ambient temperature) corresponding to animal health requirements, the hen stocking rate and the age of the hens must be guaranteed in the henhouse area.

8.11 Live electrical wires

- 8.11.1 **[K.O.]** Pullets may not be directly exposed to electricity anywhere in the area in which they are kept.

- 8.11.2 The area in which they are housed also does not contain any other installations that act like electricity wires if simply connected to a source of electricity. If wires are used as deflectors above feed and drinker lines, no isolators may be used to attach them.

8.12 Emergency power supply

- 8.12.1 The farm has a suitable emergency power supply to guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds in the event of a power outage.

This emergency power supply is regularly tested (at least six-monthly) and the function tests are documented.

Alternatives to an emergency power supply may be accepted if it can be proven that they will guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds.

 *Evidence/documentation*

9 Free-range criteria/Organic rearing of pullets

9.1 Cold scratching area (conservatory)

The provision of a cold scratching area is recommended. As soon as the provisions of the EU Eco Regulation have been fleshed out by the EU member states, the specifications will be adapted accordingly.

The cold scratching area is a part of the henhouse that is protected from the elements, has a floor plate impermeable to liquids, is not subject to the climate control of the henhouse, is permeable to light and air, is physically separated from the henhouse building by a solid wall, is directly accessible to the birds and contains litter material.

- 9.1.1 The establishment has a cold scratching area measuring at least 1 m² for every 56 birds.
- 9.1.2 The cold scratching area (conservatory) is at least 2 m high and has a wind-breaking net with perforations that ensure permanent light and air permeability. The height of the wind-breaking net is at least 70% of the height of the external wall of the cold scratching area (i.e. a minimum of 1.40 m). Installations that have the same features as a wind-breaking net are also permitted. The cold scratching area has an outdoor climate and a roof. It is separated from the warm henhouse by a solid wall and is designed in such a way that wild birds cannot gain access.
- 9.1.3 As inside the henhouse, the separation of flocks is obligatory in the cold scratching area.

9.2 Popholes

- 9.2.1 The popholes to the cold scratching area and to the free-range area are at least 35 cm high and 40 cm wide and evenly distributed along the entire length of the outside wall. They are not arranged above one another. For henhouses with different floor levels and raised popholes from a height of 30 cm upwards, suitable entry and exit aids are provided. The entry/exit aids are provided at each pophole across the full width of the opening.
- 9.2.2 For accessing the conservatory, there is a minimum length of 2 metres of popholes per 100 m² of total usable area.
- 9.2.3 For accessing the outdoor area, there is a minimum length of 4 metres of popholes per 100m² of total usable area.
- 9.2.4 The birds must have unrestricted access to both the cold scratching area and the free-range area. If there are narrow areas or obstacles, bridges or tunnels are required, with a minimum width of 2 m per 100 m² of total usable area.
- 9.2.5 If the popholes are not at ground level, climbing aids have been positioned at each pophole across the full width of the latter.

9.3 Free-range areas

- 9.3.1 The following condition applies to new buildings/installations: 1 m²/bird free-range area.

For henhouses that already have a green free-range area with less surface, a transitional arrangement is in place until 2028.

Note: As a general rule the birds must spend 1/3 of their lives outside. To provide evidence of time spend outdoors, the days must be documented and noted in the handover record for the laying hen keeper (exceptions apply to periods of confinement due to vaccinations and periods of inclement weather).

The free-range area must be no further than 350 m from the closest pophole. This may be documented using a clear overview of the surface areas.

Note: Sealed areas cannot be counted as free-range areas.

- 9.3.2 Pullets are given access to the free-range area as early as possible, but no later than from the 70th day of life.
- 9.3.3 Measures are in place to ensure that the birds have access to the free-range area for a minimum of 8 hours per day.

D Special criteria – Conventional rearing of broiler roosters

10 Requirements of housing equipment and housing conditions

10.1 Hen stocking rate

10.1.1 Stocking rate rules without pre-rearing

For stocking as of 1 January 2022 until 30 June 2024:

- As of the 35th day of life: a maximum of 20 birds/m² total usable area. In housing equipment in which the usable area is distributed across several levels, a maximum of 40 birds/m² total usable floor area applies.

Note: hatch date = 1st day of life

For stocking from 1 July 2024 onwards:

- As of the 35th day of life: a maximum of 18 birds/m² total usable area. In henhouses in which the usable area is distributed across several levels, a maximum of 36 birds/m² total usable floor area applies.

10.1.2 Stocking rate rules with pre-rearing

- From the 35th to the 49th day of life: a maximum of 30 birds/m² total usable area.
- From the 50th day of life, the stocking rates listed in Chapter 10.1.1 apply. The birds must have permanent access to perches, litter and pecking stones.

10.1.3 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place in the respective henhouses to ensure that the stocking rate stipulated in Chapters 10.1.1 and 10.1.2 is never exceeded.

10.2 Minimum slaughter age/minimum slaughter weight

10.2.1 The minimum slaughter age is 70 days AND, regardless of breed (brown, white or cream-coloured egg layers), a minimum average weight of 1,300 g at the time of destocking is reached.

10.2.2 The slaughter weight is to be documented at the time of destocking so that more information on weight development is available in the event of the Guide subsequently being revised.

10.3 Usable areas

These are areas, the side length of which is never <30 cm, that have headroom of at least 40 cm and the floor of which slopes by no more than 14%, including the areas under feeding and drinking facilities, perches and landing perches, and fixtures for claw rubbing that the birds can pass over or under.

10.3.1 In multi-tier housing equipment, there are no more than 4 levels on top of each other, with the henhouse floor counting as the first level.


10.3.2 Only those levels from which the manure can only fall one level lower are counted towards the usable area. Further levels only count towards the usable area if the manure is collected.

10.3.3 System-related usable areas*) may be counted towards the usable area even if not fitted with a manure belt provided that they are available during the entire daylight period, are at least 30 cm wide, have headroom of at least 40 cm and provide the birds with a firm surface.
*) see Annex 1.3 Definition of terms

10.4 Cold scratching area (conservatory)

A cold scratching area (conservatory) is not a requirement for conventional rearing. If it is provided, however, it may be counted towards the usable area subject to the following conditions:

- 10.4.1 The cold scratching area (conservatory) is at least 2 m high and has a wind-breaking net with perforations that ensure permanent light and air permeability. The height of the wind-breaking net is at least 70% of the height of the external wall of the cold scratching area (i.e. a minimum of 1.40 m). Installations that have the same features as a wind-breaking net are also permitted. The cold scratching area has an outdoor climate and a roof. It is separated from the warm henhouse by a solid wall and is designed in such a way that wild birds cannot gain access.
- 10.4.2 Measures are in place to ensure that the cold scratching area (conservatory) is available to the birds as of the day on which this is required to maintain compliance with the stocking rate.
- 10.4.3 The birds have access to the cold scratching area (conservatory) at least during the entire light phase, and outdoor periods during the light phase are documented.

 Evidence/documentation

10.5 Scratching area

The scratching area is deemed to be that part of the henhouse with a flat compacted floor, the whole of which is covered with material to be manipulated by the birds and that offers scope for dust baths.

- 10.5.1 At least 25% of the usable henhouse floor area is a scratching area. The scratching area is located only on the lowest level.
- 10.5.2 The birds are given access to the scratching area as early as possible and by no later than the 35th day of life.
- 10.5.3 The scratching area is always fully covered with a suitable type of litter.

10.6 Enrichment material/dust baths

In addition to litter, the birds are always provided with other manipulable and alterable material to help keep them occupied. When selecting the materials, care is taken from a biosecurity perspective to ensure that they are hygienically safe.

- 10.6.1 As of the 1st day of life, the birds are offered manipulable material.

Note: Feedstuff scattered over the chicken paper is an acceptable form of enrichment material.

- 10.6.2 In addition to litter, the birds are also provided with enrichment material and the chance to have a dust bath from as early a stage as possible.

Examples of enrichment material: bales of hay or straw, alfalfa, pecking stones etc.

10.7 Perches

Perches must provide the birds with a secure footing and not damage the foot pads. Perches must also be at least 17 cm away from the wall, with a minimum distance of 25 cm from the centre of each perch to the centre of the next perch. There must be at least 40 cm free space above perches that the birds can reach by flying and at least 20 cm of free space above those that the birds can climb on to.

- 10.7.1 The birds are given access to perches from their first day of life. At least one third of the perches are raised.

- 10.7.2 Measures are in place to ensure a minimum perch length of 6 cm/bird as of the 35th day of life.

10.8 Feeding and drinking facilities

The feeding and drinking equipment is designed to provide all birds with access to perfect quality feed and water at all times and to minimise any contamination of the water or feed as far as technically possible.

10.8.1 Feeding equipment

- 10.8.1.3 If linear feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4.5 cm per bird is provided as of the 50th day of life. If circular feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 2 cm per bird is guaranteed as of the 50th day of life.

10.8.2 Drinking equipment

- 10.8.2.1 With nipple or cup drinkers there must be at least one drinker for every 10 birds as of the 50th day of life. Where circular drinkers are used for watering, an edge length of at least 1 cm per bird is guaranteed.

- 10.8.2.2 The drinkers are set at an appropriate height for the birds to reach.


10.9 Light conditions

Buildings must be lit so that the birds can see each other and the person who feeds and looks after them. The lighting must be designed to ensure an even distribution of light.


- 10.9.1 The availability of **natural daylight** is obligatory. The henhouse has light openings that correspond to at least 3% of the usable floor area.

- 10.9.2 If **artificial lighting** is used, an even distribution of light across the birds' activity area is guaranteed.

- 10.9.3 A permanent blackout of the light openings (e.g. using paint, covering with coloured films) or the use of monochromatic light is only permitted in exceptional cases on **sound veterinary grounds** (which must be confirmed in writing).

 *Evidence of veterinary grounds*

- 10.9.4 The light phase must last for at least 8 hours/day as of the 15th day of life with an uninterrupted dark phase of eight hours. The dark phase should always be preceded by a dusk phase. The light programme is documented.

 *Evidence of light programme*

10.10 Henhouse environment

- 10.10.1 A henhouse environment (ventilation system, ambient temperature) corresponding to animal health requirements, the hen stocking rate and the age of the birds must be guaranteed in the henhouse area.

10.11 Live electrical wires

- 10.11.1 **[K.O.]** The birds are not directly exposed to electricity anywhere in the area in which they are kept.


- 10.11.2 The area in which they are housed also does not contain any other installations that act like electricity wires if simply connected to a source of electricity. If wires are used as deflectors above feed and drinker lines, no isolators are used to attach them.

10.12 Emergency power supply

10.12.1 The farm has a suitable emergency power supply to guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds in the event of a power outage.

This emergency power supply is regularly tested (at least six-monthly) and the function tests are documented.

Alternatives to an emergency power supply may be accepted if it can be proven that they will also guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds.

 *Evidence/documentation*

E Special criteria – Organic rearing of broiler roosters

11 Requirements of housing equipment and housing conditions

11.1 Origin of the cockerels

11.1.1 Since 1 January 2022, the organic chicks have, as a general rule, been required to come from organic parent stock/organic hatcheries.

Note: If not enough organic hatching eggs are available, chicks from conventional parent stock may be used. The exemptions currently applicable in Germany will then take effect, and an exemption certificate issued by the responsible authority must be submitted.

11.2 Hen stocking rate

11.2.1 Stocking rate rules if no pre-rearing

The following has applied to all stocking in organic rearing since 1 January 2022:

- From the 35th day of life: 14 birds/m² total usable area or, in henhouses in which the usable area is distributed across several levels, a maximum of 28 birds/m² total usable floor area.

11.2.2 Stocking rate rules with pre-rearing

- From the 35th to the 49th day of life: a maximum of 30 birds/m² total usable area.
 - From the 50th day of life, the stocking rates listed in Chapter 11.2.1 apply.
- The birds must have permanent access to perches, litter and pecking stones.

11.2.3 **[K.O.]** Measures are in place in the respective henhouses to ensure that the stocking rate stipulated in Chapters 11.1.1 and 11.1.2 is never exceeded.

11.3 Minimum slaughter age/minimum slaughter weight

11.3.1 The minimum slaughter age is 70 days AND, regardless of breed (brown, white or cream-coloured egg layers), a minimum average weight of 1,300 g at the time of destocking is reached.

11.3.2 The slaughter weight is to be documented at the time of destocking so that more information on weight development is available in the event of the Guide subsequently being revised.

11.4 Usable areas

These are areas, the side length of which is never <30 cm, that have headroom of at least 40 cm and the floor of which slopes by no more than 14%, including the areas under feeding and drinking facilities, perches and landing perches, and fixtures for claw rubbing that the pullets can pass over or under.

11.4.1 In multi-tier housing equipment, there are no more than **3 levels** on top of each other, with the henhouse floor counting as the first level.

11.4.2 Only those levels from which the droppings can only fall one level lower are counted towards the usable area. Further levels only count towards the usable area if the manure is collected. The higher levels must be designed in such a way that no droppings can fall down onto the birds below and must be fitted with an efficient system for removing the manure.

Note: Exemption certificates issued by the authorities will be recognised provided that the establishment holds a written copy.

11.5 Group size/spatial separation of flocks

- 11.5.1 All henhouses including cold scratching areas are sectioned off so as not to exceed the maximum permitted group size pursuant to the applicable Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

Note: Depending on the interpretation by the local competent authority, both 4,800 compartments and 10,000 compartments for broiler roosters will be accepted in the KAT system until final clarification from the EU.

- 11.5.2 The separating elements are designed to reliably prevent any mixing of groups. Any doors in the separations must be kept closed.

11.6 Scratching area

The scratching area is deemed to be that part of the henhouse with a flat compacted floor, the whole of which is covered with material to be manipulated by the birds and that offers scope for dust baths.

- 11.6.1 The scratching area makes up at least 1/3 of the usable floor area. The scratching surface is located only on the lowest level.
- 11.6.2 The scratching area is opened as of the 22nd day of life and all birds must have access to the scratching area as of the 28th day of life at the latest.
- 11.6.3 The area is always completely covered with suitable litter.

11.7 Enrichment material/dust baths

- 11.7.1 As of the 1st day of life, the birds are offered manipulable material.
- 11.7.2 In addition to litter, the birds are also offered enrichment material as early as possible, including for example hay racks, balls of straw, alfalfa, pecking stones etc. (with added grit in some cases).
- 11.7.3 The enrichment material is permanently accessible. A corresponding concept/documentation of the quantity and type of enrichment material used is in place.
- 11.7.4 Sufficient facilities for dust baths are provided.

11.8 Perches

- 11.8.1 Perches are provided from the first day of life, with at least one third taking the form of raised perches.
- 11.8.2 Measures are in place to ensure a minimum perch length of 10 cm/bird as of the 35th day of life or at least 100 cm² raised perch area/bird.

Where pullets/cockerels are being reared together:

From the 50th day of life: 10 cm/bird or 100 cm² raised perch area/bird.

11.9 Feeding and drinking facilities

11.9.1 Feeding equipment

- 11.9.1.3 If linear feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 4.5 cm per bird is provided as of the 50th day of life. If circular feeders are used for feeding, an edge length of at least 2 cm per bird is guaranteed as of the 50th day of life.

11.9.2 Drinking equipment

- 11.9.2.4 With nipple or cup drinkers there must be at least one drinker for every 10 birds as of the 50th day of life. Where circular drinkers are used for watering, an edge length of at least 1 cm per bird is guaranteed.

11.9.2.5 The drinkers are set at an appropriate height for the birds to reach.

Note: Cup drinkers are not circular drinkers and are treated in the same way as nipple drinkers.

11.10 Light conditions

11.10.1 The availability of **natural daylight** is obligatory. The henhouse has light openings that correspond to at least 3% of the usable floor area.


11.10.2 The daylight openings guarantee an even distribution of light.

11.10.3 If **artificial lighting** is used, an even distribution of light across the birds' activity area is guaranteed.

11.10.4 A permanent blackout of the light openings (e.g. using paint, covering with coloured films) or the use of monochromatic light is only permitted in exceptional cases on **sound veterinary grounds** (which must be confirmed in writing).

 *Evidence of sound veterinary grounds*

11.10.5 The light phase must last for at least 8 hours/day as of the 15th day of life. There must be an uninterrupted dark phase of at least eight hours. The dark phase should always be preceded by a dusk phase. The light programme is documented.

 *Evidence of light programme*

11.11 Henhouse environment

11.11.1 A henhouse environment (ventilation system, ambient temperature) corresponding to animal health requirements, the hen stocking rate and the age of the hens must be guaranteed in the henhouse area.

11.12 Live electrical wires

11.12.1 **[K.O.]** Birds must not be directly exposed to electricity anywhere in the area in which they are kept.

11.12.2 The area in which the brother roosters are housed also does not contain any other installations that act like electricity wires if simply connected to a source of electricity. If wires are used as deflectors above feed and drinker lines, no isolators may be used to attach them.

11.13 Emergency power supply

11.13.1 The farm has a suitable emergency power supply to guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds in the event of a power outage.

This emergency power supply is regularly tested (at least six-monthly) and the function tests are documented.

Alternatives to an emergency power supply may be accepted if it can be proven that they will also guarantee the supply of power needed to look after the birds.

 *Evidence/documentation*

12 Free-range criteria/Organic rearing of brother roosters

12.1 Cold scratching area (conservatory)

The provision of a cold scratching area is recommended. As soon as the provisions of the EU Eco Regulation have been fleshed out by the EU member states, the specifications will be adapted accordingly.

The cold scratching area is a part of the henhouse that is protected from the elements, has a floor plate impermeable to liquids, is not subject to the climate control of the henhouse, is permeable to light and air, is physically separated from the henhouse building by a solid wall, is directly accessible to the birds and contains litter material.

- 12.1.1 The establishment has a cold scratching area measuring at least 1 m² for every 56 birds.
- 12.1.2 The cold scratching area (conservatory) is at least 2 m high and has a wind-breaking net with perforations that ensure permanent light and air permeability. The height of the wind-breaking net is at least 70% of the height of the external wall of the cold scratching area (i.e. a minimum of 1.40 m). Installations that have the same features as a wind-breaking net are also permitted. The cold scratching area has an outdoor climate and a roof. It is separated from the warm henhouse by a solid wall and is designed in such a way that wild birds cannot gain access.
- 12.1.3 As inside the henhouse, the separation of flocks is obligatory in the cold scratching area.

12.2 Popholes

- 12.2.1 The popholes leading to the cold scratching area and to the free-range area are at least 35 cm high and 40 cm wide and evenly distributed along the entire length of the outside wall. They are not arranged above one another. For henhouses with different floor levels and raised popholes from a height of 30 cm upwards, suitable entry and exit aids are provided. The entry/exit aids are provided at each pophole across the full width of the opening.
- 12.2.2 For accessing the conservatory, there is a minimum length of 2 metres of popholes per 100 m² of total usable area.
- 12.2.3 For accessing the free-range area, there is a minimum of 4 metres of popholes per 100 m² of total usable area.
- 12.2.4 The birds must have unrestricted access to both the cold scratching area and the free-range area. If there are narrow areas or obstacles, bridges or tunnels are required, with a minimum width of 2 m per 100 m² of total usable area.
- 12.2.5 If the popholes are not at ground level, climbing aids have been positioned at each pophole across the full width of the latter.

12.3 Free-range areas

- 12.3.1 The following condition applies to new buildings/installations: 1 m²/bird free-range area. For henhouses that already have a green free-range area with less surface, a transitional arrangement is in place until 2028. The free-range area must be no further than 350 m from the closest pophole. This may be documented using a clear overview of the surface areas.

Note: Sealed areas cannot be counted as free-range areas.

- 12.3.2 Brother roosters are given access to the free-range area as early as possible. Measures are also in place to ensure that the birds have access to the free-range area for a least 1/3 of their lifetime.

Note: Delayed/reduced access to the free-range area may only be accepted upon presentation of a veterinary indication.



- 12.3.3 Measures are in place to ensure that the birds have access to the free-range area for a minimum of 8 hours per day.

Teil III: Annex

1 Definitions

1.1 Signs and symbols

[K.O.] Knock-out criteria

-  References to applicable documents
-  Required documents/documents for submission*
- Reference to other sections

*) The required documents and documents for submission must be in an appropriate form. The KAT forms can be used as a guide and reference in this regard. They are not binding, however.

1.2 Abbreviations

K.O.	Knock-out (criterion)
Mjr	Major
LW	Week of life
LT	Day of life
NA	Not applicable
VVVO	Livestock Movement Ordinance
ID	Identification number

1.3 Definition of terms

Tab.4: Definition of terms

Term	Definition/explanation
Rearing farm	Establishment in which pullets and/or brother roosters from laying hybrid breeds are reared commercially.
Brother rooster	Male chicken of laying hen strains intended for meat production
Lifetime	The lifetime begins on the hatch date and ends on the slaughter date.
Total usable area	Total of all usable areas within a henhouse including the additional usable area and the usable henhouse floor area.
Housing equipment	Equipment (e.g. henhouse, perches, feeders etc.) required for the long-term housing of birds.
Flock	A certain number of pullets/cockerels of the same age kept together in one henhouse.
Newbuilds	All henhouses used for the rearing of pullets/cockerels and for which the planning permission application was submitted after the Guide entered into force.
Usable henhouse floor area	Portion of the floor area of the part of the building that the birds can use at any time and without any restrictions, minus any area under henhouse equipment that the pullets cannot cross over or under.

Term	Definition/explanation
Usable area	Area that is available to the birds at least during the entire light phase and areas, the side length of which is no less than 30 cm at any point, that have headroom of at least 40 cm, that have a floor slope of no more than 14 percent and that provide the birds with a firm surface, including surfaces under feeding and drinking facilities and perches that the pullets can cross over or under.
Hatch equivalent	Procedure 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 and being of the same laying hybrid breed as the female chick.
Hatch date	Hatch date = 1st day of life
Epidemiological unit	All birds of the same species that are housed together or looked after together.
Henhouse	Part of the operation/building in which chicks/pullets or flocks are kept.
Henhouse floor area	Floor area of the part of the building in which the chicks/pullets are housed.
System-related area	Areas provided in the housing equipment in order to train the pullets' mobility (jumping and flying) and that are not equipped with a manure belt.
Aviary	Housing system comprising several levels equipped with perches, and feeding and drinking systems, in order to make better use of the available space.
Additional usable area	All surface areas within an aviary, including system-related areas.

2 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 Certification Protocol
- ✓ Checklist for rearing farms
- ✓ Documents: forms and procedural instructions
- ✓ KAT Crisis Management Guide for Members
- ✓ List of approved KAT certification bodies