

Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme

Rearer, Egg
Producer & Packing
Centre Standard



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1. Introduction



1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Sustainable Agriculture is defined by the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform (SAI)¹ as "the efficient production of safe, high quality agricultural products, in a way that protects and improves the natural environment, the social and economic conditions of farmers, their employees and local communities, and safeguards the health and welfare of all farmed species."

This definition clearly highlights four main elements to sustainable production, namely:

- The production of safe, high quality food products.
- The protection and improvement of the natural environment.
- Caring for the social and economic conditions of those in the supply chain.
- The protection of the health and welfare of all farmed animals.

The Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme (SEAS) is designed to include criteria that address all these elements of sustainable production.

The criteria contained in Sections 3 – 5 of this Standard are included to ensure best practice in the rearing of point-of-lay pullets (Section 3) and in the production of hen eggs (*Gallus gallus* species) (Section 4) and the packing of table eggs (Section 5). These criteria are grouped according to traceability, food safety, hygiene, health and safety and welfare and are complemented by the Performance Criteria outlined in Section 6.

1.2 Development

The Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme (SEAS) was developed by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) representing Bord Bia – the Irish Food Board; Teagasc; the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI); the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM); industry (rears and egg producers, rearing organisations and packing centres) and other technical experts. The criteria were established taking into account Food Safety Management / HACCP principles as they apply to the production of table eggs.

The Scheme is accredited to the European Standard for Product Certification (ISO 17065: 2012²). This means that the Standard (and the Scheme which is based on the Standard) has been independently assessed against international standards in other countries.

This Standard replaces the previous Egg Quality Assurance Standards (Producer and Packing Centre), Revision 03 of 2009.

1.3 Scheme Overview

The SEAS has been developed in response to the demands of the marketplace. Increasingly purchasers of Irish eggs are requiring proof that the eggs are produced sustainably on farms that are certified members of an accredited assurance scheme that embraces sustainability principles. Based on the EU average as reported in the Joint Research Council

¹ The SAI Platform was formed by Nestlé, Unilever and Danone in 2002 as a non-profit organisation to facilitate sharing, at precompetitive level, of knowledge and best practices to support the development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices involving stakeholders throughout the food value chain. SAI Platform today has over 80 members including Bord Bia. SAI Platform develops tools and guidance to support global and local sustainable sourcing and agriculture practices.

² International Standards Organisation <http://www.iso.org/iso/home.html>

report (Nov 2010), the emissions relating to egg production in Ireland are below the EU average. However, opportunities for further improvement exist and this Scheme will provide the means to achieve that.

The SEAS has been designed to demonstrate the sustainability of Irish egg production in a systematic way at individual Participant (farm and Packing Centre) level. An audit is conducted by an independent auditor on every Participant at 18-month intervals, during which the compliance criteria are assessed together with the Performance Criteria. A comprehensive report on the performance of the Participant against the Standard's criteria is produced for the member.

1.4 Objectives

The primary objectives of the Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme are:

- To demonstrate to customers that table eggs are produced sustainably under an accredited scheme;
- To set out the criteria for best practice in sustainable egg production;
- To provide a uniform mechanism for recording and monitoring:
 - Compliance of Participants with hygienic production, food safety, traceability, health and welfare, and farm safety;
 - The level of continual improvement over time.
- To provide an on-going means of demonstrating best practice at all levels in the egg production process.

1.5 Benefits from Participation in the SEAS

On farm benefits

Sustainable production complements efficient production. It involves minimising the amount of resources (e.g. energy, feed, water etc.) used by the enterprises and implementing measures that enhance their environmental performance. These sustainability measures also typically deliver socio-economic and environmental benefits through lower costs of production.

Industry benefits

The Scheme will assist in the marketing of eggs in several ways including the provision of access to markets that demand certification to the sustainable source farms, thereby demonstrating the commitment of Irish Egg farmers to "green" farming practices. It will also provide a means to benchmark Irish egg production internationally.

1.6 Information Collection

In preparation for the Bord Bia farm visit and to reduce as much as possible the need to collect data while on the farm, Bord Bia will request the Rearing Organisations and the Packing Centres to provide information with the consent of the participating farm owners. The information will include data on all the key inputs and outputs relevant to the farm enterprise. This will include:

- For Rearing: numbers of day-olds supplied, number of pullets produced, age, weight, other inputs, etc.;
- For Egg Producers: inputs, outputs (egg production - all grades), etc.;
- For all Participants: any additional information that could be used in assessing the sustainability performance of the farm.

Additional information will be collected during the Bord Bia visit (feeds, other inputs, etc.). All the data will be maintained on a confidential basis and will be collated by Bord Bia to provide detailed information on the performance of the farm enterprise or packing centre to assist with identifying possible improvements.

1.7 Normative References of the Standard

This Standard incorporates the key legislative requirements relevant to rearing, egg production and packing. However, it is also recommended that Participants consult other best practice guidelines and legislation referenced in Appendix 7.1: Reference Information.

The Scheme is based on the requirements of existing legislation and standards including:

- European hygiene legislation (including (EC) 178: 2002; 852 and 853 of 2004);
- ISO 17065 (2012) Conformity assessment — Requirements for certification bodies certifying products, processes and services;
- PAS 2050: 2011 - Specification for the assessment of the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions of goods and services. Published by British Standards Institute.
- Codex Alimentarius: Recommended International Code of Practice General Principles of Food Hygiene (Cac/Rcp 1-1969, Rev. 4-2003);
- Relevant National and EU legislative requirements;
- Recognised international quality management standards (such as ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System – Requirements);

See Appendix 7.1: Reference Information for a list of other applicable legislation and codes of practice.

Note: Compliance with this Standard does not guarantee compliance with all relevant legislation. It is also recommended that Participants consult with their Agricultural and Veterinary advisors and the relevant Competent Authority.

1.8 Definitions

Note: These terms below are used throughout the Standard. Readers are advised to refer to this section for explanations / definitions of the terms and abbreviations. These terms and abbreviations apply to their use in this Standard only.

Applicant: a Rearer, Egg Producer or Packing Centre applying for membership of the SEAS

Audit: where used means that, during a Bord Bia farm or packing centre visit, a qualified auditor will assess:

- The level of compliance with the Scheme Regulations (as set out in the Standard: Section 2, Scheme Regulations) and the Scheme Criteria (as set out in the Standard: Sections 3 - 5, criteria for Rearers, Egg Producers and Packing Centres)
- The level of performance against the Performance Criteria (Section 6).

Bord Bia: the Irish Food Board.

Certification Committee: A Committee appointed by Bord Bia to which the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Board has devolved responsibility and authority for all certification decisions with regard to membership of the Scheme.

Certification Period: the period of validity of the certification. (see Scheme Regulations 2.4.2 for further detail).

Competent Authority: when used in this Standard means the state authority with responsibility for the relevant official controls. (EC) 882/2004 formally defines the Competent Authority as the central authority of a Member State competent for the organisation of official controls or any other authority to which that competence has been conferred; it shall also include, where appropriate, the corresponding authority of a third country.

Bord Bia Register / Database: the register / database of the current certified Members indicating their certification status.

DAFM: the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Egg Producer: a farmer with a valid flock number producing table eggs for human consumption.

Eggs - Table Eggs: eggs from hens intended for sale as shell eggs for human consumption as defined in Commission Regulation (EC) 589: 2008.

EMEA: European Medicines Evaluation Agency

Farm: the land under the control of the participating Rearer / Egg Producer that is relevant to the farm enterprise operated by an SEAS participant.

Farm Auditor: the independent auditor carrying out the farm audits.

FAWAC: the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council

Field Officer: the personnel appointed by the Rearing Organisations or the Packing Centres whose role is to evaluate and report the on-going compliance of the farm Participants and to liaise with farmers in closing out non-compliances. All such Field Officers receive special training in the relevant SEAS criteria from Bord Bia and are formally registered on the Bord Bia database.

Flock Number: a unique number assigned by the Competent Authority to the site.

Formal Training: this applies to training conducted by a competent organisation and a certificate issued.

FQAS: the Bord Bia Feed Quality Assurance Scheme.

FSAI: the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

HACCP: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, an internationally recognised system for the identification and control of hazards relating to food safety.

House: when used in the Standard in relation to production (i.e. production house) means the building in which the birds are maintained during the production (rearing or egg production) process.

HPRA: Health Products Regulatory Authority – the body in Ireland that regulates medicines including animal remedies (see also www.hpra.ie).

Member: a Rearer, Egg Producer or Packing Centre that is certified under the SEAS.

Origin Green: A unique sustainability programme that provides proof of Ireland's commitment to sustainable food and drink production.

Participant: an SEAS Applicant or Member.

Packing Centre: the process of sorting, grading, labelling, packing and delivery of table eggs under the SEAS. This includes all the buildings used for this purpose that are under the control (i.e. operated by the Packing Centre, or operated by another organisation as part of the Packing Centre's operations) of the participant.

Production House: the building in which the young birds are raised or the eggs are produced.

Quality Assurance Board: an independent subsidiary Board within Bord Bia which has overall responsibility for policy in relation to the operation of the Assurance Scheme.

Range: when used in the Standard in relation to free-range egg production means the area of land that is accessible to the free range birds during the egg production process.

Rearer: a farmer who is producing replacement pullets for supply to an Egg Producer.

Rearing Organisation: The organisation that supplies day-old chicks to the Rearer.

Register / Database: the Bord Bia register / database (either term may be used interchangeably) of the current certified members indicating the membership status.

Residues: A residue means a residue of substances having a pharmacological action, of their metabolites and of other substances transmitted to animal products and likely to be harmful to human health.

Scheme: the Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme consists of the following elements:

- The SEAS Standard (this Standard);
- The process for ensuring that the Criteria as set out in the Standard are met (through auditing);
- The process for collecting and analysing the data under the Sustainable Assessment Criteria;
- The certification process whereby all the compliance data is evaluated and a certification decision is made.

SEAS: the Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme.

SEAS Standard: this consists of the criteria as set out in this Standard in Sections 1 (Introduction), 2 (Scheme Regulations), 3 (Rearer criteria), 4 (Egg Producer Criteria), 5, (Packing Centre Criteria), 6 (Performance Criteria), 7 (Appendices).

Site: all the buildings and associated facilities (yards, ranges, production houses, other buildings) on a rearing farm, egg production farm or packing centre which are involved with rearing or egg production or packing process.

Sustainability: the efficient production of safe, high quality agricultural products, in a way that protects and improves the natural environment, the social and economic conditions of farmers, their employees and local communities, and safeguards the health and welfare of all farmed species (as defined in www.SAIplatform.org).

Teagasc: The Agriculture and Food Development Authority.

Technical Advisory Committee: a committee representing the stakeholders in rearing and egg production who are assigned the role of advising Bord Bia on the technical content of the Standard.

Veterinary Prescription / Veterinary Written Directive (VWD): this document is commonly referred to on farms as a “prescription” but is, however, more correctly entitled a Veterinary Written Directive (VWD). It is a document (containing the information specified in S.I. 786: 2007, Schedule 3) issued by a registered veterinary practitioner in respect of an animal or animals under his / her care that provides for the administration of an animal remedy to the animal(s).

1.9 Cautionary Notes

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this Standard, Bord Bia cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions.

Bord Bia is not liable for any costs or potential or estimated loss of earnings resulting from having to comply with any criterion of this scheme or in regard to the consequences of being found to be in breach of any legal requirement.

Compliance with this standard does not guarantee compliance with all relevant legislation.

All references to legislation in this Standard are given on an “as amended basis”.

2. Scheme Regulations



2 Scheme Regulations

This section contains important general information for all Participants in the Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme (SEAS) and Participants are urged to take sufficient time to obtain a full understanding of the various regulations of the Scheme.

2.1 Scope and Membership

This Standard applies to replacement birds supplied to egg production farms, to the table eggs produced by hens for public consumption, and to the Packing Centres who pack eggs for public consumption.

Only sites where all activities (Rearing, Egg Production or Packing Centre) are conducted in accordance with the SEAS are eligible to participate in the SEAS.

Membership of the Scheme is open to all Rearers, Egg Producers and Packing Centres that have valid registration with the Competent Authority.

Membership fees apply and the schedule of fees is published on the Bord Bia website (www.BordBia.ie/SEAS) and failure to submit the specified fees, when requested, will result in suspension from the Scheme.

During the Bord Bia visits, the farms and Packing Centres must submit to an assessment by a qualified auditor of both:

- The level of compliance with the Scheme Regulations (as set out in the Standard: Section 2, Scheme Regulations) and the Scheme Criteria (as set out in the Standard: Sections 3 - 5, criteria for Rearers, Egg Producers and Packing Centres).
- The level of performance against the Performance Criteria (Section 6).

2.2 Database Information

A Bord Bia database / register indicating the status of all certified Participants in the Scheme will be maintained.

Bord Bia records all relevant / applicable data during the Bord Bia visit by the Bord Bia appointed auditor and this is maintained on the Bord Bia database. All data is maintained on a confidential basis on the database in accordance with the data protection act (see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information). Access to the information is only provided to Rearing Organisations and Packing Centre personnel for the purposes of permitting closeout of non-compliances. Access to the data is also provided to Bord Bia personnel for the purposes of making certification decisions.

The Bord Bia database performs a number of functions.

- Recording production house details of the farm (house(s), bird numbers, production system, etc.) and farmer details (name, address, phone numbers, directions to the farm) for contact and communication purposes;
- Recording the enterprises that are present on the farm (main production types / systems, other enterprises present (e.g. tillage), size of the enterprise, etc.) as relevant to the Criteria in the Standard;
- Recording data about the Packing Centre enterprise that is relevant for certification purposes;
- Recording and collating data collected as part of the Bord Bia audit for the purpose of calculating the carbon footprint of the enterprise;
- Recording the results of the audits carried out by the Bord Bia appointed auditors and communicating those results as needed to the Participant, to Bord Bia, and to the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre as relevant.
- Providing Members with information about the certification status of other Members as relevant (e.g. the status of Producers will be visible to Packing Centres; the status of Rearers will be visible to Egg Producers).

The Bord Bia database is linked to the Bord Bia public website (www.bordbia.ie) through which various links are available, e.g. checking flock certification status and downloading documentation relating to the Schemes (such as the Standard, templates, other information relevant to the scheme, etc.) (See the web-link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

Access to the Bord Bia database is provided by Bord Bia only on an as-required basis. In each case, the Bord Bia database administrator will, on Bord Bia's instruction, issue a user with a username and password to permit access to the information relevant to the user's function in the Scheme.

Rearing Organisations' Field Officers are registered on the database and are trained by Bord Bia to be able to conduct the required inspections, to provide support to their Rearers with regard to participation, and to assist with the management of closeout of non-compliances.

Packing Centres' Field Officers are registered on the database and are trained by Bord Bia to be able to conduct the required inspections, to provide support to their Egg Producers with regard to participation, and to assist with the management of closeout of non-compliances.

2.3 Eligibility under the Scheme

Only Participants registered with the relevant Competent Authority are eligible to apply for Membership of the Scheme.

Certification under the Standard will only be granted where it is demonstrated through audit that the Participant has complied in full with all the applicable criteria in the Standard (see also sub-section 2.7 below for details on the application process).

Where specific Salmonella pathogens (*S. Enteritidis* and *S. Typhimurium*) are detected on a farm, a slaughter-out policy must be in operation and implemented and Bord Bia must be informed immediately. This policy must be notified in advance of any application to Bord Bia for participation in the Scheme. Bord Bia will then consider the policy (and associated procedures that will apply) and advise on its acceptability.

A Participant that has been convicted of an offence under the legislation against any of the criteria in this Standard in the previous 3 years will not be eligible for certification to this Standard. In addition, if, during the period of validity of the certificate, the Participant is convicted of an offence under the legislation relevant to the Standard, the certificate will be revoked and the Participant will be withdrawn from the Scheme and removed from the register of certified Members for a period of 3 years from the date the conviction was notified to Bord Bia. Failure to inform Bord Bia of a conviction will also be deemed as not having met the conditions of membership and suspension from the scheme will apply for a period of 3 years from the date the conviction was notified to Bord Bia.

2.4 Control, Certification and Monitoring

2.4.1 Control

Overall control of the Scheme will be exercised by the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Board. This Board is representative of the relevant sectors of the food industry and collaborates with the Technical Advisory Committee, which is responsible for drafting the Standard and formulating required amendments.

The decision of the Quality Assurance Board on any matter relating to the control or operation of the Scheme is final. See also section 2.9 Appeals regarding the process for appealing certification decisions.

2.4.2 Audit Interval, Certification Period and Monitoring

The evaluation of the compliance of all Participants with the criteria of the Standard will be conducted through an independent Bord Bia audit conducted by Bord Bia's appointed agents. Certification will be granted based on compliance with the criteria as determined through these audits and will be normally granted for an 18-month period. This period may be shortened to take audit findings and seasonal factors into account at the discretion of the Certification Committee.

All Members are required, as a condition of participation in the Scheme, to comply with the relevant criteria at all times. This includes legal compliance (see also Appendix 7.2, Farmer Declaration).

Bord Bia reserves the right to carry out audits or spot checks on an unannounced basis for the purpose of verifying compliance with the criteria of the Standard or to determine that the corrective / preventive actions arising from audit findings remain in place and are effective. Bord Bia appointed auditors are entitled to seek access to all relevant areas of the enterprise (buildings, fields, etc.) and to relevant regulatory reports required to be maintained under the legislation by the Participant. Participants must supply any information relevant to establishing compliance with the Standard as requested by the auditor. Failure to permit the requested access or to supply the relevant information to the Bord Bia auditor may result in the suspension of the Member from the Scheme.

Bord Bia (or its appointed agents) reserves the right to remove samples for independent analysis (feed, water, dust, faeces, birds, eggs, etc.) to establish compliance with the Standard.

The full onus of responsibility for compliance with the criteria of this Standard is on the Scheme Participants and not on Bord Bia or its agents or any other third party.

2.4.3 Rearing Organisation Monitoring of Rearers (Internal Audits)

The Rearing Organisation is required under the Scheme to conduct at least one internal audit of each rearer / producer per crop during the rearing period. The frequency (above the minimum) and scope of these audits can be varied based on a documented risk assessment which takes into account, among other things, the number and severity of non-compliances identified at audit (Bord Bia and Internal). However, all critical criteria from the Bord Bia Standard must be audited at each audit and all sections of the Bord Bia Standard at least annually.

The Rearing Organisation internal audit report findings will be used as follows by Bord Bia.

- Where the Rearing Organisation identifies a critical non-compliance, they are required to immediately prevent any pullets being supplied to Egg Producers and to immediately notify Bord Bia. The situation will be assessed by Bord Bia and the certification of the farm / production house may be suspended until such times as measures to correct the issues have been put in place.
- Where the Rearing Organisation identifies a General non-compliance during an internal audit the officer will work in collaboration with the farmer/producer to address the issues within a 2-month period.
- The reports of all internal audits will be made available to the Bord Bia auditor on request during announced or unannounced Bord Bia audits.
- Where non-compliances identified in the internal audit have not been addressed and have been open for longer than a 2-month period the certification status of the farm may be compromised and the farm will be at a higher risk of receiving an unannounced Bord Bia audit during the certification period.

2.4.4 Packing Centre Monitoring of Egg Producers (Internal Audits)

The Packing Centre is required under the Scheme to conduct audits of all the egg producing farms supplying the Packing Centre every month while the house is stocked. The frequency (above the minimum) and the scope of these audits can be varied based on a documented risk assessment which takes into account, among other things, the number and severity of non-compliances identified at audit (Bord Bia and Internal). However, all critical criteria from the Bord Bia Standard must be audited at each audit and all sections of the Bord Bia Standard at least annually.

The Packing Centre audit report findings will be used as follows by Bord Bia to determine on-going certification:

- Where the Packing Centre identifies a critical non-compliance, they are required to immediately cease using eggs from the farm for table eggs supply and to immediately notify Bord Bia. The situation will be assessed by Bord Bia and the certification of the farm / production house may be suspended until such times as measures to correct the issues have been put in place.
- Where the Packing Centre identifies a General non-compliance during an internal audit the officer will work in collaboration with the farmer/producer to address the issues within a 2-month period.
- The reports of all internal audits will be made available to the Bord Bia auditor on request during announced or unannounced Bord Bia audits.
- Where non-compliances identified in the internal audit have not been addressed and have been open for longer than a 2-month period the certification status of the farm may be compromised and the farm will be at a higher risk of receiving an unannounced Bord Bia audit during the certification period.

2.5 Criteria Categories and their Application

2.5.1 Categories

The criteria where compliance with the Standard is required are identified in the introductory text in sub-sections 3.0 and 4.0 (Egg Producer and Rearer criteria respectively) and sub-section 5.0 Packing Centre. These criteria are classified as Critical or General.

Critical: These criteria are printed in bold typeface with the wording: (Critical). These relate to areas of high significance (e.g. food safety and traceability) and to Scheme regulations. The Participants must comply fully with each of these criteria.

General: These criteria are printed in normal typeface in the text and relate to core best practice. The Participants must comply with each of these criteria as set out below (see 2.5.2 Compliance / Non-compliance)

The criteria under which performance information will be collected during the Bord Bia audit are identified in Section 6 (Performance Criteria). This information will be used in calculating the performance of the Participant but not in the calculation of the audit score.

2.5.2 Compliance / Non-compliance

During Bord Bia audits where compliance is required the auditor will identify the performance against the applicable criteria. For Critical criteria, 100% compliance is required at all times. For General criteria, compliance is scored as follows: 2 = compliance, 1 = minor non-compliance, 0 = major non-compliance, NA = not applicable).

- **Compliance:** There is full compliance with the criterion (e.g. the record is available, correctly completed and up to date) and the score allocated is 2;
- **Minor non-compliance:** The criterion is being met in some respects, but not in other respects (e.g. there is a record, but several entries are incorrect or missing) and the score allocated is 1;
- **Major non-compliance:** There is a complete failure to meet the criterion (e.g. there is no record of the activity) and the score allocated is 0;
- **Not applicable:** the criterion does not apply on this farm (e.g. there is no assisted ventilation present) and is scored NA.

For Bord Bia farm audits: Based on this scoring system, the performance of the farm against the applicable criteria is calculated and expressed as an overall percentage (%). For a Rearer or Egg Producer to be eligible for certification, he/she must:

- Have full compliance with all Critical criteria, and
- Obtain a score of 80% or greater in the General criteria.

Where the house fails to obtain a score of 80% or more, the farmer must reapply after the non-compliances have been addressed.

The score calculation can be illustrated with the following example taken from the Egg Producer criteria (Standard, Section 3) for an Enriched Cage system:

There are 188 criteria in total relevant to cage egg production. Of these, 19 are critical criteria and 169 are general criteria.

- Total general criteria = 169
- Total not applicable criteria for this flock (for example): 18
- Total applicable general criteria = 151 and the maximum score achievable = 302
- The actual score achieved = 286 (this could arise where there were 5 major non-compliances (score 0) and 6 minor non-compliances (score 1))
- The actual overall score = 94.7%.

The overall % performance of the farm is calculated in this way only when the audit is completed.

The manner in which this information is applied is set out in 2.5.3 Application of Non-Compliances (Bord Bia audits).

For Bord Bia Packing Centre audits: all non-compliances (i.e. score = 1 or 0) must be closed out in the period as set out in 2.5.3 below.

2.5.3 Application of Non-Compliances (Bord Bia audits)

For all Participants, where a re-audit is required following a Not-Eligible decision, a fee may be charged at the discretion of Bord Bia based on the circumstances. The schedule of fees is published by Bord Bia on the website.

For new / first time applicants, all non-compliances must be closed out prior to being granted certification.

For existing Members, the following section identifies how non-compliances (major or minor) that are identified during the audit must be managed:

Critical Criteria:**Rearers and Egg Producers:**

Where a Critical non-compliance is identified during a Bord Bia audit, the Rearer / Egg Producer is advised at the audit and the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre is advised immediately electronically by the database. A response must be recorded on the Bord Bia database within 48 hours describing clearly the actions taken to address the non-compliance. Where the critical non-compliance is then closed out, a full Bord Bia audit must be conducted. A failure to respond in 48 hours results in automatic exclusion from the register of the certified Rearer or Egg Producer.

Packing Centres:

Where a Critical non-compliance is identified during a Bord Bia audit, the Packing Centre is subject to immediate suspension as advised by Bord Bia. The Bord Bia auditor will immediately notify Bord Bia quality management personnel and Bord Bia will then advise the outcome. If the Packing Centre is suspended, it is notified in writing and the conditions for re-applying for participation in the scheme will be advised. Alternatively, Bord Bia may, in conjunction with the auditor on site, impose special restrictions on the operation of the Packing Centre and may conduct unannounced audits to verify compliance with the conditions imposed.

General Criteria:**Rearers and Egg Producers:**

Where the overall score is 80% or less, the major non-compliances must be closed out in the period as agreed between the Rearer / Egg Producer and the auditor (maximum 1 month) and sufficient minor non-compliances must be closed out to achieve a minimum overall score of 80%. The Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre may then advise Bord Bia when this situation has been achieved and a mandatory re-audit of the Rearer or Egg Producer will be scheduled.

Where the overall score is greater than 80% and the non-compliances identified include major non-compliances, the major non-compliances must be closed out in the period as agreed between the Rearer / Egg Producer and the auditor (maximum 1 month) and evidence of the closeout of each such major non-compliances must be uploaded to the Bord Bia database. This evidence will be reviewed by Bord Bia and if it is acceptable and closeout is deemed to have been completed, the audit can be considered for certification, otherwise, the audit will be referred back to the auditor and to the Field Officer as required. The Rearer / Egg Producer must also give an undertaking to the Bord Bia auditor at audit to ensure that all minor non-compliances are closed within a 2-month period. The Field Officer will be required to liaise with the farmer to ensure that this takes place and upload the information to the database. Closeout will be monitored by Bord Bia through the database. Clauses 2.4.3 and 2.4.4. above also apply.

Where the overall score is greater than 80% and only minor non-compliances were identified, the Rearer / Egg Producer must give an undertaking to Bord Bia to address these issues within 2 months in conjunction with the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre. The Rearing Organisation / Packing Centre must then collaborate with the Rearer / Egg Producer respectively to address each of these minor non-compliances within 2 months. The Rearer / Egg Producer must also give an undertaking to the Bord Bia auditor at audit to ensure that all minor non-compliances are closed within a 2-month period. The Field Officer will be required to liaise with the farmer to ensure that this takes place and upload the information to the database. Closeout will be monitored by Bord Bia through the database. Clauses 2.4.3 and 2.4.4. above also apply.

The undertakings referred to above will be secured at the audit exit meeting and will be recorded on the audit documentation system before the recommendation is completed. Failure to provide the commitment will result in a “not eligible” recommendation by the auditor and this will be explained to the Participant at the time.

As required in ISO 17065, Bord Bia will occasionally require the performance of the auditor during audit to be observed. This will be notified in advance to the auditee.

Packing Centres:

Packing Centres must close out all major non-compliances raised during a Bord Bia audit in the period agreed with the auditor(s) (maximum 1 month) and all minor non-compliances must be closed out in the period agreed with the auditor(s) (maximum 2 months).

Verification:

Bord Bia reserves the right to verify, through unscheduled audit, that the corrective actions are being implemented.

2.5.4 Closeout Process (Bord Bia audits)

Rearers and Egg Producers:

Where non-compliances are identified during audit, the nominated Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre will be informed so as to ensure that assistance with addressing the non-compliances can be offered to the Rearer / Egg Producer. However, it is the responsibility of the Rearer / Egg Producer to ensure that the non-compliances are addressed as agreed with the auditor. In all cases, the Rearer / Egg Producer will receive a report from Bord Bia outlining all the non-compliances and identifying the closeout process.

Non-compliances must be addressed through the database. If this is not possible, the Rearer / Egg Producer or his/her representative may obtain permission from Bord Bia to supply the information through another route.

Failure to respond within the required time or failure to close out the noncompliance in the required period will result in the Rearer / Egg Producer being suspended from the Scheme.

Where non-compliances are identified, the Bord Bia auditor will advise the Rearer / Egg Producer of each non-compliance and will brief the Rearer / Egg Producer on the type of evidence that could be submitted in closeout and how this evidence can be supplied. The Rearer / Egg Producer must understand however that the auditor is precluded from providing advice on what action to take to close out the non-compliance.

Packing Centres:

Packing Centres must close out all non-compliances raised during a Bord Bia audit in the time allowed under the Scheme Regulations or as agreed with the Bord Bia auditor(s) at the time of audit.

Non-compliances must be addressed through the database.

Failure to respond within the required time or failure to close out the noncompliance in the required period will result in the Packing Centre being suspended from the Scheme.

2.6 Recommendations for Best Practice

There are a number of recommendations for best practice included in this Standard in the Sections 3 - 6. Compliance with these recommendations is not mandatory for certification however, during audit, these issues may be evaluated and the result recorded.

2.7 Application Process

Rearers and Egg Producers

Farmers applying for membership for the first time under this Standard must apply either through their associated organisation (Rearer Organisation for Rearers, Packing Centre for Egg Producers) or directly to Bord Bia. An application form must be completed which also sets out the conditions of Participation. The application form can be downloaded from the Bord Bia website (www.bordbia.ie/SEAS) and posted directly to Bord Bia. Alternatively, the application form can be obtained by writing to or phoning Bord Bia, or through a participating Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre.

The application form also contains a consent form permitting the release of relevant data, as defined in sub-section 1.6, from the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre. The application will be evaluated and, if appropriate, a full independent audit of the Rearer / Egg Producer will be carried out to evaluate the capability of the applicant to meet all the criteria of the Standard.

A Declaration Form will also need to be completed at the audit (see Appendix 7.2, Farmer Declaration).

Packing Centre Participants

A Packing Centre applying for membership for the first time must apply directly to Bord Bia. An online facility or application form is available on the Bord Bia website. www.bordbia.ie/seas

All applicants

In all cases, once the application documentation is received, Bord Bia will conduct an evaluation of the information to ensure that the scope of the certification applied for is clearly established and to verify that this certification process can be fully accommodated under the Scheme.

Where Bord Bia is unable to process the application, this is communicated in writing to the applicant.

For existing certified members, there is no application required as the details are already available except where a change has occurred or is planned as set out in Scheme Regulations sub-section 2.12.

2.8 Certification Decisions

The decision to grant, extend, withdraw or suspend certification to / from a Participant is made by the Bord Bia Certification Committee. This decision is made primarily on the basis of the audit findings, but other factors, which may be recorded by the auditor or may come to light after the audit (such as failure to meet regulatory compliance), may be taken into consideration in arriving at the certification decision.

The certification decision is published on the Bord Bia database. The current certification status of the Participant can be verified by entering the required details in the following link: <https://qas.bordbia.ie/SEAS/Verify/>

All certification decisions are notified in writing to the Participants and a certificate is made available online. This certificate can be used as evidence of certification under the SEAS, but may not be used for any other purpose without the permission of Bord Bia. In the event that certification is withdrawn, the certificate must be returned and the Participant will be removed from the register of certified Members.

Certificates are issued under the following conditions:

- That the Member may make claims regarding certification only in respect of the scope for which the farm or Packing Centre has been certified;
- That certification is not used in such a manner as to bring Bord Bia into disrepute and the Member must not make any statement regarding the certification which Bord Bia may consider misleading or unauthorised;
- That no certificate, report, or any part thereof is used in a misleading manner;
- That the Member complies with the criteria of the Bord Bia Scheme where reference is made to Bord Bia certification in any communication media such as documents, brochures or advertising.

2.9 Appeals

The Participant may appeal certification decisions in relation to certification status by writing to Bord Bia within two weeks of the date of issue of the certification decision communication.

Bord Bia's Appeals Procedure will be followed and, where necessary, the matter will be referred to Bord Bia's Appeals Committee. The decision of Bord Bia's Appeals Committee is final. However, this does not affect the right of the Participant to refer the issue to the Ombudsman for consideration. Contact can be made at:

Office of Ombudsman, 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2;

Tel. 01 639 5600; Fax. 01 639 5674;

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.ie

2.10 Complaints

The Participant may complain at any time with regard to the audits or any other aspect of the operation of the Scheme. All complaints must be in writing and must be addressed to Bord Bia. All such complaints will be acknowledged and investigated by Bord Bia.

Members of the public may complain with regard to the Scheme or with regard to members of the scheme. Where such complaints are made to Bord Bia they will be acknowledged and investigated; where they are made to a scheme member they must be recorded.

2.11 Revision Updates

Participants are advised to note that only this revision of the Standard (Revision 04) now applies. When future changes occur, updates will be issued in whole or in part to all Participants who are responsible to ensure that the obsolete sections are replaced.

2.12 Notification of Change

In the event that changes to the following occur Bord Bia must be notified and the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre as relevant must be immediately informed as follows:

Where there is a change of ownership of the production unit(s), the Rearing Organisation / Packing Centre must be informed, the change must be recorded on the database and a new audit must be conducted by Bord Bia.

Where the Egg Producer wants to supply a different Packing Centre from that on the original Producer Application Declaration Form, the database must be updated so that the Packing Centre is informed and so that Field Officer audits can continue.

Where the Egg Producer or Rearer wants to add a new production house or amend an existing production house, the Rearing Organisation or Packing Centre must be informed so that their audit schedule can be amended and the database must be updated with the details.

For Egg Producers, Bord Bia will decide based on the circumstances (extent of the change, previous audit history) whether an audit prior to commencement of supply of eggs will be required.

For Rearers, a re-audit will be required on extending an existing house, or when a new house is being brought into use. An audit must be conducted prior to supplying pullets to an egg producer.

Where there is a change of ownership of the Packing Centre or where any significant alterations are made to the packing equipment or the packing centre buildings, Bord Bia must be notified.

3. Rearer Criteria



3. Rearer Criteria

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Blue Text

For information only. Score not affected.

Black Frame & Text

Required for certification. Assessed for score.

Orange Text

Recommendations only. Score not affected.

Foreword & Layout

The purpose of this Section (Section 3) of this Standard is to set out the criteria to ensure that best practice is achieved in the rearing of point-of-lay pullets.

Rearers are required to comply in full with the criteria in Section 3 and to provide information to the auditor on the relevant Performance Criteria in Section 6.

Rearers will seek advice from recognised sources and consult the relevant and current guidelines/publications produced by DAFM and other relevant bodies (see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

The Rearer must be fully aware of all the relevant criteria for Rearers as set out in this Standard. This includes the Introduction (Section 1), Scheme Regulations (Section 2) and Rearer Criteria (Section 3), the Performance Criteria (Section 6) and the Appendices (Section 7), which offer further information and clarification on various aspects of the applicable criteria. These criteria apply to the rearing of pullets for supply to Egg Producer Scheme Members.

The responsibilities outlined in the Rearer's criteria relate largely to the person who manages the house(s) on the Rearing farm. However, where a Rearing Organisation is involved, the Rearing Organisation also has responsibilities with regard to certain criteria as identified in the text in parentheses at the beginning of the criterion as follows: (Rearing Organisation). For these criteria, the Rearing Organisation must collaborate with the Rearer to ensure compliance. Where no Rearing Organisation is involved, the Rearer must assume full responsibility for all criteria.

To ensure clarity and to assist the reader the information is laid out as follows:

Background Text

The blue text sets out the context of the subsequent criteria in the sub-section and is presented for information purposes only.

Compliance Criteria

Black text surrounded by a black frame sets out the criteria against which the Rearer's compliance will be assessed. These are numbered as a), b), c), etc. The Rearer must demonstrate compliance with these criteria (as set out in full detail in the Scheme Regulations) in order to be eligible for certification under the scheme.

Best Practice Recommendations

The orange text sets out the recommendations for best practice. These are identified with an uppercase letter and number as follows: 3R1, 3R2, 3R3... 3R15. Compliance with these criteria is not required for certification.

3.1 General

a) If a Critical non-compliance is identified during routine Management Checks or at any other time, the Rearer Organisation (or Bord Bia where there is no Rearing Organisation) must be notified immediately (Critical).

Note: The Rearing Organisation must then immediately implement the procedures for critical non-compliances outlined in Scheme Regulations 2.5.3.

b) Each Rearer must be registered with the relevant regulatory authority (DAFM or equivalent) and evidence of this registration must be maintained (Critical).

c) Each Rearer participating in the Scheme must complete and submit a signed declaration form (see Appendix 7.2, Farmer Declaration) at the time of the audit.

d) Each Rearer must maintain a copy of the current revision of this Standard and any amendments.

e) Rearers must maintain a copy of the audits or inspection findings from Rearing Organisation personnel, the Bord Bia auditors, and the Competent Authority.

f) Rearing houses and any associated range / paddocks must be dedicated to the rearing of point-of-lay birds only. Rearers may however apply to Bord Bia for permission to amend this criterion (e.g. for seasonal turkey production).

g) All birds on each site must comply with the requirements on salmonella controls as set out in Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures and also the criteria sub-sections 3.6 and 3.14 (Critical).

h) All specified records must be maintained on site for 2 years at a minimum.

i) The Rearer must appoint a designated person with responsibility for the operation of the scheme.

j) (Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must understand the basic principles of Food Safety Management (as per the HACCP principles) and apply them to the rearing of pullets. An Illustrative Food Safety Management plan (FSM) is included in Appendix 7.3, Food Safety Management Plan for reference and can be used by the Rearer for guidance in drafting a farm FSM plan.

k) (Rearing Organisation). The Rearer must facilitate the Field Officer conducting an audit on each crop of pullets in a manner that ensures that all critical criteria are audited for each crop and that all criteria are audited over a year.

l) Where non-compliances are identified by the Field Officer, the Rearer must implement corrective action in the time specified by the Field Officer.

Note: Continual compliance with the SEAS is a condition of participation – see Scheme Regulations 2.4.2.

3.2 Site, Security and Surrounds

a) A site map identifying the position and purpose of all houses and buildings on the site must be maintained and available for inspection.

b) At any given time, the site must be dedicated to one species and production system.

c) Pullets in any house must be single age (i.e. “all in all out” or a complete inter-crop production break) (Critical).

- d) The site must be clearly signposted in a prominent position and secured at all times to prevent any entry of unauthorised personnel or vehicles.
- e) The yard / loading area at the entrance and front of the house(s) must be of a level surface (ideally concrete) for ease of access for vehicles and for ease of cleaning.
- f) The site must be isolated from other farm / poultry enterprises and protected by a physical barrier (i.e. a perimeter fence at least 2m from the house(s) at any point) that precludes entry of other farm animals.
- g) The site must be free of all debris, vegetation (grass, weeds) and equipment to minimise cover for rodents and to control wild birds.
- h) The site must be maintained free of manure (see also Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management).
- i) **Where the previous flock was diseased (i.e. a notifiable disease was identified), the manure must be stored on site as per the criteria in Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management. Bord Bia and the local DVO or equivalent must be consulted and manure must be managed in accordance with the instructions of the DVO and a record of this maintained (Critical).**

Note: The Competent Authority will automatically be informed in this event.

- j) There must be a documented schedule for cleaning / tidying around the production site and a record maintained.
- k) The exterior of the house(s) must be kept free of any debris, equipment etc., since these can be a source of attraction for vermin.
- l) Pets (such as cats and dogs) must be excluded from the production house(s).

3R1. Ensure that the site is dry, free draining and open (but not exposed) and that it does not cause significant interference in the locality.

3.3 Rearing / Production Houses

Background Information

The rearing house must be compliant with planning laws and designed with due regard to the visual impact of the building on the local landscape.

Rearers will be aware that perches (where appropriate) are provided and positioned to facilitate the movement of pullets underneath and to allow these birds to express normal behaviour. This will facilitate training of the pullets so that they adapt better to the laying house environment.

- a) The building must be structurally sound and vermin-proof.
- b) All surfaces within the house must be smooth and easy to clean.
- c) The roof must be waterproof and in good condition.
- d) The floor must be leak-proof, safe and smooth.
- e) Walls must be waterproof and draught-proof.

- f) Houses must be well maintained with no sharp edges or projections likely to cause injury to the birds or to personnel.
- g) (Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must collaborate with the Rearing Organisation to ensure that the stocking density does not exceed 20kg / m² at any stage in the rearing cycle.
- h) A floor plan of the house detailing floor area and equipment layout (feeders, drinkers, perches and fans) with measurements / numbers / capacities must be available.
- i) House data must be available as per Appendix 7.17, House Specification Data.
- j) Where birds are being reared for barn / free range systems normally, perching must be provided as follows:
 - i. Perching must be provided that gives at least 1.7cm usable perching per pullet;
 - ii. Perching must be introduced in the house by 10 days of age.

3R2. Ensure the houses are insulated so that target air temperatures can be maintained on the desired curve, as determined by Rearing Organisation/group adviser.

3R3. Ensure new houses are designed so as to be constructed of easily sanitised materials and smooth finishes to limit the areas to which pathogens and their carriers can migrate.

3R4. Ensure buildings are designed to provide a safe, hygienic and comfortable environment for the birds.

3.4 Housing and Environment

Background Information

Rearers will be aware of the need to carefully control the house environment and will have installed ventilation systems that are sensitive, responsive to environmental change and easy to clean. As with fan assisted ventilation, stocking densities and thinning weights govern ventilation rates.

Rearers will also be conscious of the need for good lighting during the initial brooding period, to ensure that the chicks can easily find water and feed and to encourage even distribution of the chickens throughout the house.

- a) Temperatures must be monitored and controlled and the maximum and minimum temperatures at bird level inside the house must be recorded daily.
- b) The litter must be kept dry and friable.
- c) The ventilation system must be responsive to environmental change, easy to clean and capable of maintaining air quality (depending on stocking density and bodyweight of birds in the house) as detailed in sub-section 3.17.
- d) For rearing, where ventilation is fan assisted, fans must be able to expel, at a minimum, 3.0 cubic metres of air/kg live weight per hour.
- e) Where natural ventilation is provided, the controller must be capable of regulating specific openings to the desired levels and of setting a minimum ventilation rate.

- f) All rearing houses must be fitted with:
 - i. An effective alarm (either audible up to 400m or remote) that is triggered by failure in the main power supply and / or by temperature fluctuations above set points, and;
 - ii. An operational fail-safe system to ensure ventilation is provided.
- g) The alarm system(s) must be tested weekly and recorded.
- h) All sites must have a stand-by generator, tested at least once each week and the test result recorded.
- i) There must be a written procedure for connecting to the stand-by power system.
- j) All electrical controllers, motors, computers and fail-safe systems must be tested annually. Either a service technician from the supplier/installer, an approved registered electrical contractor trained in this field with appropriate experience or service personnel with appropriate experience must carry out the test and any alterations or improvements must be documented.
- k) A written lighting programme (as specified by the Rearing Organisation or breeding company) must be documented specifying duration and intensity.
- l) The duration and intensity must be recorded daily.
- m) Light intensity must be uniform at bird level to encourage even distribution of the birds throughout the house and must be capable of being dimmed.
- n) Lights must be cleaned frequently and burned out bulbs replaced.

3R5. Ensure air intakes are screened to exclude flies.

3.5 House Preparation

Background Information

Forward planning is essential for successful and efficient rearing. With good planning, provision can be made to allow adequate inter-crop intervals and to ensure proper cleaning and disinfection of house(s) and site. Rearers will be aware that uneven litter will create an uneven floor temperature and chicks may huddle in pockets and be deprived of heat, water and feed.

- a) A documented terminal hygiene programme must be in place that is equivalent, at a minimum, with the programme set out in Appendix 7.14, Terminal Hygiene Programme and that was prepared in consultation with the veterinarian.
- b) Between flocks, a terminal hygiene checklist must be completed, dated and signed by the designated person.
- c) A certificate must be issued by the Rearing Organisation verifying the effectiveness of the terminal hygiene programme (e.g. through swab testing) and authorising receiving the next flock and re-commencement of rearing.
- d) A house preparation sheet that complies at a minimum with the checklist in Appendix 7.19, Rearer House Preparation must be completed before the arrival of each batch of chicks.

3.6 Day-Olds Sourcing

Background Information

In the sourcing of young birds, safety, traceability, bird quality and welfare are the key considerations. The Rearer will therefore be aware that time of delivery must be co-ordinated with the hatchery, so that adequate help is available to place the young birds in the house as quickly and efficiently as possible. This can be achieved by tipping them onto the litter gently, quickly and evenly.

Rearers will also be aware that full boxes must not be stacked in the brooding area (as this may cause overheating or suffocation). This will prevent dehydration and minimise stress to the birds.

- a) **(Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must maintain documentation to demonstrate that the day-olds were supplied from hatcheries that are certified under an independent quality assurance scheme for hatcheries (Critical).**
- b) **The supplying hatchery must have a salmonella control programme in place (Critical).**
- c) **(Rearing Organisation) Where imported day-olds are supplied, the Rearer must maintain documentation to confirm that they have come from parent flocks that were (all Critical):**
 - i. **Not Salmonella vaccinated;**
 - ii. **Tested and proved negative for Salmonella within the previous twenty-eight days, and;**
 - iii. **In compliance with Council Directive 90/539/EEC on importation of poultry.**
- d) A documented quality check on the day-old birds must be completed and available for inspection.
- e) (Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must maintain documentation for home-reared or imported day-olds recording all the following:
 - i. Name of hatchery from where the day-olds were sourced;
 - ii. Proof of registration of the hatchery by the Competent Authority;
 - iii. Date of arrival;
 - iv. Number of day-olds received;
 - v. Beak trimming record (where applicable);
 - vi. Vehicle identification;
 - vii. Condition / cleanliness of the vehicle;
 - viii. A written declaration from the haulier to the effect that all equipment used was dedicated to the transportation of day-olds alone.
- f) **(Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must maintain documentation that where day-olds are imported under licence, they have accompanying EU inter trade health certificate and appropriate transport documentation (Critical).**
- g) **(Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must maintain documentation to demonstrate that the day-olds arrived with the vaccination programme as directed by the group veterinarian (Critical).**

3R6. Ensure the young birds are left for a short time to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. Later, check to ensure that all chicks have access to water and feed.

3R7. Ensure any necessary adjustments are made to equipment and temperature, and re-checked to ensure temperature is stabilised.

3.7 Remedies / Medication

Background Information

Rearers have a responsibility to safeguard the health and welfare of the animals under their control and will be fully committed to producing safe food. There are occasions where animal remedies must be used for the welfare of the birds. This a responsibility shared jointly between Rearer and his/her veterinary surgeon and both have a major role in ensuring that animal remedies are used responsibly so that the health of other species (including humans) is not adversely affected. In particular, Rearers and their veterinary surgeons will ensure that any possible development of resistance to the prescribed antimicrobials is minimised. The emergence of antimicrobial resistance as a serious problem in human medicine has prompted concerns that resistance or resistant bacteria could be transferred from livestock to the human population. Rearers will be especially aware that the incorrect use (over-use or under-use) of veterinary medicines can have serious negative effects on human health.

All animal remedies for use in food producing animals are currently authorised by either the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) or by the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA).

a) Only authorised remedies that carry a VPA, EMA or other official approval number and that were purchased from approved sources are permitted (Critical).

Note: See Appendix 7.5, Supply and Sale of Animal remedies.

b) For each remedy administered, there must be a veterinary prescription and all such prescriptions must be retained for 5 years.

c) Clear procedures must be in place to ensure that the withdrawal period is observed for each administration and no food (meat or egg) is sold for human consumption during the withdrawal period (Critical).

d) Where remedies / medicines are administered through feed or water, there must be controls in place (i.e. cleaning / flushing / separate storage) to prevent accidental contamination of feeds for non-target birds (where there is more than one flock present) (Critical).

e) The use of antimicrobial¹ products in day-olds is prohibited (Critical)

f) All medicines must be stored in a secure cabinet (see Appendix 7.6, Animal Remedies Storage).

g) All expired animal remedies must be removed from the medicines store or segregated and clearly identified within the store and controlled pending safe disposal, and any quantity of unused/expired medicines returned to the supplier for disposal must be recorded in the animal remedy records.

h) All animal remedies must be retained in their original labelled container, stored in isolation from other products such as farm chemicals and where requiring refrigerated storage (e.g. vaccines and other remedies) stored in a suitable fridge.

¹ Fluoroquinolones, 3rd and 4th generation Cephalosporins

- i) To ensure that all animal remedies purchased are clearly and readily traceable, all the purchasing information, (including name and address of supplier, date of purchase or receipt, authorised name of the animal remedy, quantity) must be recorded in one of the following ways:
- i. Retention of all invoices/purchase records provided they contain ALL the necessary detail (above);
 - ii. Computer based records containing the above details and which are clearly accessible (i.e. either on-site or via the Rearing Organisation) for inspection;
 - iii. Details entered in an Animal Remedies Purchases Record (see Appendix 7.7, Animal Remedies Purchase Record).
- j) Label instructions / prescriptions with respect to target species / class of livestock, dosage rates, treatment duration and withdrawal periods, must be observed and this will be subject to verification via the Animal Remedy Records.
- k) An up-to-date register of remedy usage, on an individual animal or group basis must be maintained in one of the following formats:
- i. The Bord Bia Remedies Usage Record (see Appendix 7.8, Animal Remedies Usage Record) or equivalent;
 - ii. Computer based records provided that are available for inspection either on-site or via the Rearing Organisation;
 - iii. Other means satisfying legal requirements.
- l) For each administration, the following information must be recorded:
- i. Date of administration;
 - ii. Authorised name and quantity of the animal remedy administered;
 - iii. Identity of crop to which the remedy was administered;
 - iv. Date on which the withdrawal period ends;
 - v. Name of person administering the remedy;
 - vi. Name of prescribing veterinarian (if applicable);
 - vii. Reason for the administration.
- m) Administration records must demonstrate that all remedy usages were necessary for the health of the birds and that the remedies were used at therapeutic dosages only (i.e. not at sub-therapeutic levels).
- n) The person responsible for the unit must sign this administration record after house depopulation and a new record must be used for each subsequent flock.

3R8. Follow veterinary guidelines in the use of antibiotic products and in using them to achieve optimum therapeutic efficacy and to minimise the build-up of resistant bacterial strains.

3.8 Feed and Water

Background Information

Birds require easy access to feed, adequate in quantity and quality to satisfy their dietary requirements. Rearers will be aware that rate of consumption of water is an excellent indicator of flock health and vigour. Rearers will also be aware of the guidelines issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on correct installation and maintenance of private wells (see EPA Advice Note 14 in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

Rearers will understand the need to demonstrate that the potable water they use in food production is compliant at all stages of use with the Drinking Water Regulations (SI 122 of 2014). Rearers who use water directly from mains water supplies will be aware that they can regularly check the Competent Authority results and retain this in their food safety management system to demonstrate compliance with all the parameters of the Drinking Water Regulations.

Rearers who use their own private water supply will be aware that they are fully responsible to ensure that it is safe for use in the poultry enterprise and for human consumption.

Feed

a) Rearers must provide evidence that the feed has been sourced from a feed mill approved by Bord Bia for supply to poultry farms (i.e. heat-treating feeds to 80°C for 4 minutes or equivalent) or certified in accordance with the Feed Quality Assurance Scheme for supply to poultry producers. (Critical).

Note: Refer to the web-link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information for the list of approved feed suppliers.

b) Where feed is mixed on site, the Rearer must be certified under the Bord Bia FQAS (Critical).

c) Where feed is medicated, it must be clearly identified and segregated and where it is deemed necessary to incorporate anti-microbial substances in the feed, the clauses in sub-section 3.7 must be complied with and a prescription must be available where relevant.

d) Each feed delivery must be accompanied by a declaration of ingredients in descending order of weight and a declaration of nutrient analysis, together with the licence number, batch number, date of manufacture and expiry date.

e) The Rearer must retain all feed delivery records.

f) Properly labelled feed samples from each delivery must be retained for 3 months after the supply has been used. Samples must be stored in a vermin proof container and made available for inspection during the growing period. In a fully integrated system, the samples can be held at the mill.

g) All feed must be used before its expiry date.

h) The bins and the feed lines must be cleaned between crops.

Drinking and Feed Space

i) Drinking and feeding facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all birds to meet their health and welfare needs.

j) Feeder Spaces must meet the following specifications:

Pan Feeders: 2.0cm

Chain Feeders: 2.5cm linear track

Water

- k) All water must be tested and the test data retained.
- l) Where water is extracted from a private well, the water supply must be sampled and tested² for E. coli and Enterococci. This must be done at least annually between May 1st and September 30th, or in the event that the source is changed.
- m) The test results must demonstrate that these organisms were not detected in 100ml.
- n) Where there is a failure (detection of either organism), corrective measures must be taken, the group adviser notified immediately and the supply re-tested within one week. In the event that there are two consecutive failures, water quality must be addressed.
- o) Birds must have access to water at all times (except for 1 hour prior to thinning / de-population).
- p) Each house must have a water meter installed and the consumption recorded daily and the cumulative use recorded weekly.
- q) The water storage tank must be covered at all times to ensure that contamination is minimised.
- r) The primary water supply source must have an alarm.
- s) An emergency water supply must be available, adequate for a minimum of 12-hour supply for all birds on site.
- t) The use of untreated surface water for the birds is prohibited.
- u) Drinkers must be provided in numbers as per the manufacturer's recommendation for the species.
- v) A written plan for dealing with emergencies such as feed or water supply failure must be in place addressing the issues in Appendix 7.16, Emergency Procedure.
- w) Where the water is supplied from a private well, the well head must be sealed to prevent ingress of insects, vermin and small birds.

3R9. Where water is derived from mains supplies, check the water analyses on the supplier's website and keep a copy for your records.

3R10. Where water is derived from a well, observe the guidelines in EPA Note 14 and manage the well in accordance with this.

² The sampling must be carried out independently (e.g. by a Field Officer) and the analysis by a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 for testing against these specific organisms using the following methods: E. coli (ISO method 9308-1) absence in 100ml, Enterococci (ISO method 7899-2) absence in 100ml, or equivalent validated methods.

3.9 Health and Welfare General

Background Information

Rearers and hatcheries will be aware of the need for close collaboration regarding welfare because of the impact on disease control especially with regards to Salmonella and other transmissible diseases (e.g. avian influenza). Rearers will have familiarised themselves with the Salmonella Control Plan (available from DAFM).

- a) Each Rearer must have access to the services of a veterinarian who will be available to the rearing farms for advice and monitoring.
 - b) A record must be maintained of all veterinarian visits together with the reason for the visit and the actions taken.
 - c) The identity of the veterinarian must be communicated in advance to Bord Bia.
 - d) An animal health and welfare plan that addresses the relevant aspects as set out in Appendix 7.9, Animal Health and Welfare Plan, to safeguard the health and welfare of the flock, must be drawn up in consultation with the veterinarian, implemented on the farm and reviewed annually in writing.
 - e) The plan must define the routine preventive treatments and management practices to cover issues such as vaccination programmes along with internal and external parasite control strategies.
 - f) The plan must take account of the flock performance monitoring programme.
 - g) The monitoring of the flock for signs of disease must be recorded in a manner equivalent to that set out in Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures.
 - h) Houses must be managed so that it is possible to inspect all birds for health and welfare reasons.
 - i) **Where Salmonella Enteritidis or Typhimurium or any other organism specified by DAFM are identified in a flock, Bord Bia and the Competent Authority must be informed and the birds must be slaughtered in accordance with the slaughter-out policy (See Scheme Regulations 2.3) (Critical).**
 - j) **The supply of pullets to Egg Producers may not recommence until there is official confirmation from the Competent Authority and from Bord Bia that the problem has been resolved. Records of these events must be maintained (Critical).**
 - k) Corrective actions required to support the implementation of the policies set out in the Animal Health and Welfare Plan must be recorded.
 - l) Any suspected adverse reaction in poultry to any medicine must be reported to the veterinarian and a record maintained and recorded (e.g. in the on-farm medicine use record – see also clauses in sub-section 3.7).
- Note:** In the case of vaccines a suspected failure to prevent disease may also constitute an adverse reaction.
- m) (Rearing Organisation) The Rearer must maintain the notification of the group mortality limit (day 1-7) as determined by the Rearing Organisation.
 - n) Mortality above this limit must be reported to the group adviser / veterinarian and samples submitted for laboratory examination where necessary.
 - o) After day 7, mortality above 0.3% / day (of initial placement) must be similarly reported.
 - p) All flock mortality must be recorded daily together with the reasons (where known).

3R11. Ensure that the nominated veterinarian has attended training on the Bord Bia SEAS.

3.10 Flock Management

Background Information

The welfare and health of a flock depends on the implementation of good stock management and the provision of a suitable environment. It is an obligation of the Rearer to ensure that at all times the health and welfare of the flock is maintained.

The stock-person is responsible for the welfare of the flock and personnel who care for the birds will have adequate knowledge of poultry and of the husbandry systems used.

Rearers will therefore be aware of the need to deal humanely with ill, injured, overtly lame birds or birds finding it difficult to reach feed or water and, where required, to carry out humane slaughter.

- a) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence with regard to the welfare of the flock (i.e. have either received formal training in flock welfare, or have a recognised qualification in poultry production, or have at least 5 years of experience in poultry production).
- b) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence in the humane slaughter of birds.
- c) A record must be maintained to demonstrate that a thorough flock inspection was carried out at least twice daily as follows:
 - i. Observe the physical condition of the birds;
 - ii. Observe the behavioural patterns that would indicate stress;
 - iii. Verify that the feeders are in good working order and charged with feed;
 - iv. Verify that the drinkers are in good working order, with no leakage or spillage, and;
 - v. Verify that the ventilation system is operating correctly.
- d) This record must also provide space for the veterinarian to file a site report and, where additional checks are required by the veterinarian or rearing organisation, these must be recorded.
- e) A written procedure must be in place to deal with heat stress that addresses, at a minimum, the issues identified in Appendix 7.10, Heat Stress Avoidance.
- f) Catching and handling of birds in the house must be carried out in a manner that minimises stress on the bird, bird panic, bruising, etc. See Appendix 7.15, Poultry Catching.
- g) Where beak trimming is carried out, it must be undertaken by personnel who can demonstrate competence in this activity and only conducted on chickens <10 days old that are intended for laying.
- h) Where birds are not beak-trimmed, the person responsible must be able to demonstrate that measures are in place to minimise aggression between the birds.

3.11 Site Hygiene & Biosecurity

Background Information

Rearers will be aware of the need to ensure that best practice in bio-security is central to the control of disease in the flock and will have appropriate controls in place. Rearers will also be aware of the risks associated with the movement of personnel between farms (vaccinating and catching teams, advisory staff, veterinarians, service personnel).

Note: All chemicals (including disinfectants, boot sanitising and hand sterilising products) must be officially approved for this use (see clause 3.16.a).

- a) Personnel entry and traffic movement must be kept to a minimum.
- b) An effective hygiene control measure must be provided at the entry to each house including:
 - i. Provision of covered boot sanitising dips with replenishment as required, but at least on a weekly basis, and;
 - ii. Use of disinfectants with regulatory approval for the species in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- c) Hand washing facilities with hot water (ideally premixed to 44°C) or hand sanitising facilities must be available on each site and hands must be washed / sanitised before entering the bird area of the house and again afterwards.
- d) There must be clear instructions available at each wash point on the correct hand-washing procedure.
- e) Only site personnel must be allowed access to the site. All others must be regarded as visitors and only essential visitors should be allowed on the site.
- f) Staff and all those in frequent contact with the rearing flock (including catchers) must not keep or have contact with any other live birds (for food or hobby purposes) at any time while working on the Rearing farm and this must be demonstrated through records (e.g. staff declarations).
- g) All equipment used at another site must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before entry to farm – including trucks, crates, trolleys and fork lifts.
- h) Litter must be sourced from a documented source and stored so as to prevent contamination (e.g. from wild birds, rodents, water).
- i) Houses must be screened against wild birds, rodents and other animals.
- j) Domestic pets must be excluded from the rearing house(s).
- k) There must be a procedure for the removal and for the disposal of dead birds and a record of this must be maintained.
- l) Dead birds must be removed on a daily basis and must be held in sealed vermin-proof container outside each house (or in a central container which serves all houses) and the container(s) must be identified with the following words clearly visible on the container: "Category 2 – Not for animal consumption".
- m) Dead birds must only be disposed of by a licensed collection contractor for rendering or licensed incineration where applicable and records maintained. Bins / containers must be retained on site and washed and disinfected after each collection.
- n) Staff must have access to toilet and canteen facilities.

Visitors

- o) All visitors must be provided with full protective clothing (disposable coats, head and foot wear) and requested to wash/sanitise hands on entry to and exit from the site.
- p) A record of all visitors (which can exclude service vehicles) must be maintained and this must include at a minimum:
 - i. Date of visit;
 - ii. Name of visitor;
 - iii. Organisation / company;
 - iv. Purpose of visit;
 - v. Last poultry site (production or processing) visited in the previous 5 days with date of visit, if applicable, and;
 - vi. Vehicle registration number, if applicable.
- q) A hygiene policy must be documented and all visitors must be made aware of the hygiene policy on arrival.

3.12 Pest and Rodent Controls

Background Information

Rearers will be aware of the need to use pest control products in a responsible way. This involves minimising the impact on the environment and the exposure to non-target species through good practices and controls. Rearers will understand the need for care where the farmyard is close to sites of special scientific interest or designated by legislation relating to wildlife (such as raptor release sites). Selection of the pest control products and placement of them has an important bearing on this. Rearers will also be aware of the benefits of using an Integrated Pest Management Approach (IPM) approach to the management of pests – as set out in the CRRU Code. (See link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information, Page 3 Responsible Use of Rodenticides).

Note: All chemicals (including pest and rodent control products) must be officially approved for this use (see clause 3.16.a).

- a) An effective pest and rodent control programme, with product specifications demonstrating suitability for use in this application must be in place for each site.
- b) Where the pest control programme is implemented by the Rearer, there must be evidence that the Rearer has attended training.
- c) Where rodenticides are used, these must have a valid PCS number.
- d) The rodent baiting programme must reflect the manufacturer's instructions for the rodenticide selected.
- e) Where baiting is used or where traps are placed, the baiting / trapping programme must include the following:
 - i. A simple plan or sketch identifying the location of all bait and trap points;
 - ii. Measures to ensure bait and traps are not exposed to non-target species and that bait does not contaminate feed or water;
 - iii. A record of regular inspections of bait and trap points, and replenishment of bait points;
 - iv. Routine collection of dead rodents and safe disposal as per product documentation or label instructions.

- f) Baits must only be placed outside feed storage areas to prevent inadvertent contamination of feed materials.
- g) Bait points must be inspected monthly or more frequently where there is a specific risk, and corrective action recommended by the manufacturer / service provider must be taken.
- h) Structural, operational and environmental hygiene controls must be in place to prevent insect infestation with the application of physical or chemical treatments as required.

3.13 Training

Background Information

The importance of training is well recognised and Rearers will be aware of the benefits of having all personnel trained in the criteria of the SEAS Standard and in the need to ensure that the operation is managed in a manner to ensure the safety of the personnel on the farm, the consumers of the products produced on the farm and the environment.

- a) All Rearers must have attended general training in the criteria of this Standard.
- b) The training provided must specifically address the following areas:
 - i. Flock welfare;
 - ii. Hygiene policy and hygienic egg production;
 - iii. Health and Safety (Including First Aid);
 - iv. Chemical handling and use;
 - v. Biosecurity including pest and rodent control.
- c) Where staff are employed, internal training must be conducted for all on the SEAS criteria and a record maintained.

3.14 Catching, Transport and Delivery

Background Information

The importance of good catching techniques is also well recognised and Rearers will be aware of the need to train all catchers in these procedures. The Rearer will be aware of the need to minimise the risk of disease transmission through vehicles (lorries, trailers, forklifts and modules). Rearers will be aware of the need to ensure that these are properly washed and disinfected before entering a farm.

Catching

- a) The Rearer or a nominated representative must be on site during catching to ensure that good hygiene practices are adopted and the welfare of the birds including stocking density is ensured.
- b) A written procedure must be in place for catching teams that complies at a minimum with the provisions in Appendix 7.15, Poultry Catching.

Transport and Delivery

- c) Only point-of-lay birds from Bord Bia certified Rearers may be supplied to a Bord Bia certified Egg Producer.

- d) A pre-movement Salmonella certificate must be provided for all point-of-lay birds that is within 14 days of delivery and a copy retained (Critical).**
- e) A delivery / dispatch document signed and dated by the Rearer for each delivery / dispatch must be available to the Egg Producer.
- f) Prior to loading, a visual inspection of the vehicle and the modules must be conducted to determine that they are clean and suitable for transportation.
- g) The delivery / dispatch document must record the following at a minimum:
- i. Name and address of Rearer;
 - ii. Loading date;
 - iii. Expected transport time - commencement and finish, which must not exceed 8 hours;
 - iv. Number of birds dispatched, age and estimated average weight;
 - v. Destination;
Vehicle / trailer identification;
 - vi. Condition and cleanliness of vehicles and modules;
 - vii. Record of vaccination programme;
 - viii. Beak trimming record (where applicable);
 - ix. A written declaration from the haulier to the effect that all equipment used was dedicated to the transportation of point-of-lay birds alone.
- h) Transport of live birds must be conducted in accordance with Appendix 7.11, Poultry Transport.

3R12. To assist in the catching process, ensure light curtains are placed over the exit door(s).

3R13. Ensure stocking densities within the drawers are observed which comply with the recommendations of the manufacturer and are reduced in warm weather.

3.15 Health and Safety on the Farm

Background Information

Rearers with less than 3 employees will be aware of their legal responsibility to have a completed Farm Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) on the farm. Where there are three or more employees, a Farm Safety Statement (FSS) is required. Rearers will be aware that the FSRA or FSS assessment needs to be reviewed on an on-going basis and communicated to employees and visitors. Rearers understand the need to ensure that all avoidable hazards (for both livestock and humans) are eliminated, these include: open / unfenced lagoons, open wells, excessively low or insecure electric wiring, poorly fenced land bordering roads and railways, inadequately protected machinery, access to / gridding of agitation points etc. Rearers will be aware of the need to seek professional advice in the completion of the FSRA / FSS and many agencies provide such a service. In addition, publications on this are available from various sources (Health and Safety Authority of Ireland (HSA), Teagasc, Farming Organisations, Insurance providers etc.). Rearers will be aware that safe agricultural employment plays an important role in the economic development of local populations and communities and of the positive impact on local economies through local sourcing of materials, labour and services. While many farms are family owned and operated, Rearers will also be aware of the need to ensure that employed farm staff members are treated fairly in terms of hours worked, work environment, annual leave entitlements, benefits, etc.

- a) An up to date FSRA / FSS must be available that identifies all the specific hazards on the site, assesses the risk of injury and specifies how these risks are to be controlled.
 - b) All hazard areas on the site must be clearly identified at the location of the hazard or centrally.
 - c) The FSRA / FSS must be available to all people who visit and work on the site such as Farm Workers, Farm Relief Personnel, Contractors, etc.
 - d) If the FSRA / FSS is not immediately available to hand, a notice must be displayed visible to all visitors advising of the availability of the FSRA on request.
 - e) Rearers must have basic first aid supplies, including eyewash, disinfectant, etc. that is accessible at all times.
- Note:** The first aid supplies may be kept in another farm building or in the dwelling house provided these buildings are adjacent to the rearing house.
- f) A notice must be prominently displayed to the effect that eating, drinking and smoking are prohibited in the house(s) or adjacent to the house(s) except in designated areas.
 - g) These designated eating, drinking and smoking areas must be clearly identified on the site map and located in a manner that will ensure that contamination of the rearing facility is prevented.
 - h) Where workers are employed on the farm, the Workplace Policy (see Appendix 7.21: Welfare in the Workplace) must be explained to the employees and their understanding and acceptance recorded (e.g. by signing and dating)
 - i) A plan for dealing with emergencies such as personal injury, fire, flood or power failure, must be in place that addresses the issues in Appendix 7.16, Emergency Procedure.
 - j) The Emergency Procedure must be displayed at a central location or at the exit.
 - k) Fire extinguishers³ must be in place on site and independently checked at a minimum every 5 years.

³ Bord Bia recommends that a minimum 5kg extinguisher suitable for electrical fires would be available; the Rearer should consult with a Fire Safety expert on this issue. See also I.S. 291: 2002

3.16 Pesticides (Chemicals)

Background Information

The term 'Pesticides' includes both biocides such as detergents, sanitisers, sterilisers, disinfectants, rodenticides, etc. as well as plant protection products (PPPs) such as herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. This section applies to all such chemicals in use on the site which must be officially approved by the relevant Competent Authority e.g. Pesticide Control Division (PCD) of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) (Appendix 7.1 Reference Information) under the Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR). There is also a legal requirement for Participants to comply with the Pesticide Regulations including the Sustainable Use Directive 128: 2009 (EC). Accurate records of usage will therefore be important.

Rearers will be aware of the need to ensure that all chemicals are stored in a secure place, and segregated from feeds, water, remedies, etc. chemicals. Rearers will (i) understand the need for training in the handling of chemicals, (ii) use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and (iii) follow manufacturers' recommendations at all times. Rearers will also understand the need to ensure that equipment is maintained in good condition to protect the operator from any possibility of contamination with chemicals. Rearers will also be aware of the importance of triple rinsing or pressure rinsing empty chemical containers prior to disposal and will ensure that the disposal of obsolete product and empty containers is carried out using a licensed hazardous waste company.

- a) All pesticides (i.e. chemicals used to sanitise or sterilise surfaces, or to control pests) to be used on the production unit must be approved and must carry an authorisation number (e.g. PCS / BPA number) or equivalent approval number⁴.
- b) All chemicals must be stored safely in their original packages in a dry place.
- c) Chemicals must be handled at a minimum in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 7.12, Chemical Handling which must be displayed so as to be readily accessible (e.g. on a notice board in the store).
- d) Safety information must be available for all chemicals used and must be accessible to all employees (e.g. safety data sheets, instructions for use, labels, etc.).
- e) Safety and protective clothing, footwear and apparatus as recommended by the manufacturer must be available when handling such substances; the relevant components must be within expiry dates (e.g. respiratory filters).
- f) The use for which each chemical is intended must be clearly identified and displayed (e.g. on a noticeboard in the store).
- g) Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they have been authorised and in accordance with the label instructions.

⁴ Refer to <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie> Note: the authorisation number is in the format: IE / BPA nnnn) e.g. PCS 12345 / PCD 12345

- h) For each chemical used, a record (see sample record in Appendix 7.12 Chemical Use) must be maintained of the following:
- i. Location/LPIS No;
 - ii. Product name;
 - iii. PCS Number;
 - iv. Crop (winter or spring if appropriate);
 - v. Area/tonnage treated;
 - vi. Volume of water used;
 - vii. Date applied;
 - viii. Reason/rationale for use;
 - ix. Professional User number (PU).
- i) The record must demonstrate that all chemicals are used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Note the personnel involved must have received training in the use and handling of the chemicals as per criterion 3.13.b.
- j) Any person applying professional use⁵ pesticides on farm must be registered with DAFM as a Professional User.
- k) The application method employed must demonstrate that the chemical was used in a manner that minimises the impact on the environment and protects sensitive areas (e.g. ground water, areas used by the public, etc.).
- l) Empty chemical containers must be triple rinsed according to DAFM guidelines on Storing and Using Plant Protection and Biocidal Products.
- m) Empty containers must be crushed and /or pierced to prevent re-use and must be clearly identified and controlled pending safe disposal.
- n) There must be a safe disposal method for rinsate from application equipment and / or surplus spray mix (i.e. on suitable untreated field crop or designated fallow ground and where permitted) and records of such must be maintained.
- o) The use of strong products or chemicals with a strong odour or products that could be injurious to bird health (wood preservatives, fumigants) in the production house or near feeds is prohibited except as required during terminal hygiene cleaning.
- p) All blast and orchard sprayers and all boom sprayers with a boom width of >3m (and older than 5 years) must be inspected and certified by a registered DAFM inspector before it can be used for the application of professional use PPPs. Proof of certification must be available.
- q) Products that have been withdrawn from the market (expired or revoked) should be used up within the allowed time period and thereafter must be controlled pending disposal as hazardous waste.

⁵ Pesticides are categorized as either Professional Use or non-Professional / Amateur Use products. Professional use products are products that may only be applied by Professional Users (PUs) who must be registered with DAFM. Non-Professional/Amateur use products are products that may be used in a home garden situation by any person and there are no restrictions on the use of such products and there is no requirement for such users to be trained or registered with DAFM. Product labels generally indicate whether a product is for Professional use or non-Professional / Amateur but the status of all registered products can be checked at <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/getprod.asp>

3.17 Air Quality

Background Information

The main contaminants of the air in a rearing house are dust, ammonia, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and excess humidity. In this context and as a guideline in the interests of the safety and welfare of workers, the Rearer will ensure that the following levels are not exceeded through management of ventilation:

Name of Gas	Long Term Exposure <i>(Limit (8-hour day) ppm or mg/kg)</i>	Short Term Exposure <i>(Limit (10 mins) ppm or mg/kg)</i>
Ammonia	20	35

3R14. Ensure the ventilation system is controlled so as to maintain gas levels that are compatible with a safe and comfortable environment.

3.18 Environmental Protection

Background Information

Rearers will be aware of the desirability of locating poultry units and conducting operations on-site so as to minimise the impact on the environment and the amenities beyond the site boundary. Rearers will therefore have taken advice and sought relevant permissions prior to establishing a new production house including emissions licensing where relevant. Rearers will be aware that farms need to operate to defined environmental standards and display a responsible attitude to the countryside and to protection of the environment. Careful management of the storage, application and disposal of manure and effluent in accordance with current legislation and best practice will prevent pollution of the environment, contamination and the spread of disease and Rearers with existing houses will already have implemented relevant measures in this regard.

All Rearers will also be aware that sites exceeding the bird number threshold (i.e. 40,000 bird places) require an emissions licence in accordance with S.I. 138 of 2013, European Union (Industrial Emissions) Regulations 2013. Where required, the Industrial Emissions (IE) licence is issued by the EPA (Environment Protection Agency).

- a) All Rearers must have a manure management programme in place to minimise problems of overspreading or waterway pollution associated with poultry manure application.
- b) There must be evidence that the guidelines on manure management as set out in Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management or an equivalent are being implemented.
- c) This programme must be accompanied by a map of the areas being used for spreading and a record of the spreading activity on the land under the management of the Rearer detailing at a minimum:
 - i. Date;
 - ii. Land area used (as identified on the map);
 - iii. Amount of manure spread.

- d) Where an Rearer uses a contractor / neighbour to dispose of their litter / slurry, then a record must be maintained detailing at a minimum:
- i. Date;
 - ii. Quantity or volume (tonnes / gallons / cubic metres);
 - iii. Name and destination.
- e) All Rearers must have documentary evidence of the appropriate status under the Industrial Emissions directive.
- f) Effective facilities for collecting, storing and disposal of litter / manure must be in place to prevent pollution and the spread of disease.
- g) Any effluent that arises within the poultry house (e.g. wash water) must be collected in a leak-proof tank that is safe and secure for storage and disposal.
- h) The storage and or use of raw or treated sewage / sludges on Bord Bia certified farms is prohibited (Critical).**
- i) Where litter or manure waste is not used on the farm, or exported as in 3.18.d above, it must be composted and a record maintained.

3R15. Ensure the nutrient content of the manure, the nutrient requirements of the field crop and the nutrient status of the soil based on soil analysis is taken into account when calculating the rate of application of poultry manure.

3R16. Adhere to the Teagasc Recommended Code of Practice for Manure Spreading.

4. Egg Producer Criteria



4. Egg Producer Criteria

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Blue Text

For information only. Score not affected.

Black Frame & Text

Required for certification. Assessed for score.

Orange Text

Recommendations only. Score not affected.

Foreword & Layout

The purpose of this Section (Section 4) of the Standard is to set out the criteria to ensure that best practice is achieved in the production of table eggs. The Standard covers all aspects of egg production from farmed hens of the species *Gallus gallus*.

Egg Producers are required to comply in full with the criteria in Section 4 and to provide information to the auditor on the relevant Performance Criteria in Section 6.

Egg Producers and Rearers will seek advice from recognised sources and consult the relevant and current guidelines / publications produced by DAFM and other relevant bodies (see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

The Egg Producer who manages the house(s) on the laying farm must be fully aware of the criteria for Egg Producers as set out in this Standard. This includes the Introduction (Section 1), Scheme Regulations (Section 2), the Egg Producer Criteria (Section 4), the Performance Criteria (Section 6) and the relevant Appendices (Section 7) which offer further information and clarification on various aspects of the applicable criteria.

The Egg Producer has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with all the applicable criteria as set out in this section of the Standard. However, the Packing Centre supplied by the producer also has joint responsibility with regard to certain criteria as identified in the text in parentheses at the beginning of the criterion as follows: (Packing Centre). For these criteria, the Packing Centre must collaborate with the Egg Producer to ensure compliance.

To ensure clarity and to assist the reader the information is laid out as follows:

Background Text

The blue text sets out the context of the subsequent criteria in the sub-section and is presented for information purposes only.

Compliance Criteria

Black text **surrounded by a black frame** sets out the criteria against which the Egg Producers compliance will be assessed. These are numbered as a), b), c), etc. The Producer must demonstrate compliance with these criteria (as set out in full detail in the Scheme Regulations) in order to be eligible for certification under the scheme.

Best Practice Recommendations

The orange text sets out the recommendations for best practice. These are identified with an uppercase letter and number as follows: 4R1, 4R2, 4R3... 4R20. Compliance with these criteria is not required for certification.

4.1 General

a) If a Critical Non-Compliance is identified during routine Management Checks or at any other time, the Packing Centre must be notified immediately (Critical).

Note: The Packing Centre will then immediately implement the procedures as outlined for critical non-compliances outlined in Scheme Regulations 2.5.3.

b) Each Egg Producer must be registered with DAFM or the equivalent for their production system and evidence of this registration must be maintained (Critical).

c) Each Egg Producer participating in the Scheme must complete and submit a signed declaration form (see Appendix 7.2, Farmer Declaration) at the time of the audit.

d) Each Egg Producer must maintain a copy of the current revision of this Standard and any amendments.

e) Egg Producers must maintain a copy of the audits or inspection findings conducted by the Packing Centre personnel, Bord Bia auditors, and the competent authority.

f) Egg laying houses and free-range paddocks must be dedicated to laying birds only (Critical).

g) All specified records relating to the two previous flocks must be maintained.

h) Each Egg Producer must appoint a designated person responsible for the implementation of the criteria of this Standard.

i) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must understand the basic principles of Food Safety Management based on Food Safety Management / HACCP principles and apply them to the production of the eggs. An Illustrative Food Safety Management Plan is included in Appendix 7.3, Food Safety Management Plan (FSM) for reference and may be used by the Egg Producer for guidance in drafting a farm FSM plan.

j) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must facilitate the Field Officer conducting an audit on each house during the laying cycle in a manner that ensures that all applicable critical criteria are audited during each visit and that all criteria are audited over a year.

k) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must accept the Field Officer's reports, which will be automatically copied to Bord Bia.

l) Where non-compliances are identified by the Field Officer, the Egg Producer must implement corrective action in the time specified by the Field Officer.

Note: Continual compliance with the SEAS is a condition of participation – see Scheme Regulations 2.4.2.

4.2 Flock Sourcing

Background Information

In the sourcing of young birds, safety, traceability, bird quality and welfare are the key considerations. Where flocks from more than one rearing house / farm are used for restocking, the same sourcing information must be provided for each flock.

The Egg Producer will be aware that time of delivery must be co-ordinated with the Rearer, so that adequate help is available to place the young birds in the house as quickly and efficiently as possible. Egg Producers and Rearers will be aware of the need for close collaboration regarding welfare and the importance of disease control, especially with regards to Salmonella and other transmissible diseases (e.g. avian influenza).

Records of all rearing, transport and Salmonella status must be maintained by the Producer.

- a) **A pre-movement Salmonella certificate must be obtained prior to accepting delivery of the birds and maintained (Critical).**
- b) **Pullets must only be sourced from a Bord Bia certified Rearer (Critical).**
- c) A delivery / dispatch document from the Rearer (as specified in Rearer criterion, clause 3.14.g) must be obtained at the time of delivery and maintained.
- d) Ensure that the young birds are left for a short time to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings. Later, check to ensure that all the young birds have access to water and feed.

4R1. **Ensure that any necessary adjustments to equipment and temperature are made and re-checked to ensure temperature is stabilised.**

4.3 Biosecurity, Hygiene and Training

Background Information

The Egg Producer will be aware of the need to minimise the risk of disease transmission.

Legislative control of Salmonella Enteritidis and Salmonella Typhimurium exists in Ireland and both types are currently notifiable diseases (this list is subject to change at any time). Salmonella vaccines and competitive exclusion products must not be used in the rearing of poultry flocks. Antibiotics must not be used to treat flocks for Salmonella infections. Egg Producers will be aware that the health of the birds is crucial to food safety and productivity on the farm. Egg Producers will have a close relationship with their veterinary surgeon and will be conscious of the need to try to prevent disease, in particular Salmonella and other transmissible diseases (e.g. avian influenza). To this end, certain records must be maintained by the Egg Producer.

Disease Control

- a) **A Salmonella monitoring programme must be in place in accordance with the national Salmonella Control Plan (available from DAFM) (Critical).**

- b) During egg production, samples must be taken (faecal or dust). Sampling must be carried out in accordance with the relevant procedure as set out in Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures and the analysis must be done in a laboratory that is ISO 17025 accredited¹. In a month when the statutory faecal sample is due, no further sample is required.
- c) **There must be a documented procedure to ensure that the eggs of both suspect and infected flocks are not supplied for human consumption and are not otherwise used for human consumption, unless they are pasteurised, and that confirmed infected flocks are slaughtered immediately (Critical).**
- d) **Where a Salmonella breakdown has occurred (as indicated in environmental testing), Bord Bia and the competent authority must be informed and egg supply may not recommence until there is official confirmation from the competent authority and from Bord Bia that the problem has been resolved. Records of these events must be maintained (Critical).**
- e) Any unusual increase in mortality or a major decrease in bird performance that may cause concern must be reported to management / veterinarian as appropriate and investigated immediately by a veterinary laboratory.

Personnel Hygiene

Note: All chemicals (including disinfectants, boot sanitising and hand sterilising products) must be officially approved for this use (see 4.14.a).

- f) An effective hygiene control measure must be provided at the entry to each house including:
 - i. Provision of boot dips that are covered when not in use and that are replenished as required and at least on a weekly basis;
 - ii. Use of disinfectants with regulatory approval for the species in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

Note: The use of boot dip and other disinfectants must be recorded (see 4.14.g)

- g) Hand washing facilities with heated water (ideally premixed to 44°C) or hand sanitising facilities must be available on each site and hands must be washed / sanitised before entering the bird area of the house and again afterwards.
- h) Except as specified in 4.3.i, staff and all those in frequent contact with the laying flock (except catchers) must not keep or have any contact with any other live birds whatsoever (for food or hobby purposes) and this must be demonstrated through records (e.g. staff declarations).
- i) If an Egg Producer wishes to keep turkeys for the Christmas market, then separate protective clothing and footwear must be worn while attending to them. Hands must be washed before returning to the layer flock. In addition, Salmonella tests must be carried out during their production period as per Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures.
- j) Hands must be washed before and after handling eggs with perfume free soap to prevent taint.

Training

- k) All staff in contact with the birds and / or the eggs must have received training in the relevant Egg Producer criteria and records of the training must be retained.

¹ The sampling must be carried out independently (e.g. by a Field Officer).

- l) The training provided must specifically address the following areas:
- i. Flock welfare;
 - ii. Hygiene and GMP for Egg Production;
 - iii. Health and Safety (Including First Aid);
 - iv. Chemical use;
 - v. Biosecurity including Rodent Control.

- 4R2. Provide instructions on the correct hand-washing procedure at each wash point.
- 4R3. Provide and wear house-specific protective clothing and footwear for use inside each house.
- 4R4. Ensure that Egg Producer personnel familiarise themselves with the relevant current Salmonella Code of Practice (available from DAFM).

4.4 Remedies / Medication

Background Information

Egg Producers have a responsibility to safeguard the health and welfare of the animals under their control and will be fully committed to producing safe food. There are occasions where animal remedies must be used for the welfare of the birds. There is a responsibility, shared jointly between the Egg Producer and his / her veterinary surgeon, to ensure that animal remedies are used responsibly so that the health of other species (including humans) is not adversely affected. In particular, Egg Producers and their veterinary surgeons will ensure that any possible development of resistance to the prescribed antimicrobials is minimised. The emergence of antimicrobial resistance as a serious problem in human medicine has prompted concerns that resistance or resistant bacteria could be transferred from livestock to the human population. Egg Producers will be especially aware that the incorrect use (over-use or under-use) of veterinary medicines can have serious unforeseen effects on human health.

All animal remedies for use in food producing animals are currently authorised by either the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) or by the European Medicines Evaluation Agency (EMA).

- a) Only authorised remedies that carry a VPA, EMA or other official approval number and that were purchased from approved sources are permitted (Critical).**

Note: See also Appendix 7.5, Supply and Sale of Animal remedies

- b) For each remedy administered, there must be a veterinary prescription. All prescriptions must be retained for 5 years.
- c) Clear procedures must be in place to ensure that the withdrawal period is observed for each administration and no food (meat or egg) is sold for human consumption during the withdrawal period (Critical).**
- d) Where remedies / medicines are administered through feed or water, there must be controls in place (i.e. cleaning / flushing / separate storage) to prevent accidental contamination of feeds for non-target birds (where there is more than one flock present) (Critical).**
- e) All medicines must be stored in a secure cabinet (see Appendix 7.6, Animal Remedies Storage).

- f) All expired animal remedies must be removed from the medicines store or segregated and clearly identified within the store and controlled pending safe disposal, and any quantity of unused / expired medicines returned to the supplier for disposal must be recorded in the Animal Remedy Records.
- g) All animal remedies must be retained in their original labelled container, stored in isolation from other products such as farm chemicals and, where requiring refrigerated storage (e.g. vaccines and other remedies), stored in a suitable fridge.
- h) To ensure that all animal remedies purchased are clearly and readily traceable, all the purchasing information, (including name and address of supplier, date of purchase/receipt, authorised name of the animal remedy, quantity) must be recorded in one of the following ways:
 - i. Retention of all invoices / purchase records provided they contain ALL the necessary detail (above);
 - ii. Computer based records containing the above details and which are clearly accessible to inspection;
 - iii. Details entered in an Animal Remedies Purchases Record (see Appendix 7.7, Animal remedies Purchase Record for a sample record).
- i) Label instructions / prescriptions with respect to target species / class of livestock, dosage rates, treatment duration and withdrawal periods, must be observed and this will be subject to verification via the Animal Remedy Records.
- j) An up-to-date register of remedy usage, on an individual animal or group basis must be maintained in one of the following formats:
 - i. The Bord Bia Remedies Usage Record (see Appendix 7.8, Animal Remedies Usage Record) or equivalent;
 - ii. Computer based records provided which are easily accessible for inspection;
 - iii. Other means satisfying legal requirements.
- k) For each administration, the following information must be recorded:
 - i. Date of administration;
 - ii. Authorised name and quantity of the animal remedy administered;
 - iii. Identity of animal or flock or group of animals to which the remedy was administered;
 - iv. Date on which the withdrawal period ends;
 - v. Name of person administering the remedy;
 - vi. Name of prescribing veterinarian (if applicable);
 - vii. Reason for the administration.
- l) Administration records must demonstrate that all remedy usages were necessary for the health of the birds and that the remedies were used at therapeutic dosages only (i.e. not at sub-therapeutic levels).
- m) The person responsible for the unit must sign this administration record after house depopulation and a new record must be used for each subsequent flock.

4R5. Follow veterinary guidelines in the use of antibiotic products and in using them to achieve optimum therapeutic efficacy and to minimise the build-up of resistant bacterial strain.

4.5 House and Environment

Background Information

Egg Producers will be aware of the need to carefully control the house environment and will have installed ventilation systems that are sensitive, responsive to environmental change and easy to clean. As with fan assisted ventilation, stocking densities govern ventilation rates.

The main contaminants of the air are dust, ammonia, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and excess humidity. In order to assure safety, the levels of noxious substances must be monitored.

- a) Houses must be screened against wild birds, rodents (such as rats and mice) and other animals (such as domestic pets).
- b) Houses must be structurally sound (i.e. no holes, cracks or leaks in the structure in the roof, walls or floor).
- c) Houses must be insulated.
- d) All surfaces within the house must be smooth and easy to clean.
- e) There must be no obvious unsafe features (e.g. exposed wiring, sharp edges or projections) likely to cause injury to birds or personnel.
- f) Birds must not be housed where surfaces have been treated with strong smelling wood preservatives or disinfectants or any toxic substance that could present a significant toxin in the birds or in the eggs.
- g) There must be a procedure for removal and disposal of dead birds and a record of this must be maintained e.g. mortality in Appendix 7.13, House Management Checklist.
- h) Dead birds must be removed on a daily basis and must be held in sealed vermin-proof container outside each house (or in a central container that serves all houses) and the container(s) must be identified with the following words clearly visible on the container: Category 2 – Not for animal consumption.
- i) Dead birds must only be disposed of by a licensed collection contractor for rendering or licensed incineration where applicable and records maintained.
- j) Dust must not be allowed to accumulate on surfaces, walls, ceilings and floor areas.
- k) Forced ventilation systems must be capable of expelling quantities of air as follows:
 - i. Alternative system (Free Range, Barn): 5.6 m³/bird/hour;
 - ii. Enriched cage: 5.1 m³/bird/hour.
- l) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must facilitate access by the Field Officer to test and record ammonia levels as per Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures at monthly intervals at a minimum.

4R6. Ensure that buildings are designed to provide a safe, hygienic and comfortable environment for the birds and personnel.

4R7. Ensure that the capability of forced ventilation systems is verified on installation of the units.

4R8. Ensure the air intakes are screened to exclude flies.

4.6 Site, Security and Surrounds

Background Information

Egg Producers will be aware of the need to ensure that best practice in biosecurity is central to the control of disease in the flock and will have appropriate controls in place, and will also be aware of the risks associated with the movement of personnel between farms (catching teams, advisory staff, veterinarians, service personnel).

- a) A site map identifying the position and purpose of all houses and buildings on the site must be maintained and available for inspection.
- b) At any given time, the site must be dedicated to one species and production system.
- c) **Stock in any house must be single age (i.e. “all in all out” or a complete inter-flock production break) (Critical).**
- d) The site must be clearly signposted in a prominent position and secured at all times to prevent any entry of unauthorised personnel or vehicles.
- e) The yard at the entrance and front of the house(s) must be of a level surface (ideally concrete) for ease of access for vehicles and for ease of cleaning.
- f) The site must be isolated from other farm / poultry enterprises and protected by a physical barrier (i.e. a perimeter fence at least 2m from the side of the house(s) at any point) that precludes entry of other farm animals.
- g) The site and exterior of the house(s) must be free of all debris, vegetation (grass, weeds) and equipment to minimise cover for rodents and to control wild birds.
- h) **Where the previous flock was seriously diseased (i.e. notifiable disease), the manure cannot be stored on site, but must be managed in the manner set out in Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management. Bord Bia and the local DVO must be consulted and manure must be managed in accordance with the instructions of the DVO and a record of this maintained (Critical).**
- i) There must be a documented schedule for cleaning and tidying around the production site and a record maintained.
- j) The site must be maintained free of manure.
- k) Pets (such as cats and dogs) must be excluded from the production house(s).

4.7 Visitors

- a) Personnel entry and traffic movement must be kept to a minimum.
- b) A Visitors Log (which can exclude service vehicles) must be maintained. This must record at a minimum:
 - i. Date;
 - ii. Name of visitor;
 - iii. Organisation;
 - iv. Purpose of visit;
 - v. Last poultry site visited in the previous 5 days with date of visit, if applicable, and;
 - vi. Vehicle registration number, if applicable.

- c) A hygiene policy must be documented and all visitors must be made aware of the hygiene policy on arrival.
- d) Visitors (including contractors, egg-collectors, external maintenance personnel etc.) who need to enter the house must be provided with full protective clothing (disposable coats, head and foot wear) and requested to wash hands on entry to and exit from each house.

4.8 Terminal Hygiene Programme

- a) A documented terminal hygiene programme equivalent at a minimum to the programme set out in Appendix 7.14, Terminal Hygiene Programme, that was prepared in consultation with the veterinarian, must be in place.

Note: This programme may need to be strengthened to meet the specific needs of the farm.

- b) There must be adequate supervision by management to ensure the procedures are carried out effectively and a Terminal Hygiene Checklist completed and signed off.
- c) (Packing Centre) A certificate must be issued by the Packing Centre Field Officer verifying the effectiveness of the terminal hygiene programme (e.g. through swab testing). The certificate must also authorise receiving the next flock and re-commencement of egg production.

4.9 Health & Welfare General

Background Information

The welfare and health of a flock depends on the implementation of good stock management and the provision of a suitable environment. It is an obligation of the Egg Producer to ensure that the health and welfare of the flock is maintained at all times. The stock-person is responsible for the welfare of the flock and personnel who care for the birds will have adequate knowledge of poultry and of the husbandry systems used. Egg Producers will therefore be aware of the need to deal humanely with ill, injured, overtly lame birds or birds finding it difficult to reach feed or water, and where required to carry out humane slaughter.

Egg Producers will also be aware of the importance of feather cover as an indicator of the welfare status of the birds. Feather cover is essential for temperature regulation, protection from the sun (free range & organic), dustbathing and preening. Feather loss can be associated with welfare issues (including stress and injury).

- a) Each Egg Producer must have access to the services of a veterinarian who will be available to the laying farms for advice and monitoring.
- b) A record must be maintained of all veterinarian visits together with the reason for the visit and the actions taken.
- c) The identity of the veterinarian must be communicated in advance to Bord Bia.
- d) An animal health and welfare plan, to safeguard the health and welfare of the flock, must be drawn up in consultation with the veterinarian, implemented on the farm and reviewed at a minimum every 2 years. This plan and supporting documentation must address the issues outlined in Appendix 7.9, Animal Health and Welfare Plan.

- e) This plan must define the preventive treatments and management practices to address issues such as internal and external parasite control strategies.
- f) The plan must take account of the flock performance monitoring programme and flock production records (daily/weekly) must be maintained and must include an egg production graph.
- g) The Egg Producer must have a procedure that specifies how the Health and Welfare of the stock is assured and records must be maintained that demonstrate that all checks required in Appendix 7.13, House Management Checklist have been completed.
- h) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must facilitate the Field Officer in monitoring and recording feather loss of the birds on a monthly basis at a minimum as per Appendix 7.13, House Management Checklist.
- i) The Egg Producer must provide evidence that the hens were not put through a moulting programme.

Stockperson

- j) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence with regard to the welfare of the flock.
- k) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence in the humane slaughter of birds.

Catching and Transport

- l) The Egg Producer or a nominated representative must be on site during catching to ensure that good hygiene practices are adopted and the welfare of the birds including stocking density is ensured.
- m) A written procedure must be in place for catching teams that complies at a minimum with the provisions in Appendix 7.15, Poultry Catching.
- n) A record of all collection of birds at end of cycle must be maintained. The information in the record must include the following at a minimum:
 - i. Date;
 - ii. Number of the spent birds collected;
 - iii. Name, transporter authorisation number and vehicle registration;
 - iv. Destination of spent birds, and;
 - v. Evidence that the birds will not be more than 8 hours in transport.
- o) Transport of spent hens must be conducted in accordance with Appendix 7.11, Poultry Transport.

4R9. Ensure that the nominated veterinarian has attended training on the Bord Bia SEAS.

4.10 Feed and Water

Background Information

Birds require easy access to feed, of adequate quantity and quality to satisfy their dietary requirements. A fresh supply of clean water must always be available. Rate of consumption of water is an excellent indicator of flock health and vigour.

Egg Producers will also be conscious of the need for good lighting to ensure that the birds can easily find feed and water.

For testing procedures, see Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures.

Egg Producers will understand the need to demonstrate that the potable water they use in food production is compliant at all stages of use with the Drinking Water Regulations (SI 122 of 2014). Egg Producers who use water directly from mains water supplies will be aware that they can regularly check the Irish Water / Local authority results and retain this in their food safety management system to demonstrate compliance with all the parameters of the Drinking Water Regulations.

Egg Producers who use their own private water supply will be aware that they are fully responsible to ensure that it is safe for use in the poultry enterprise and for human consumption. Egg Producers will also be aware of the guidelines issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on correct installation and maintenance of private wells (see EPA Advice Note 14 in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

Feed

- a) Egg Producers must provide evidence that the feed has been sourced from a feed mill certified in accordance with the Feed Quality Assurance Scheme for supply for egg production and capable of heat-treating feeds to 80°C for 4 minutes or equivalent) (Critical).**

Note: Refer to the web-link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information for the list of approved feed suppliers.

- b) Where feed is mixed on site, the Egg Producer must be certified under the Bord Bia FQAS (Critical).**

Note: Where it is deemed necessary to incorporate anti-microbial substances in the feed, the clauses in sub-section 4.4 apply.

- c) Each feed delivery must be accompanied by a declaration of ingredients in descending order of weight and a declaration of nutrient analysis, together with the licence number, batch number, date of manufacture and expiry date.
- d) The Egg Producer must retain all feed delivery records.
- e) Properly labelled feed samples, from each delivery, must also be retained for 3 months after the supply has been used. The label must show batch number, date of delivery and supplier.
- f) Records must demonstrate that growth promoters, offals or meat and bone meal are not used in the feed.
- g) In the event that a feed delivery is unsuitable, the rejection of this delivery must be recorded and the appropriate corrective action taken (as outlined in the Appendix 7.3, Food Safety Management) must be recorded.
- h) Feed storage bins and lines must be cleaned in accordance with Appendix 7.14, Terminal Hygiene Programme.

Water

- i) Where present, the storage tank must be covered at all times to ensure a fresh supply of clean water and such that contamination is minimised.
- j) Where water is extracted from a private well, the water supply must be sampled and tested² for E. coli and Enterococci. This must be done at least annually between May 1st and September 30th, or in the event that the source is changed.
- k) The test results must demonstrate that the organisms were absent in 100ml and must be maintained.
- l) Where there was a failure (i.e. detection of either organism or both organisms), corrective measures must be implemented immediately and the supply re-tested after 1 month.
- m) In the event that there are two consecutive failures, the Packing Centre must be notified and a water treatment process approved by the Packing Centre initiated.
- n) All sites / houses must have an emergency supply of water sufficient to provide a minimum of 12 hours supply to the house.
- o) A water meter must be installed and the daily and cumulative monthly consumption recorded for each house.
- p) The primary water supply source must have an alarm.
- q) Where the water is supplied from a private well, the well head must be sealed to prevent ingress of insects, vermin and small birds.
- r) The use of untreated surface water for the birds is prohibited.

4R10. Where water is derived from a well, observe the guidelines in EPA Note 14 and manage the well in accordance with this.

4.11 Egg Collection / Storage / Delivery

Background Information

The Producer must be aware that the handling of eggs must be kept to a minimum to avoid contamination and breakage in accordance with EC 1234:2007 and EC 589: 2008 as amended

Collection

- a) An egg collection programme must be in place and documented.
- b) Eggs must not be washed (Critical).**

Storage

- c) Eggs must be stored in a ventilated and insulated egg store that is not exposed to direct sunlight.

² The sampling must be carried out independently (e.g. by a Field Officer) and the analysis by a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 for testing against these specific organisms using the following methods: E. coli (ISO method 9308-1) absence in 100ml, Enterococci (ISO method 7899-2) absence in 100ml, or equivalent validated methods.

- d) The temperature in the store must be monitored and measures must be in place to address temperatures >22°C.
- e) The egg store must be separated from the laying house.
- f) The store must be used for storage of eggs only.
- g) Eggs must be clearly labelled and dated so as to be fully traceable on the farm and in transit.
- h) Non-conforming eggs (including down-graded eggs) must be identified clearly and segregated and the disposal of these eggs must be clearly documented.
- i) Non-conforming eggs must be handled separately i.e. after the qualifying eggs are handled and the handling equipment washed.
- j) Equipment used to handle eggs must be maintained clean and dry when in use.

Delivery

- k) Each shipment must be clearly identified with the following information and a record maintained:
 - i. Farm Code and House ID number (e.g. 3IER000A);
 - ii. Egg Producer's Name and Address;
 - iii. Date of dispatch;
 - iv. Laying date or period;
 - v. Total number or weight of gradeable eggs;
 - vi. Total number or weight of non-gradeable eggs.
- l) (Packing Centre) The Egg Producer must provide a signed commitment to the Packing Centre to the effect that all eggs supplied under the Scheme are suitable for human consumption.

4R11. Ensure hands are washed before and after collection, with perfume-free soap.

4R12. Where present, operate belts hourly until all eggs are removed.

4R13. Place eggs into the trays with the pointed end facing down and remove them from the production house as soon as possible.

4R14. Segregate dirty and reject eggs to prevent soiling of clean eggs.

4R15. Use only clean, dry trays.

4R16. Ensure that the store is of a sufficient size to allow for adequate air circulation when there are 5 days of egg production stored and that eggs are collected at least every third working day.

4.12 Health and Safety on the Farm

Background Information

Egg Producers with less than 3 employees will be aware of their legal responsibility to have a completed Farm Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) on the farm. Where there are three or more employees, a Farm Safety Statement (FSS) is required. Producers will be aware that the FSRA or FSS assessment needs to be reviewed on an on-going basis and communicated to employees and visitors. Egg Producers understand the need to ensure that all avoidable hazards (for both livestock and humans) are eliminated, these include: open / unfenced lagoons, open wells, excessively low or insecure electric wiring, poorly fenced land bordering roads and railways, inadequately protected machinery, access to / gridding of agitation points etc. Egg Producers will be aware of the need to seek professional advice in the completion of the FSRA / FSS and many agencies provide such a service. In addition, publications on this are available from various sources (Health and Safety Authority of Ireland (HSA), Teagasc, Farming Organisations, Insurance providers etc.) Egg Producers will be aware that safe agricultural employment plays an important role in the economic development of local populations and communities and of the positive impact on local economies through local sourcing of materials, labour and services. While many farms are family owned and operated, Egg Producers will also be aware of the need to ensure that employed farm staff members are treated fairly in terms of hours worked, work environment, annual leave entitlements, benefits, etc.

- a) An up to date FSRA / FSS must be available that identifies all the specific hazards on the site, assesses the risk of injury and specifies how these risks are to be controlled.
- b) All hazard areas on the site must be clearly identified at the location of the hazard or centrally.
- c) The FSRA / FSS must be available to all people who visit and work on the site such as Farm Workers, Farm Relief Personnel, Contractors, etc.
- d) If the FSRA / FSS is not immediately available to hand, a notice must be displayed visible to all visitors advising of the availability of the FSRA / FSS on request.
- e) A notice must be prominently displayed to the effect that eating, drinking and smoking are prohibited in the house(s) but permitted only in clearly designated areas.
- f) These designated eating, drinking and smoking areas must be clearly identified on the site map and located in a manner that will ensure that contamination of the egg production facility is prevented.
- g) Egg Producers must have basic first aid supplies, including eyewash, disinfectant, etc., that is accessible at all times.
Note: The first aid supplies may be kept in another farm building or in the dwelling house provided these buildings are adjacent to the egg production house.
- h) Where workers are employed on the farm, the Workplace Policy (see Appendix 7.21: Welfare in the Workplace) must be explained to the employees and their understanding and acceptance recorded (e.g. by signing and dating).
- i) A plan for dealing with emergencies such as personal injury, fire, flood or power failure, must be in place that addresses the issues in Appendix 7.16, Emergency Procedure.
- j) Relevant emergency contact telephone numbers must be displayed at a central location / the exit.

- k) Fire extinguishers³ must be in place and independently checked at a minimum every 5 years.
- l) Staff must have access to toilet and canteen facilities.

4R17. Ensure that all electrical controllers, motors, computers and fail-safe systems are tested annually. Either a service technician from the supplier/installer, an approved registered electrical contractor trained in this field with appropriate experience or service personnel with appropriate experience should carry out the test and any alterations or improvements should be documented.

4.13 Environmental Protection

Background Information

The Production house(s) must be compliant with planning laws and designed with due regard to the visual impact of the building on the local landscape.

Egg Producers will be aware of the desirability of locating poultry units and conducting operations on-site so as to minimise the impact on the environment and the amenities beyond the site boundary. Egg Producers will therefore have taken advice and sought relevant permissions prior to establishing a new production house, including IPPC licencing where relevant.

Egg Producers with existing houses will already have implemented measures to minimise environmental problems through good maintenance procedures as set out in this Standard. Egg Producers will also be aware that sites exceeding the bird number threshold (i.e. 40,000 bird places) require an emissions licence in accordance with S.I. 138 of 2013, European Union (Industrial Emissions) Regulations 2013. Where required, the Industrial Emissions (IE) licence is issued by the EPA (Environment Protection Agency).

- a) All Egg Producers must have a manure management programme in place to minimise problems of overspreading or waterway pollution associated with poultry manure application.
- b) There must be evidence that the guidelines on manure management as set out in Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management or an equivalent are being implemented.
- c) This programme must be accompanied by a map of the areas being used for spreading and a record of the spreading activity on the land under the management of the Egg Producer detailing at a minimum:
 - i. Date;
 - ii. Land area used (as identified on the map);
 - iii. Amount of manure spread.
- d) Where an Egg Producer uses a contractor / neighbour to dispose of their litter / slurry, then a record must be kept detailing at a minimum:
 - i. Date;
 - ii. Quantity (tonnes / gallons / cubic metres);
 - iii. Name and destination.

³ Bord Bia recommends that a minimum 5kg extinguisher suitable for electrical fires would be available; the Egg Producer should consult with a Fire Safety expert on this issue.

- e) All Egg Producers must have documentary evidence of the appropriate status under the Industrial Emissions directive.
- f) Effective facilities for collecting, storing and disposal of litter / manure must be in place to prevent pollution and the spread of disease.
- g) Any effluent that arises within the poultry house (e.g. wash water) must be collected in a leak-proof tank that is safe and secure for storage and disposal.
- h) The storage and or use of raw or treated sewage / sludges on Bord Bia certified farms is prohibited (Critical).**
- i) Where litter or manure waste is not used on the farm, or exported as in 4.13.d above, it must be composted and a record maintained.

4R18. Ensure the site is planned so that it is dry, free draining and open (but not exposed) and so that it does not cause significant interference in the locality.

4.14 Pesticides (Chemicals)

Background Information

The term 'Pesticides' includes both biocides such as detergents, sanitisers, sterilisers, disinfectants, rodenticides, etc. as well as plant protection products (PPPs) such as herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. This section applies to all such chemicals in use on the site which must be officially approved by the relevant Competent Authority e.g. Pesticide Control Division (PCD) of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) (Appendix 7.1 Reference Information) under the Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR). There is also a legal requirement for Participants to comply with the Pesticide Regulations including the Sustainable Use Directive 128: 2009 (EC). Accurate records of usage will therefore be important.

Egg Producers will be aware of the need to ensure that all chemicals are stored in a secure place, and segregated from feeds, water, remedies, etc. Egg Producers will understand the need for training in the handling of chemicals, will use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and following manufacturers' recommendations at all times. Egg Producers will also understand the need to ensure that equipment is maintained in good condition to protect the operator from any possibility of contamination with chemicals. Egg Producers will also be aware of the importance of triple rinsing or pressure rinsing empty chemical containers prior to disposal and will ensure that the disposal of obsolete product and empty containers is carried out using a licensed hazardous waste company.

- a) All pesticides (i.e. chemicals used to sanitise or sterilise surfaces, or to control pests) to be used on the production unit must be approved for the use and must carry an authorisation number (e.g. PCS / BPA number) or equivalent approval number⁴.
- b) All chemicals must be stored safely in their original packages in a dry place.
- c) Chemicals must be handled at a minimum in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 7.12, Chemical Handling which must be displayed so as to be readily accessible (e.g. on a notice board in the store).

⁴ Refer to <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie> Note: the authorisation number is in the format: IE / BPA nnnn e.g. PCS 12345 / PCD 12345

- d) Safety information must be available for all chemicals used and must be accessible to all employees (e.g. safety data sheets, instructions for use, labels, etc.).
- e) Safety and protective clothing, footwear and apparatus as recommended by the manufacturer must be available when handling such substances; the relevant components must be within expiry dates (e.g. respiratory filters).
- f) The use for which each chemical is intended must be clearly identified and displayed (e.g. on a noticeboard in the store).
- g) Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they have been authorised and in accordance with the label instructions.
- h) For each chemical used, a record (see sample record in Appendix 7.12 Chemical Use) must be maintained of the following:
 - i. Location/LPIS No;
 - ii. Product name;
 - iii. PCS Number;
 - iv. Crop (winter or spring if appropriate);
 - v. Area/tonnage treated;
 - vi. Volume of water used;
 - vii. Date applied;
 - viii. Reason/rationale for use;
 - ix. Professional User number (PU).
- i) The record must demonstrate that all chemicals are used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Note the personnel involved must have received training in the use and handling of the chemicals as per criterion 4.3.i.
- j) Any person applying professional use⁵ pesticides on farm must be registered with DAFM as a Professional User.
- k) The application method employed must demonstrate that the chemical was used in a manner that minimises the impact on the environment and protects sensitive areas (e.g. ground water, areas used by the public, etc.).
- l) Empty chemical containers must be triple rinsed according to DAFM guidelines on Storing and Using Plant Protection and Biocidal Products.
- m) Empty containers must be crushed and /or pierced to prevent re-use and must be clearly identified and controlled pending safe disposal.
- n) There must be a safe disposal method for rinsate from application equipment and / or surplus spray mix (i.e. on suitable untreated field crop or designated fallow ground and where permitted) and records of such must be maintained.

⁵ Pesticides are categorized as either Professional Use or non-Professional/ Amateur Use products. Professional use products are products that may only be applied by Professional Users (PUs) who must be registered with DAFM. Non-Professional / Amateur use products are products that may be used in a home garden situation by any person and there are no restrictions on the use of such products and there is no requirement for such users to be trained or registered with DAFM. Product labels generally indicate whether a product is for Professional use or non-Professional / Amateur but the status of all registered products can be checked at <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/getprod.asp>

- o) The use of strong products or chemicals with a strong odour or products that could be injurious to bird health (wood preservatives, fumigants) in the production house or near feeds is prohibited except as required during terminal hygiene cleaning.
- p) All blast and orchard sprayers and all boom sprayers with a boom width of >3m (and older than 5 years) must be inspected and certified by a registered DAFM inspector before it can be used for the application of professional use PPPs. Proof of certification must be available.
- q) Products that have been withdrawn from the market (expired or revoked) should be used up within the allowed time period and thereafter must be controlled pending disposal as hazardous waste.

4.15 Pest and Rodent Control

Background Information

Egg Producers will be aware of the need to use pest control products in a responsible way. This involves minimising the impact on the environment and the exposure to non-target species through good practices and controls. Egg Producers will understand the need for care where the farmyard is close to sites of special scientific interest or designated by legislation relating to wildlife (such as raptor release sites). Selection of the pest control products and placement of them has an important bearing on this. Egg Producers will also be aware of the benefits of using an Integrated Pest Management Approach (IPM) approach to the management of pests – as set out in the CRRU Code. (See link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information, Page 3 Responsible Use of Rodenticides).

Note: All chemicals (including pest and rodent control products) must be officially approved for this use (see clause 4.14a).

- a) An effective pest and rodent control programme, with product specifications demonstrating suitability for use in this application, must be in place for each site.
- b) Where the pest control programme is implemented by the Egg Producer, there must be evidence that the Participant has attended appropriate training.
- c) The rodent baiting programme must reflect the manufacturer's instructions for the rodenticide selected.
- d) Where baiting is used or where traps are placed, the baiting / trapping programme must include the following:
 - i. A simple plan or sketch identifying the location of all bait and trap points;
 - ii. Measures to ensure bait is not exposed to non-target species and does not contaminate feed or water;
 - iii. A record of regular inspections of bait and trap points and replenishment of bait points;
 - iv. Routine collection of dead rodents and safe disposal as per product documentation or label instructions.
- e) Baits must only be placed outside feed storage areas to prevent inadvertent contamination of feed materials.
- f) Bait points must be inspected monthly or more frequently where there is a specific risk, and corrective action recommended by the manufacturer / service provider must be taken.
- g) Structural, operational and environmental hygiene controls must be in place to prevent insect infestation (including weevils, mites, flies, cockroaches) with the application of physical or chemical treatments as required.

- h) The bait points must be positioned inside and outside the house, with additional outer perimeter baiting (for free range and organic).

4.16 Laying Houses, Buildings and Equipment: General

Background Information

Housing requirements in terms of available space per bird are specified for each system. Bord Bia recommends that expert advice is sought by the Egg Producer prior to finalising housing parameters/bird numbers. The parameters outlined in this Standard need to be carefully considered.

- a) All houses must be fitted with a provision to alert the owner / manager in the event of failure of the mains power supply, or excessive temperatures.
- b) A max-min thermometer must be positioned within the bird area and the max and min temperatures recorded daily.
- c) Data on house parameters must be recorded on a House Specification Data sheet.

Note: A template is provided in Appendix 7.17, House Specification Data together with the calculation method.

- d) Buildings and equipment must be designed so as to:
- i. Maintain good conditions of hygiene and air quality;
 - ii. Maintain equipment in good condition and to the required specification.
- e) Buildings and equipment must be constructed and maintained in a manner so as to minimise risk of fire, minimise sound levels (especially sudden sounds) within the building, exclude vermin and wild birds and minimise attraction of other pests.
- f) Feeding and watering equipment (see the specification information in the following sections) must be designed, constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a manner that:
- i. Birds must have easy access to feed and water so as to avoid competitive behaviour;
 - ii. Spillage of feed and water is avoided;
 - iii. Injury to the birds is avoided.
- g) Flooring must be designed, fitted and maintained so as to avoid distress or injury to the birds (see the specification information in the following sections).
- h) For all housing types, lighting intensity must permit birds to express normal behaviour (e.g. visually inspect surroundings) and where natural daylight is provided, light must be distributed evenly throughout the house.
- i) Houses must be managed so that it is possible to inspect all birds for health and welfare reasons.
- j) Where cages are present, these must be designed to allow inspections of hens, the doors must be of a size to allow bird removal without causing injury, and they must be constructed to prevent birds escaping.
- k) For all production systems, floors must be constructed so as to support adequately each of the forward facing claws of each foot. In caged systems, floor slope of the usable area must not exceed 14% (or 8 degrees).

Note: In the case of floors using other than rectangular wire mesh, steeper slopes may be permitted.

Production Systems

Additional specific Housing and Environment criteria are described under the four headings as follows:

- Enriched Caged System
- Alternative Systems (Barn, Free Range), including multitier
- Organic System

Production System - Enriched Caged System

4.17 Bird Cage Specification⁶

- a) At least 750cm² of cage area per hen, 600cm² of which must be usable; the height of the useable area must be 45cm at a minimum.
- b) Compartment height outside the useable area must be 20cm at a minimum.
- c) Total area of cage must be no less than 2000cm².
- d) Minimum aisle width of 90cm must be provided between tiers of cages and a space of at least 35cm must be allowed between the floor of the building and the bottom tier of cages.
- e) Each compartment must be fitted with a device for restricting the growth of the hens' claws.
- f) A feed trough which may be used without restriction must be provided. Its length must be at least 12cm per bird in the cage.
- g) Each compartment must have a drinking system that is appropriate to the size of the group and, where nipple drinkers are provided, at least two nipple drinkers or two drinking cups must be within reach of each hen.
- h) Perching space must be provided for 100% of the flock and a minimum of 15cm of usable perch length per bird must be provided.
- i) A nest area must be available to each hen.
- j) Measures must be in place to permit pecking and scratching.

4.18 Lighting

- a) Artificial lighting must not exceed 16 hours per day with a dimmer system to allow control of light intensity and to permit observation of the birds as required.
- b) A documented lighting programme must be followed and must follow the day and night rhythm.
- c) Lights must be clean and burned out bulbs replaced promptly.

⁶ Measured and approved by DAFM in accordance with (EC) 74/1999, laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens

Production System - Alternative Systems (Free Range)

4.19 The Land

- a) The overall stocking density must not exceed 1,000 birds per hectare of ground.
- b) The production house must be sited so that the birds have access to all of the land available, in rotation, for the duration of the laying cycle of the flock.
- c) A secure perimeter fence must be maintained in place on the land registered for free-range production.
- d) The birds must have continuous daytime access to the scratch area and to open-air runs or paddocks, which must be used and rested in rotation⁷.
- e) The range must be protected against predators (e.g. suitable fencing materials).
- f) Shelter / shade from inclement weather must be provided on the range. This can be achieved through:
 - i. Additional range enhancement features must be present including, at a minimum, hedgerow / tree cover providing at least 5% effective cover of the range, OR;
 - ii. Providing cover that is structurally safe and sound, appropriately distributed across the range, and providing 8m²/1000 birds, OR;
 - iii. Combination of 'i' and 'ii' that provides equivalent cover.
- g) Pot-holes on the land must be filled in before re-stocking in accordance with good pasture management.
- h) The area accessed by the birds must be maintained by a levelling and re-seeding programme to maintain bare patches at <2.5% of the accessible area.
- i) The ground to which the birds have access must be well drained and be mainly covered with vegetation (i.e. with grass growing, not weeds or scrub) and topped as required.
- j) Measures must be in place to prevent other livestock (mammals or avian species) entering the ground as a safeguard against Salmonella or other infections.
- k) Land registered for free range egg production may only be used for this purpose.
- l) Rubbish, litter material, farm machinery or manure must not be allowed to accumulate on registered land.
- m) Domestic septic tank and / or percolation areas sited on registered land must be fenced and not accessible to poultry.

4.20 Specifications for Free-Range Houses

- a) The house must be constructed so that it is well insulated and ventilated, with a concrete floor throughout (including verandas / scratch area), allowing for easy cleaning and disinfection between flocks. A dirt / earth floor is not acceptable.

⁷ In accordance with DAFM regulations.

- b) The surrounds of the house or the ground surrounding the pop-holes must be laid in gravel or concrete, to avoid muddy conditions, which can increase the risk of disease to flocks and lead to soiled eggs.
- c) Houses must have two thirds slatted area and one third scratch area and must be covered with a litter material (such as chopped straw, white wood shavings, building sand or turf).

4.21 The Manure Pit / Washings Collection

- a) The droppings pit must be so constructed as to prevent seepage. Where the pit is totally below floor level, the capacity of the pit must adequately accommodate the manure produced by a colony / flock of birds, unless belts or scrapers are incorporated into the system.
- b) Any effluent that arises within a poultry house (e.g. wash water) must be collected in a suitable leak-proof tank for storage and disposal.
- c) There must be a procedure in place for the removal of any dead birds from the pit.

Note: Criteria as set out in Appendix 7.18, Poultry Manure Management also apply.

4.22 Flock size / colony size

- a) The maximum flock size is 32,000 birds. (Note: this applies to an individual house; criterion 4.22.g also applies).
- b) The flock may be divided into colonies and the maximum colony size permitted is 4,000 birds. Houses must be subdivided so as not to exceed maximum colony size.
- c) The available floor area (on which the stocking density is based) must be calculated only according to the system as set out in Appendix 7.17, House Specification Data.
- d) Bird placements must be such as to be no greater than the average of the placements for the last 3 flocks and must comply with current legislation. For new applicants / houses, the permissible bird numbers must be calculated in advance of stocking by DAFM or a Bord Bia representative.
- e) Where the Egg Producer wishes to increase bird numbers (through house or facilities modifications) a written application must be made to Bord Bia and the Competent Authority 6 months prior to re-population setting out the manner in which the increase is proposed to be achieved. No change in the bird numbers must be made until approval is received from Bord Bia.
- f) In multitier systems, gates may only be used for management purposes to exclude the birds from the scratch area under the multitier system up to age 28 weeks. After this, the gates must be permanently in the raised position allowing the hens access to all the scratch area.

g) Maximum permissible stocking density within the house is:

House Type	Stocking Density
Part Litter and Slats	As set out in 4.22.d&e above
Multitier	9 birds/m ² of total available floor area where birds have unrestricted access to the total floor area and where perches or platforms are fixed above the slatted floor level. There must be no more than 4 levels with the headroom between the levels at least 45cm and the levels must be so arranged as to prevent droppings falling on the levels below. Where the usable space below any perch is less than 45cm above the slatted floor area, it must not be used in calculating floor area.

4.23 Feeding Space

- a) Feeding facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all birds.
- b) Either linear feeders providing at least 10cm per bird or circular feeders providing at least 4cm per bird must be in place.
- c) In multi-tier systems, the Egg Producer must provide feeding space at more than one level.

4.24 Drinking Space

- a) Drinking facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all birds.
- b) Where nipple drinkers or cups are used, there must be at least one nipple drinker or cup for every 10 hens.
- c) The allocation of drinkers must not be less than 1 bell drinker per 100 birds which must provide minimum 1cm per hen.
- d) In Multi-tier systems drinkers must be provided at more than one level.

4.25 Perching

- a) Perches must have no sharp edges and be of non-slip material.
- b) A minimum of 15cm of perch length per bird must be provided for all birds.
- c) The width of the top surface of the perch must not be less than 3cm.
- d) Perches must not be mounted above the litter.
- e) The horizontal distance between perches must be at least 30cm and the horizontal distance between the perch and the wall must be at least 20cm.

- f) Overhead perches must be positioned to minimise fouling of any birds below.
- g) Where perching is provided that is leaning against the exterior wall, the overall slope of the supporting frame must not exceed 45° to the vertical.

4.26 Nest Boxes

- a) Individual nest boxes must provide not less than 1 box per 5 birds. Automatic or communal systems must provide not less than 1m² of nesting area per 120 birds.
- b) Nesting systems must be provided with a floor substrate, which encourages nesting behaviour and safeguards the hygiene of egg production.
- c) All systems must be inspected daily to ensure surfaces are clean.

4.27 Litter

- a) Litter must be free of any contamination from livestock, wild birds or rodents.
- b) Litter must be maintained in a dry and friable condition.
- c) The source of the litter must be identified. (Note: Hard wood by-products and sawdust must not be used).

4.28 Scratch Area

- a) At least 250cm² of littered area per bird must be provided.
- b) Birds must be able to dust bathe in a litter area, which must equate to a minimum of 33% of total floor area available to the birds.

Note: This litter scratching area can be either incorporated into the house area or provided under a covered weather proofed veranda attached to the external walls of the building.

4.29 Pop Hole Criteria

- a) In order to ensure that birds have easy and adequate access to the range, the minimum number and size of pop holes that must be open during daylight hours per flock is:

Flock Size	Pop Holes	Height	Length Density
500 birds or under	2	45cm	60cm
501 to 1,000 birds	4	45cm	60cm
1,001 to 1,500 birds	4	45cm	90cm
1,501 to 2,500 birds	6	45cm	90cm
2,501 to 3,500 birds	Min. 6	45cm	9m (total)
3,501 to 4,500 birds	Min. 8	45cm	12m (total)
4,501 to 5,500 birds	Min. 10	45cm	16m (total)
5,501 to 6,500 birds	Min. 12	45cm	20m (total)
Each additional 1,000 birds	+ 2	45cm	+4m

- b) Where access to the land is provided only at a gable end of the house, not more than 1,000 birds must be stocked in that house.
- c) Exit space equal to the combined length of four pop holes, as set out above, is allowable in these circumstances. Where a house is divided into sections, each section must have direct access to pasture.
- d) The gap between the pop hole and the next level may not be greater than 30cm unless a ramp is used.
- e) Ramps must have a slope not exceeding 30° (33%) and must be surfaced with material that permits the hen to ascend and descend without slipping or injury.

Production System - Alternative System (Barn)

4.30 Specifications for Barn

- a) The house must be constructed so that it is well insulated and ventilated, with a concrete floor throughout (including verandas / scratch area), allowing for easy cleaning and disinfection between flocks.

Note: A dirt / earth floor is not acceptable.

4.31 Manure Pit

- a) The capacity of the pit below the floor must adequately accommodate the manure produced by a colony / flock of birds, unless belts or scrapers are incorporated into the system.
- b) There must be a procedure in place to prevent dead birds falling into the pit. Where this occurs, they must be removed from the pit and an investigation conducted (remedial works, etc) to ensure re-occurrence is prevented.

4.32 Lighting

- a) A lighting programme must be documented and in place. An 8-hour minimum and a 16-hour maximum period of light must be provided for the birds. A dimmer system must be used to allow control of light intensity and to permit observation of the birds as required.
- b) In a split-level system of housing, lights must be available at all levels that permit observation of the birds as required and a dimming device must be used to switch off the lights.

4.33 Flock Size / Colony Size

- a) The maximum flock size is 32,000 birds. (Note: this applies to an individual house; criterion 4.33.f also applies).
- b) The flock may be divided into colonies and the maximum colony size permitted is 4,000 birds. Houses must be subdivided so as not to exceed maximum colony size.
- c) The available floor area (on which the stocking density is based) must to be calculated only according to the system as set out in Appendix 7.17, House Specification Data.
- d) Where the Egg Producer wishes to increase bird numbers above the level in a certified house (through house or facilities modifications) a written application must be made to Bord Bia and the Competent Authority 6 months prior to re-population setting out the manner in which the increase is proposed to be achieved. No change in the bird numbers must be made until approval is received from Bord Bia.

- e) In multitier systems, gates may only be used for management purposes to exclude the birds from the scratch area under the multitier system up to age 28 weeks. After this, the gates must be permanently in the up position allowing the hens access to all the scratch area.
- f) Maximum permissible stocking density within the laying house is:

House Type	Stocking Density
Part Litter and Slats	9 birds/m ² of total available floor area, provided the house has a raised slatted floor area over a droppings pit comprising a minimum of 53% of the total floor area of the house, and that the slat design meets the criteria for perches as below
Multitier	9 birds/m ² of total available floor area where birds have unrestricted access to the total floor area and where perches or platforms are fixed above the slatted floor level. There must be no more than 4 levels with the headroom between the levels at least 45cm and the levels must be so arranged as to prevent droppings falling on the levels below. Where the usable space below any perch is less than 45cm above the slatted floor area, it must not be used in calculating floor area.

4.34 Feeding Space

- a) Feeding facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all birds.
- b) Either linear feeders providing at least 10cm per bird or circular feeders providing at least 4cm per bird must be in place.
- c) In multi-tier systems feeding space must be provided at more than one level.

4.35 Drinking Space

- a) Drinking facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all birds.
- b) Where nipple drinkers or cups are used, there must be at least one nipple drinker or cup for every 10 hens.
- c) The allocation of drinkers must not be less than 1 bell drinker per 100 birds.
- d) In Multi-tier systems drinkers must be provided at more than one level.

4.36 Perches

- a) Perches must have no sharp edges and be of non-slip material.
- b) A minimum of 15cm of perch length per bird must be provided for all birds.
- c) The width of the top surface must not be less than 3cm.

- d) Perches must not be mounted above the litter.
- e) The horizontal distance between perches must be at least 30cm and the horizontal distance between the perch and the wall must be at least 20cm.
- f) Overhead perches must be positioned to minimise fouling of any birds below.
- g) Where perching is provided that is leaning against the exterior wall, the overall slope of the supporting frame must not exceed 45° to the vertical.

4.37 Nest Boxes

- a) Individual nest boxes must provide not less than 1 box per 5 birds. Automatic / communal systems must provide not less than 1m² of nesting area per 120 birds.
- b) Nesting systems must be provided with a floor substrate that encourages nesting behaviour and safeguards the hygiene of egg production.
- c) All nesting systems must be inspected daily to ensure surfaces are clean.

4.38 Litter

- a) Litter must be free of any contamination from livestock, wild birds or rodents.
- b) Litter must be maintained in a dry and friable condition.
- c) The source of the litter must be identified.

Note: Hard wood by-products and sawdust must not be used.

4.39 Scratch Area

- a) At least 250cm² of littered area per bird must be provided.
- b) Birds must be able to dust bathe in a litter area, which must equate to a minimum of 33% of total floor area available to the birds. This litter scratching area can be either incorporated into the house area or provided under a covered weather proofed veranda attached to the external walls of the building.

4.40 Pop Holes

- a) Where verandas are used as a scratch area, pop holes must be distributed evenly along the building.
- b) There must be several pop holes giving direct access to the outer area, at least 45cm high and 40cm wide and extending along the entire length of the building. A total opening of 2m must be available per group of 1,000 birds.
- c) The gap between the pop hole and the next level may not be greater than 30cm unless a ramp is used.
- d) Ramps must have a slope not exceeding 30° (33%) and must be surfaced with material that permits the hen to ascend and descend without slipping or injury.

Production System - Organic Production System

Background Information

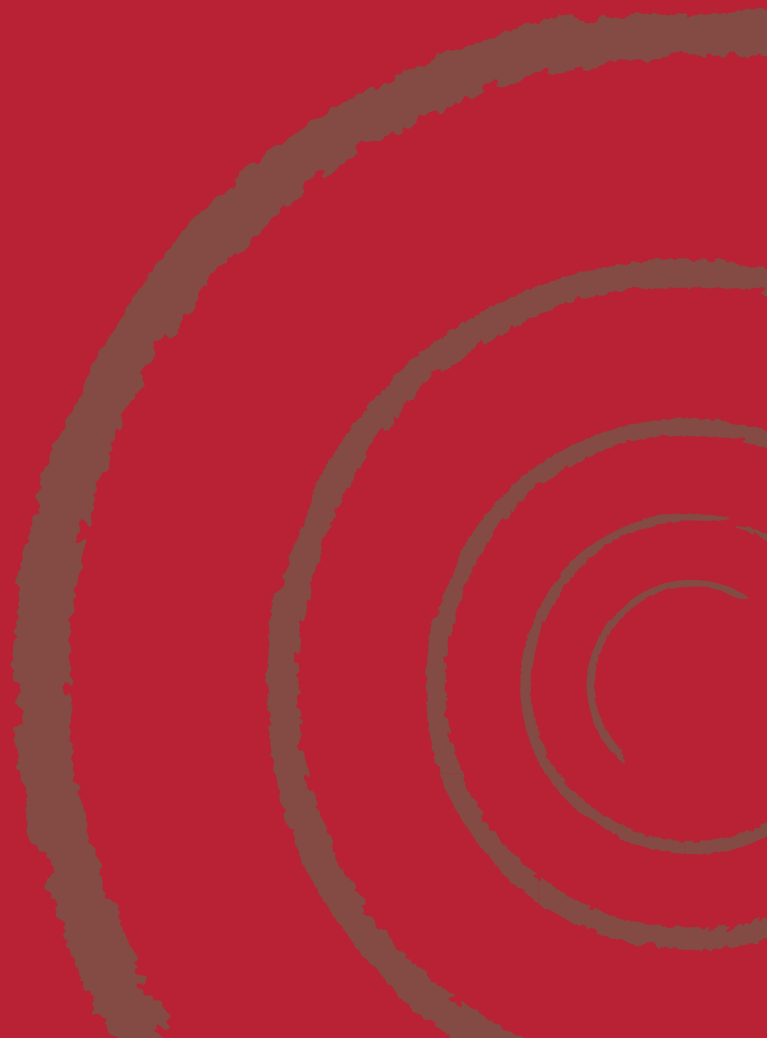
Organic Egg Producers need to be certified by one of the organic certification bodies. On receipt of a certificate, the Egg Producer will acquire a registration number from DAFM (or equivalent). The organic Egg Producer, however, will also need to meet the applicable criteria as laid out in this section (Section 4) of the Bord Bia SEAS Standard.

4.41 Organic Criteria

The following criteria are additional to the applicable criteria from the Egg Producer Criteria.

- a) The Egg Producer must be able to demonstrate that there is a valid current certificate of organic status for the enterprise.

5. Packing Centre Criteria



5. Packing Centre Criteria

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Blue Text

For information only. Score not affected.

Black Frame & Text

Required for certification. Assessed for score.

Orange Text

Recommendations only. Score not affected.

Foreword & Layout

The Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme (SEAS) is based on collaboration between the Rearer and Egg Producer, and between the Egg Producer and Packing Centre. These Participants work in partnership to meet the criteria as defined in this Standard.

The Bord Bia SEAS defines current best practice in the production and packing of eggs as determined by technical, industry and other experts.

Packing Centres are required to comply in full with the criteria in Section 5 and to provide information to the auditor on the relevant Performance Criteria in Section 6. In addition, the Packing Centre also needs to understand fully the Rearer / Egg Producer criteria (for subsequent auditing / inspection purposes) and accept it has specific responsibilities relating to Egg Producers that are identified in SEAS Section 4 Egg Producer criteria. These responsibilities are identified in the text in parentheses at the beginning of the criterion as follows: (Packing Centre). For these criteria, the Packing Centre must collaborate with the Egg Producer to ensure compliance. Therefore, the Packing Centre must be fully aware of all the relevant criteria for the Packing Centre as set out in the Standard. This includes the Introduction (Section 1), Scheme Rules (Section 2), Egg Producer Criteria (Section 4), Packing Centre Criteria (Section 5), the Performance Criteria (Section 6) and the Appendices (Section 7), which offer further information and clarification on various aspects of the applicable criteria.

Egg packers will seek advice from recognised sources and consult the relevant and current guidelines / publications produced by DAFM and other relevant bodies.

To ensure clarity and to assist the reader the information is laid out as follows:

Background Text

The blue text sets out the context of the subsequent criteria in the sub-section and is presented for information purposes only.

Compliance Criteria

Black text **surrounded by a black frame** sets out the criteria against which the Packing Centre's compliance will be assessed. These are numbered as a), b), c), etc. The Packing Centre must demonstrate compliance with these criteria (as set out in full detail in the Scheme Regulations) in order to be eligible for certification under the scheme.

Best Practice Recommendations

The orange text sets out the recommendations for best practice. These are identified with an uppercase letter and number as follows: 5R1, 5R2, 5R3... 5R20. Compliance with these criteria is not required for certification.

Management Responsibility, Commitment & Continuous Improvement

5.1 Regulatory Approval

- a) **The Packing Centre management must have documentation showing that it is registered with the competent authority (Critical).**

5.2 Food Safety and Quality Policies and Allergens

- a) Policies (quality, food safety management, hygiene, health and safety) must include a commitment to meeting the objectives of the SEAS; the policies must be approved by senior management and prominently displayed on the premises.
- b) All staff must be aware of these policies.
- c) The Food Safety and Quality Policies must include a commitment to Continuous Improvement, Safety in the Workplace, and to provision of appropriate information, training and equipment for all employees.
- d) The Food Safety and Quality Policies must be regularly reviewed for suitability and effectiveness.
- e) Current insurance policies must be in place meeting the Bord Bia requirements as set out in the Membership Agreement.

5R1. Ensure that the all policies are communicated, understood and implemented by all staff and employees.

5R2. Ensure that the all policies are regularly reviewed for suitability and effectiveness.

5R3. Ensure that the Quality Policy includes a commitment to Continuous Improvement, and to providing appropriate information, training, resources and equipment for all employees.

Food Safety Management Policy

- f) Packing Centres must have a food safety management policy, which includes a commitment to complying with all regulatory and customer requirements for current food safety.

Hygiene Policy

- g) Management must have a hygiene policy that includes policies regarding visitors and contractors.

Health and Safety Policy

- h) Packing Centres must have a health and safety policy and be able to demonstrate that this policy has been communicated to all personnel on site (employees, contractors, visitors, etc.).

Ethical Operation Policy

- i) Packing Centres must have documented ethical operation and trading policies and documented policies on employment (permanent and temporary), minimum wages, working conditions, working hours, equal opportunities, discrimination, resolution of disciplinary issues, etc. that is equivalent at a minimum to Appendix 7.21: Welfare in the Workplace.
- j) Packing Centres must be able to demonstrate that these policies were communicated to all employees and their understanding and acceptance recorded (e.g. by signing and dating).

Allergens

Eggs are allergenic and the Packing Centre must address the following at a minimum:

- k) Packing Centres must have a documented risk assessment on all raw material entering the site to establish the presence of other allergens and the likelihood of contamination of eggs or packaging.
- l) Personnel coming into contact with eggs must have received training in allergen handling.

5.3 Organisation

Management Responsibility

- a) An organisation chart showing responsibilities, lines of communication and the reporting structure must be available.
- b) The commitment of senior management to the effective implementation of the criteria of this Standard must be clearly demonstrated and communicated.
- c) The responsibilities of key personnel must be documented including the areas of food safety, hygiene, health and safety and contingency planning.
- d) Management must be able to demonstrate an adequate level of technical support with appropriate qualifications and other resources for the effective implementation of the Standard.
- e) **In the event that a critical non-compliance (including regulatory sanctions) is identified during internal audits or routine checks, the Packing Centre must immediately notify Bord Bia and co-operate with Bord Bia's direction (Critical).**
- f) Management must define the person(s) that has / have responsibility for:
 - i. Ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements including hygiene (see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information);
 - ii. Food safety management;
 - iii. Quality control;
 - iv. Non-conforming process input or product management;
 - v. Corrective and preventive action management;
 - vi. Internal auditing;
 - vii. Training.

- g) Management must define the person(s) that are responsible for ensuring compliance with the hygiene criteria and must establish a system to demonstrate that the criteria are being met.
- h) Management must ensure that there is sufficient cover in place for periods when key staff are absent.
- i) The Packing Centre must have a procedure for dealing with emergencies.
- j) The Packing Centre must identify the management and supervisory staff with responsibilities for the identification, segregation and traceability of quality assured product.
- k) The Packing Centre must establish an acceptable management system to demonstrate that all criteria of this Standard are being met.
- l) A documented plan must be in place that ensures continuity of supply in unplanned events and to ensure that unplanned absences of key staff are managed so as not to affect product quality or safety.

Management Representative

- m) The Packing Centre must officially identify in writing the named Management Representative who, irrespective of other responsibilities, has responsibility for ensuring that the criteria of the SEAS are met.
- n) In the event of the Management Representative being changed, Bord Bia must be immediately notified in writing / email.

5.4 Management Review

- a) Management, which must include senior Management, must meet at least once each year with a clearly defined agenda to:
 - i. Review the complete Quality System for improvement opportunities;
 - ii. Ensure that all aspects of the Quality System as specified in these criteria remain suitable and effective, and that preventive or corrective actions are assigned, documented and implemented;
 - iii. Review all Quality System data (including performance against previous management review targets and objectives, data from audit reports, corrective and preventive action, training, customer complaints, customer satisfaction surveys, quality control, process and non-compliance, key performance indicators, etc.) to verify the suitability and effectiveness of all quality systems;
 - iv. Set out Quality Improvement Objectives for the next year;
 - v. Establish and assign responsibility for implementing the required actions and improvements within a defined time scale.
- b) Minutes of this meeting must be retained.
- c) Management must carry out an annual review which, at a minimum, must cover current and future market requirements and include issues of a regulatory nature, audit reports, customer complaints and incidence rates for non-compliance.

Food Safety and Quality Management

Background Information

All Packing Centres will be aware of the importance of complying with national and EU regulations with regard to the implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) (see also Appendix 7.1, Reference Information) and will have developed Food Safety Management Systems to ensure food safety in their operations.

5.5 Quality System

Quality Documentation

- a) The quality system must consist of documentation that details the Packing Centre's response to each requirement of this Standard and that includes or references related operational documents, procedures and plans.
- b) The Quality System documentation (such as procedures, work instructions, specifications, etc.) must be accessible so that each employee clearly understands his / her role and responsibilities in the operation of the processes.

Quality Assurance Control Plan

- c) Packing Centres must document (such as by flow diagram) all the steps of each process from intake to final product dispatch.
- d) The Packing Centre must have documented procedures that cover all stages of the packing of eggs and that define how each process (including collection, sorting, grading, marking, packaging and delivery, etc.) is managed to ensure the quality and safety of the food product throughout the process.
- e) The procedures must be supported by documentation (e.g. work instructions) that defines how each stage of the process is to be conducted and how the equipment to be used at each stage is to be operated.
- f) For each process, the documentation must include the following:
 - i. A detailed description of each of the process steps including those steps where rework may arise or be dealt with;
 - ii. A detailed description of the hazards (chemical, including allergens, microbiological, physical / foreign bodies) that could arise at each process step and the risks that these represent;
 - iii. The control measures applicable to each step in the process;
 - iv. The responsibility and frequency for monitoring at each step (where relevant) in the process;
 - v. The tests / checks that must be performed to verify that the limits for each step are not exceeded;
 - vi. The corrective action to be taken if a non-compliance occurs at any step;
 - vii. Identification of the responsibilities, procedures and records applicable for each step in the process.
- g) The Quality Assurance (QA) control plan must be verified at a minimum annually or whenever a change that could affect the process is implemented.
- h) The data must be monitored and trends analysed so that appropriate preventive or corrective actions can be taken and documented.
- i) Evidence must be available to demonstrate that the QA control plan is actively supported by senior management.
- j) Quality tests or additional monitoring must be implemented towards the later stages of the flock cycles. The frequency can be determined by risk analysis or history of previous flocks.

Document and Data Control

Note: It is recommended that the requirements for document and data control as outlined in ISO 9001:2008 or ISO 22000:2005 should be adopted.

- k) All documents and data (including relevant external documentation such as this Standard, Customer and Regulatory documentation) that relate to the criteria of this Standard, whether electronic or paper based, must be managed and controlled as part of the Quality Management System.
- l) The Packing Centre must ensure that:
 - i. A master list of documents and procedures exists identifying the current revisions status;
 - ii. Only current issues of all documents are available for use;
 - iii. All documents are authorised;
 - iv. A procedure for issue of new documents, or amending existing documents, or removal of obsolete documents, is in place and is effective;
 - v. Applicable documents of external origin are identified and effectively controlled;
 - vi. Data is reviewed and signed off by an authorised person;
 - vii. Data is managed so as to ensure that it is available as required and stored / backed up to prevent accidental loss.
- m) This Standard is subject to document control and, where amendments are issued by SEAS, it is the responsibility of the Packing Centre to ensure that their copy of the Standard is correctly updated (see also Scheme Regulations 2.11).
- n) There must be control of the process for generation of new labels (taking into account the SEAS approval process for new labels bearing the logo), issue of labels to production, removal of unused labels post production, & the personnel involved must have received training on in-company label controls, SEAS controls & relevant labelling legislation.

Records

- o) All records specified in this Standard must be maintained up to date at all times and must be available for inspection without delay (i.e. within a time period agreed with the auditor on site) during a SEAS audit.
- p) All records must be controlled (e.g. by signing and dating) and must be maintained at a secure and easily accessible location for a minimum period of three years unless otherwise specified in legislation (e.g. Category 3 waste) and where corrections are made, these must be authorised.
- q) All records must be reviewed and co-signed / authorised according to a schedule, by the person responsible for the area or team as set out in management responsibility (sub-section 5.3) in this Standard.
- r) Records must be available for at least the last year and must be complete and without gaps unless there is a valid explanation.
- s) For unscheduled audits, records required for traceability and reconciliation for at least the previous 3 months must be made available at audit.

Note: This is a very important issue in ensuring that audits can be carried out efficiently and effectively.

Improvement Plans

- t) Packing Centres must carry out an analysis of current and future market requirements including those of a regulatory nature.

Note: This can be included in the management review.

5R4. Ensure that management and key operational staff have received an appreciation of the tools and techniques of total quality management / continuous improvement.

Reference Information

5R5. Ensure that up-to-date information is maintained on all developments relevant to the operation of the Scheme.

5R6. Ensure that a list of all current relevant Statutory Instruments defining regulations for Packing Centres is maintained for easy use and reference.

Note: See also Appendix 7.1, Reference Information.

5.6 Training

- a) Packing Centres must carry out a review at least annually to identify the training needs of all staff and to verify the effectiveness of the training given.
- b) A documented schedule of training must be available.
- c) All personnel coming into contact with food (including maintenance staff) must receive induction training before they commence work and must receive on-going food hygiene training according to a documented schedule.
- d) Staff who are operating or monitoring any control point (QA / CCP / PRP) must also receive training in the application of HACCP principles and food safety according to a documented schedule.
- e) Packing Centres must provide training on traceability and reconciliation processes as required to key staff involved in these processes.
- f) Records of all such training must be maintained.
- g) Training records must include:
 - i. Details of the course provided;
 - ii. Evidence of the trainer's competence (i.e. having attended a formal training programme, or having external certification as a trainer, or SEAS registration as trainer);
 - iii. Evidence of the effectiveness of the training provided.

Note: Training criteria are also set out in other sub-sections of the Standard.

5.7 Food Safety Management

Background Information

The regulations require that all Food Business Operators comply with (EC)178 / 2002, (EC) 852 / 2004 and (EC) 853 / 2004 which specify, among other things, that all Food Businesses implement a Food Safety Management system based on HACCP principles. Packing Centres could consult other Standards (including ISO 22000: 2005 which proposes a 12-step approach) and industry guidelines in the development of their Food Safety Management. Detailed interpretation and implementation guidelines on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as outlined by Codex Alimentarius (1997 3rd edition) are provided by Codex Alimentarius.

See also Appendix 7.1: Reference Information.

General

- a) **The Packing Centre must have a food safety management (FSM) plan based on HACCP principles which shows how product / process safety is ensured through control and prevention (Critical).**
- b) A team, that has at least one member who has received formal training in HACCP principles, must develop the FSM plan and all team meetings must be documented.
- c) The FSM plan must be coordinated with and complement the Quality Assurance Control plan and must be amended where there is a significant change in any of the processes.

Pre-Requisite Programme (PRP)

- d) Documentation must be available that demonstrates that the essential “Pre-requisite” requirements for a food operating environment have been adequately addressed for all aspects, including the following:
 - i. Building construction and layout including zoning (physical separation of activities to prevent potential food contamination);
 - ii. Plant and equipment including installation, commissioning, cleaning and on-going maintenance and preventive maintenance;
 - iii. Workspace and employee facilities layout and organisation;
 - iv. Services including electrical, water (including ice and steam), ventilation, air, and other utilities;
 - v. Waste and sewage handling;
 - vi. Management and control of purchased / received materials;
 - vii. Prevention of cross contamination via process inputs, products, contact surfaces, equipment;
 - viii. Cleaning and sanitising for equipment and facilities;
 - ix. Pest control;
 - x. Personal hygiene;
 - xi. Storage, distribution & transport.

Food Safety Management Plan

- e) A full description of each product produced on site must be available (e.g. on a product data sheet) including the following information:
- i. Composition;
 - ii. Nutritional information (see Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria);
 - iii. Food information for the consumer (i.e. (EU) 1169: 2011);
 - iv. Origin of ingredients / inputs;
 - v. Physical or chemical structure (e.g. water activity, pH etc.);
 - vi. Packaging;
 - vii. Storage and distribution conditions (e.g. with specified temperatures);
 - viii. Preservation characteristics;
 - ix. Durability and required shelf life, instructions for use and intended use.
- f) A hazard analysis must be carried out that includes a detailed identification and description of the food hazards (chemical, microbiological and physical / foreign bodies) that could arise at each process step and the risks that these represent.
- g) The control points / steps that are deemed to be Critical Control Points (CCP) or Prerequisite Control points (PRP) must be identified in the FSM plan.
- h) The limits that must be met to ensure control of each CCP / PRP must be clearly established.
- i) A process for monitoring each CCP / PRP must be in place stating responsibility, methodology and frequency to ensure that control is maintained.
- j) The corrective action to be taken where a non-compliance occurs at any CCP / PRP must be defined.
- k) The FSM plan must be verified / tested annually at a minimum to confirm that it remains effective for the processes.
- l) The verification process must be documented and scheduled and responsibility for its implementation must be assigned.
- m) The schedule for the verification / testing process must be based on the established risks and the microbiological history of the product.
- n) The FSM plan must be actively supported by senior Management.

5.8 Internal Auditing

- a) Packing Centres must establish documented procedures for the scheduling, planning and the implementation of internal audits to verify internal compliance with the criteria of the Standard and the effectiveness of the Quality System, records and procedures.

Note: The responsibility for reporting critical non-compliances in Management Responsibility in sub-section 5.3 above.

- b) All corrective and preventive actions defined in these audits must be assigned and tracked until completed by the target completion dates.

- c) The records of such audits must be available for inspection.
- d) Internal auditors must have received training in the criteria of the Standard.

SR7. Ensure that internal auditors are independent of the activity being audited and have received formal training in auditing skills.

5.9 Customer Contracts

- a) Only eggs complying with the criteria detailed in Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria are eligible for inclusion in the SEAS and this specification must be available for inspection.
- b) Packing Centres must maintain a register of all customers to whom they are supplying quality assured eggs.
- c) In the event that individual customers have specific additional requirements for product, these must be documented and maintained up to date and be available for inspection and there must be evidence of compliance with these specific additional requirements.
- d) There must be a procedure to ensure that contracts are reviewed prior to acceptance to determine that all the customer requirements including documentation can be met.

5.10 Traceability and Sourcing of Eggs

Background Information

Packing Centres will be aware that traceability of eggs at all stages of production is a legal responsibility. For eggs sourced and packed in accordance with the provisions of the SEAS that are to be marketed bearing the SEAS logo, maintaining accurate traceability information at all times is also a Packing Centre responsibility in accordance with Bord Bia's Logo Use Policy (published on www.BordBia.ie - see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information)

- a) **Packing Centres must only handle and pack eggs produced in accordance with the criteria of the SEAS (Critical).**
- b) **Packing Centres must have in place a documented product traceability procedure / system that permits a reconciliation to be carried out that clearly demonstrates that only eggs originating from a SEAS certified flock and which were processed by a SEAS certified Packing Centre were sold as quality assured eggs (Critical).**
- c) The procedure / system must permit full traceability at all stages of all processes and along the supply chain from an original SEAS certified flock of origin to the customer.
- d) **All eggs destined to be marketed bearing the SEAS Quality Assured mark must be sourced from an Egg Producer certified under the SEAS that is being monitored in accordance with SEAS Scheme Regulation 2.4 (Critical).**
- e) **Where the Packing Centre (A) needs additional eggs to meet orders that will be packed in Packing Centre A, these can be sourced from certified farms in conjunction with another SEAS certified Packing Centre (B); these additional eggs must be delivered directly to Packing Centre A and must be graded and packed and marked in Packing Centre A in a manner that ensures that the originating farm is correctly identified so as to ensure traceability (Critical).**

f) Where a Packing Centre (A) needs additional eggs to meet orders that will not be packed in Packing Centre A, these can be sourced directly from another SEAS certified Packing Centre (B) provided that the eggs are graded, packed and marked by Packing Centre B (Critical).

g) Packing Centres must maintain a record of all eggs obtained and sold under clauses 5.10.e and 5.10.f above that demonstrates that all eggs can be accounted for through a reconciliation process.

Note: Exceptions to criteria 5.10.e and 5.10.f will be considered by Bord Bia. However, a specific application must be made in writing prior to implementing any sourcing change.

5.11 Producer Monitoring

Background Information

The Egg Producer is a key element of the supply chain. The Packing Centre will therefore ensure that staff are fully familiar with the producer monitoring criteria in order to ensure that the egg production process is being operated in accordance with the criteria of the Scheme.

a) There must be a documented procedure to ensure that the eggs of both suspect and infected flocks are not supplied for human consumption and are not otherwise used for human consumption, unless they are pasteurised (Critical).

Note: The procedures as outlined for critical non-compliances outlined in Scheme rules, 2.5.3 also apply.

b) There must be a procedure in place to ensure that where a Salmonella breakdown has occurred (as indicated in environmental testing), egg supply is stopped and is not permitted to recommence until there is official confirmation from the Competent Authority and from Bord Bia that the problem has been resolved. Records of these events must be maintained (Critical).

c) After the initial compliance audit, each Egg Producer must be inspected in accordance with the criteria in Scheme Regulation 2.4.4 by the Packing Centre using the SEAS inspection protocols.

d) The Field Officer carrying out this inspection must have attended formal training in the use of the SEAS inspection protocol.

e) The Field Officer is required to carry out the Egg Producer audits as per the Scheme Regulations 2.4.4 and must liaise with the Egg Producer to verify closeout of non-compliances identified in SEAS and Packing Centre audits as set out in the Scheme Regulation 2.4.4).

Note: Independent announced or unannounced Egg Producer inspections will be carried out by Bord Bia or its agents at a frequency to be advised by Bord Bia for the purpose of verifying the Packing Centre inspection procedures and results.

f) The Field Officer must also take account of the on-farm tests required - see Appendix 7.4, Farm Sampling and Test Procedures.

g) A review of the data obtained in the Egg Producer monitoring must be carried out and documented.

5.12 Purchasing, Approval and Monitoring (of materials other than eggs)

- a) A procedure for the approval of suppliers of products and services that could affect product quality must be in place.
- b) Packing centres must maintain a list of suppliers that have been approved to supply materials or services that could affect egg product quality or safety.
- c) The process of approving suppliers prior to purchasing materials which come into contact with the product must include an appropriate risk assessment and must define appropriate controls.
- d) All approved supplier lists must be reviewed at defined intervals, based on risk, to maintain accuracy of the information.
- e) All materials that could affect product quality or safety must be checked and approved before use. A record of these approvals must be maintained.
- f) The storage of all materials that could affect product quality or safety must be managed in a way that ensures continuing fitness for purpose.
- g) All materials must be stored on site and used in a manner that prevents chemical, physical or microbiological contamination of the product.
- h) The Packing Centre must have on file current certificates of suitability for use in egg packaging for the following, where in contact with product:
 - i. Soaps, Detergents, Inks, Oils and Lubricants;
 - ii. Packaging Materials;
 - iii. Pest Control Materials.

5.13 Water

- a) A sample from each source of water must be tested¹ at least annually (at a minimum for the parameters described below) and the results retained. Samples must be taken from multiple sites by trained personnel.
- b) The Packing Centre must have a procedure in place to verify that the water supplied within the plant meets the regulatory physico-chemical parameters².
- c) A water distribution map must be available, showing the sampling points.
- d) In the event that the source of the water is changed at any time, the new source must be tested for compliance and approved before use.

¹ The sampling must be carried out by trained QC staff, and the testing must be done by a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 for testing against these specific organisms using the following methods: *E. coli* (ISO method 9308-1) absence in 100ml, *Enterococci* (ISO method 7899-2) absence in 100ml, or equivalent validated methods.

² SI 122: 2014 as amended Part 1, Table A (Microbiological) and Table B (Chemical). Data from the water supplier can be used to demonstrate compliance with Table B.

- e) Microbiological analysis of the water must comply with the following at a minimum:
- i. E. coli 0 / 100ml (ISO method 9308-1)
 - ii. Enterococci 0 / 100ml (ISO method 7899-2)
- f) If the water analysis is not compliant, an alternative compliant supply must be used immediately. The original supply may be reused when it has been demonstrated to be compliant.
- g) Non-potable water is not permitted except where dedicated pipes are used and the non-potable water pipes are clearly distinguished from potable pipes to prevent use.
- h) Where the water is supplied from one or more private wells, the well heads must be sealed to prevent ingress of insects, vermin and small birds (see also EPA Note 14, Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

5R8. Where water is derived from a well, observe the guidelines in EPA Note 14 and manage the well in accordance with this.

5.14 Product and Packaging Traceability and Identification

- a) **Packing Centres must have in place an identification and traceability procedure that permits traceability of eggs to the original production house or supplying packing centre, if applicable, and to the customer(s) (Critical).**
- b) Packing Centres must have in place an identification and traceability procedure that permits traceability of primary packaging.
- c) **Where the eggs are to be marketed under the SEAS, the Packing Centre must ensure that all packaging bears the correct following information (all Critical):**
- i. **Text used in product description as set out in Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria;**
 - ii. **Production type;**
 - iii. **Relevant Quality Assurance logo;**
 - iv. **Packing Centre Code;**
 - v. **Explanation of the Egg Producer code.**

Note: Where eggs are not to be marketed under the Scheme, the logo may not be applied.

- d) **Where the eggs are to be marketed under the SEAS, the Packing Centre must ensure that all eggs bear the following information (all Critical):**
- i. **Egg Producer code;**
 - ii. **Packing Centre identity indication;**
 - iii. **Best before date;**
 - iv. **Quality Assured Scheme Mark.**

Note: Best before date must not be more than 28 days after laying. For calculation purposes, the date of lay is to be taken as day 0.

- e) Where product claims are made on the product label, documentary evidence supporting the detail of the claim must be available (e.g. species / breed, welfare status, health benefits). The evidence must be reviewed annually and documented.

5R9. Provide nutritional information as specified by (EU) 1169: 2011 (see Appendix 7.1, Reference Information).

5.15 Management of Product Recall and Withdrawal

- a) **Packing Centres must have a documented procedure for the withdrawal or recall of eggs originating from infected flocks or where otherwise deemed unsafe for human consumption (Critical).**
- b) Packing centres must document and establish an effective product recall procedure.
- c) The recall procedure must include a provision to initially contact the regulatory authorities (FSAI and DAFM or equivalent) prior to initiating product recall where there is a food safety concern.
- d) Documentation must be maintained to demonstrate that the recall procedure was tested annually for effectiveness.
- e) In the event that a recall is required, Bord Bia must be notified.

5.16 Customer Complaint Handling

- a) Packing centres must establish an effective procedure for handling of customer complaints, including any of regulatory origin.
- b) The procedures must clearly outline responsibilities for logging, tracking and closing off complaints in conjunction with the complainant.
- c) The complaint log and related correspondence must be maintained and be available for inspection.
- d) Analysis of complaints must be carried out on an annual basis by the Packing Centre.

5.17 Corrective and Preventative Action

- a) There must be documented and effective procedures for Corrective and Preventive action management.
- b) Corrective and Preventive actions must be tracked and their priorities appropriately identified (e.g. by means of defined time scales for completion).

5.18 Imported Eggs

- a) **Imported eggs may be used for packing as quality assured product provided that the eggs are sourced under a scheme that has been approved in advance by Bord Bia (Critical).**

Note: The requirements of Bord Bia's Logo Use Policy will also apply.

Product and Process Management

Background Information

Packing Centres will ensure that all inspections and testing as detailed in the Quality Assurance/HACCP Plan are carried out and records are available. All incoming materials other than eggs that could affect the egg quality will be from an approved source and records of these approvals maintained. Controls with respect to egg weights and non-conforming product will be in place.

5.19 Egg Grading and Packing Control

- a) Packing Centres must ensure that their packing equipment is maintained so as to meet all the Egg specifications.
- b) A preventive maintenance programme must be in place that defines the acceptable limits of operation of the equipment.
- c) Records must be available showing that the equipment is functioning correctly.
- d) Eggs must be graded within 10 days of date of lay.

5.20 Inspection and In-process Testing of Eggs

- a) All incoming eggs must be approved on the basis of checks for cleanliness and Egg Producer approval status. Records of these approvals must be maintained.
- b) Incoming checks must also be shown on the Quality Assurance / Hazard Control Plan.
- c) In-process checks for non-compliance with Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria must be carried out according to the Quality Assurance / Food Safety Management.
- d) Records must be maintained that demonstrate that the controls are effective and that only eggs complying with the Egg Specification are being placed on the market under the SEAS.
- e) A documented egg quality test procedure that takes into account predictable conditions of processing, storage and use, previous history and that verifies compliance with the Egg Specification must be conducted at least annually and the results maintained.

5.21 Packaging for Eggs

- a) Certificates of conformity must be maintained for all egg packaging that confirms its suitability for use in the food industry.
- b) Packaging must be stored in a manner that prevents any risk to product safety or quality (e.g. in a separate storage room).

5.22 Equipment Calibration and Control of Egg Weights

- a) A register of all inspection, measuring and test equipment must be maintained which includes:
 - i. Identity / location;
 - ii. Operating range;
 - iii. Tolerance and accuracy required;
 - iv. Calibration frequency and responsibility;
 - v. Calibration method or reference;
 - vi. Operational checking (e.g. start-up checks) to ensure continuing accuracy.
- b) Records of all calibrations with traceability to a National or International Standard must be maintained.
- c) When a device is found to be out of calibration, an assessment of the validity of previous inspection results, the likely impacts and the appropriate corrective and preventive actions must be carried out and recorded.
- d) The weight of eggs must be checked according to a documented schedule to determine compliance with Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria.

5.23 Control of Non-Conforming Product

- a) There must be a documented procedure to ensure that product / material at any stage, which does not conform to requirements that apply at that stage of the process, is prevented from unintended use or release.
- b) The procedure must provide for clear identification, adequate segregation and final disposition of the non-conforming product. Records of such disposition must be maintained.
- c) Incidents with a potential to cause a food safety hazard must be recorded and reported in writing to the person responsible.
- d) Disposing of non-conforming eggs (including downgrades) must only be conducted in accordance with the regulations and in a manner that permits full traceability and reconciliation, and must only be authorised by the personnel specified in sub-section 5.3.

Note: This includes recording the quantity of eggs (ideally number and total kgs) that were supplied for non-table use through (a) breaking and (b) disposal.

5.24 Final Inspection and Testing

- a) All quality assured finished product must be inspected and positively released for dispatch according to a documented inspection procedure (including any specific tests required by customers).
- b) The personnel with responsibility and authority for final product approval and release must be identified in the procedure and the approval / release documentation.

- c) This inspection must ensure that final product:
- i. Is free from visible contamination before final inspection;
 - ii. Meets internal and customer requirements for quality and safety;
 - iii. Is correctly labelled as per sub-section 5.14;
 - iv. Complies with the labelling criteria as set out in Appendix 7.20, Egg Quality Criteria;
 - v. Packaging label carries storage instructions.
- d) There must be a procedure for residue testing at a frequency to be determined by a documented risk assessment.

Hygiene in Manufacturing Processes

Background Information

Management will have ensured that the premises are designed, constructed and maintained to prevent and control the risk of contamination, and to comply with all relevant legislation pertaining to food safety. The criteria listed below define the essential management procedures necessary to implement hygiene in accordance with this Standard. However, compliance with these criteria does not in any way lessen the responsibility on Packing Centres to conform to all existing statutory requirements.

5.25 General

- a) There must be a current site map showing all the buildings present and detailing their uses.
- b) Management must document and display its Hygiene Policy on site.
- c) Management must define who has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the hygiene requirements of the legislation and must be able, through audits and records, to demonstrate that these requirements are being met.

5.26 Site Security

- a) Packing Centres must ensure that site security is maintained to prevent possible product contamination.
- b) All personnel working in the Packing Centre (temporary or otherwise) must be aware of and have participated in training on the site security policy in order to prevent possible product contamination.
- c) Management must document how visitors are managed to minimise risk to product.
- d) Training of all relevant staff regarding site security must take place and be documented.
- e) All visitors and contractors that need to gain entry to the production area must complete a medical / hygiene questionnaire and must be made aware of their responsibilities when in the production area.

5.27 Cleaning and Sanitation

- a) Packing Centres must document and implement a comprehensive cleaning and sanitation programme covering both the exterior and interior of the Packing Centre and the transport facilities. The programme:
 - i. Must state the frequency and method of cleaning (including safety hazards);
 - ii. Must identify the person(s) who is / are responsible for cleaning.
- b) Records verifying the effectiveness of cleaning must be maintained.
- c) A designated person must be responsible for verifying the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation programme.
- d) Where cleaning is done by a subcontractor, a contract with full specification must be in place.
- e) The cleaning programme must reference the site map (internal and external) (see clause 5.25.a).

5.28 Pest Control

Background Information

Packing Centres will be aware of the need to use pest control products in a responsible way. This involves minimising the impact on the environment and the exposure to non-target species through good practices and controls. Packing Centres will understand the need for care where the packing facility is close to sites of special scientific interest or designated by legislation relating to wildlife (such as raptor release sites). Selection of the pest control products and placement of them has an important bearing on this. Packing Centres will also be aware of the benefits of using an Integrated Pest Management Approach (IPM) approach to the management of pests – as set out in the CRRU Code. (See link in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information, Page 3 Responsible Use of Rodenticides).

- a) An effective rodent control programme, with product specifications demonstrating suitability for use in this application, must be in place for each site.
- b) All rodenticides used must have a valid PCS number.
- c) The rodent baiting programme must reflect the manufacturer's instructions for the rodenticide selected.
- d) Where baiting is used or where traps are placed, the baiting / trapping programme must include the following:
 - i. A simple plan or sketch identifying the location of all bait and trap points;
 - ii. Measures to ensure bait is not exposed to non-target species and does not contaminate raw materials, packaging, finished product or water;
 - iii. A record of regular inspections of bait and trap points and replenishment of bait points;
 - iv. Routine collection of dead rodents and safe disposal as per product documentation or label instructions.
- e) Bait points must be inspected at least eight times annually and more frequently where there is a specific risk, and corrective action as recommended by the manufacturer / service provider must be taken.
- f) Structural, operational and environmental hygiene controls must be in place to prevent insect infestation (including weevils, mites, flies, cockroaches) with the application of physical or chemical treatments as required. (Note: the criteria for chemical use in sub-section 5.42 also apply).
- g) An annual review (e.g. by field biologist) of the programme must be conducted to establish its suitability and effectiveness.
- h) Buildings must be kept in good repair and condition to prevent pest access and to eliminate potential breeding sites. Openings must be sealed, or protected with fine wire mesh screens and animals (such as birds, pets, wildlife, etc.) must be excluded from the premises and other at-risk areas.
- i) Where baiting supplies are stored on site, the store must be kept locked.
- j) All bait stations and electronic fly killers must be secured, numbered and clearly indicated on a site map.
- k) Inspections for pest control must be made and recorded (minimum 8 visits per year) by an independent contractor.
- l) Bait containers and traps must be secured to the ground or wall.
- m) All air vents and intake points must be covered with 1.2mm screens / meshes to prevent pest ingress.

5R10. Put a multi-level baiting system in place such as:

- First line of defence: Perimeter with bait points at 6-8m intervals along the entire perimeter;
- Second line of defence: Along factory building wall;
- Third line of defence: Internally where there is a risk of rodent ingress.

5.29 Maintenance

- a) A preventive maintenance programme for essential equipment affecting product quality / safety must be in place, the procedure and frequency for which to be determined by risk assessment.
- b) Maintenance schedules and procedures must be documented.
- c) All internal maintenance staff must receive training in hygiene.
- d) All external maintenance personnel must be made aware of the company hygiene regulations prior to commencing work.
- e) Maintenance procedures must indicate the precautions taken to ensure that the product is not contaminated in any way by the maintenance activity whether carried out by own or contracted staff (e.g. ventilate production area post-maintenance).
- f) A record of maintenance activities must be maintained.
- g) There must be a procedure to approve equipment for re-use after maintenance is complete.

5R11. Ensure that a system for accountability of tools used and equipment parts removed during maintenance has been developed and implemented.

Environmental Hygiene

Background Information

Packing Centres must be aware that the structure and fabrication of the premises and the supply of services must be such as to minimise contamination.

Packing Centres will appreciate that structures within food premises need to be soundly built, constructed of durable materials, and easy to maintain, clean and disinfect. This can be achieved with a number of building materials including stainless steel sheeting, PVC sheeting, tiles, smooth finish plaster treated with non-toxic / non-peel food grade paint, or other equivalent materials.

5.30 General

- a) A policy, based on a risk assessment, dealing with the management of glass / hard plastics and foreign bodies in the work environment must be in place.
- b) Written procedures for handling breakages in all process and storage areas must be in place. This must cover all plastics that are likely to give rise to sharp fragments.
- c) Where glass / hard plastics are present a glass / hard plastics register must be maintained.

5.31 Exterior, Structure and Grounds

- a) The grounds and all areas of the premises must be well presented and maintained so as to minimise sources of contamination.
- b) A perimeter fence, wall, or other suitable physical demarcation must protect access to the grounds.
- c) Equipment, pallets, and other materials stored in the Packing Centre grounds must be stored neatly and in clean and clearly defined areas.
- d) Any unused buildings, service buildings etc. must be maintained in good repair and free from debris.
- e) There must be a clearance of one metre wide around the factory to avoid rodent infestation.
- f) Exterior finish of the premises must be maintained in sound condition (i.e. no flaking paint or broken plaster).
- g) The grounds must be kept free of debris and there must be no stagnant water, potholes or open drains.
- h) Roofs, valleys, and gutters must be maintained in good repair and free from debris and weeds.
- i) Areas directly outside the premises must be free of weeds, grass, rubbish, or any item that may harbour pest and/or disease.

5.32 Entry to production

- a) A procedure must be in place to ensure good hygiene practices at entry and exit from all production areas.
- b) The entry point must contain a hygiene barrier for staff entry and exit from the production area.
- c) Wash-hand basins must be provided at all entry points to production areas.
- d) Taps in production areas must be knee, foot, arm or electronically operated.
- e) Paper towel dispensers and used towel disposal facilities must be in place.
- f) Hand washing / sanitising facilities must be provided at each hand washing point and clearly identified.
- g) Hand-washing instructions must be posted adjacent to each wash station.

5.33 Interior: General

- a) All pipes, pipe work, lagging, electrical cables etc. must be clean, secure and properly constructed.
- b) A schedule of internal cleaning must be in operation.
- c) Working surfaces that come in contact with food must be in sound condition, impermeable to water, durable and easy to clean, maintain and disinfect.
- d) Work surfaces must be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials and inert to food, detergent and disinfectant under normal working conditions.
- e) All equipment must be placed or installed in a manner that permits cleaning all around.
- f) All electrical equipment and installations must be checked by a competent person annually or at a frequency determined by a documented risk assessment.
- g) Pallet racking must be of sound structure, free of peeling paint, corrosion free and be secured to the ground.
- h) Aprons, where used, must be subjected to frequent cleaning (e.g. in wash cabinets designed to minimise the risk of cross contamination).
- i) Hoses (which would ideally be completely constructed of corrosion free materials) must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition and must always be kept off the floor when not in use.

5R12. Ensure a solid barrier, large enough to limit impact (e.g. from forklifts), is constructed to protect internal walls and to prevent damage.

5R13. Use stainless steel equipment (where metallic equipment is used) in the process area.

5.34 Interior Walls

- a) Wall surfaces must be designed and constructed to be durable, smooth, light coloured, easily cleaned and impermeable to liquids.
- b) They must be maintained in a clean condition, free from cobwebs and moulds, etc.
- c) Ledges and sills must be sloped and kept free from dust, dirt or other miscellaneous items.
- d) Walls must be well maintained so that there is no flaking paint or broken plaster, no damaged or missing tiles and that all tile cracks are sealed or grouted.

5R14. Ensure junctions and joints are smooth and impervious.

5R15. Ensure wall-to-floor junctions are sealed and constructed so as to be easily cleanable.

5.35 Ceilings and Overheads

- a) Ceilings must be designed and constructed to be of sufficient height, smooth, light coloured, prevent the shedding of particles and easily cleaned.
- b) Ceilings must be maintained in good repair, clean and be free of condensation.
- c) Girders and overhead pipe-work and structures must be clean, free from rust, dust, mould growth, flaking paint and other extraneous material.
- d) Skylights are undesirable, but where present they must be clean and be fitted with fly screens where they can be opened.

5R16. Ensure all joints are sealed and impermeable.

5R17. Ensure access to the void above false or cavity ceilings to enable cleaning and inspection.

5.36 Floors

- a) Floors must be constructed of durable, non-slip, water resistant material and be maintained in good condition (i.e. no holes or cracks).
- b) Floors must be kept clean and free from the accumulation of water or debris especially in corners or in areas hidden by machinery.
- c) Rubber mats or plastic meshes, where used, must be easily removed and easily cleaned.
- d) Concrete floors must be treated with a floor sealant to prevent dust in the premises.

5.37 Drainage

- a) Drainage must be such as to prevent risk of contamination.
- b) Stagnant pools of liquid on floors must be prevented by adequate sloping towards the drainage channels or by other management techniques.
- c) Where drainage channels crossing personnel working areas and passage-ways are present, these must be protected with removable covers to facilitate cleaning.
- d) Drainage from on-site laboratories must be designed to exit the building before joining up with other waste systems.
- e) Where manholes are present inside a premises they must be doubly sealed and secured to prevent overflow and odour.
- f) Drains must be constructed in a manner that will prevent odours or vermin entry to the premises (such as by using swan neck waste pipes and gridded drain covers).
- g) A cleaning schedule for drains must be in place with spot-checks to ensure on-going cleanliness.

5R18. Ensure direction of drainage flow is opposite to that of product flow.

5.38 Doors

- a) Doors and door frames must be constructed of durable impermeable material; these must be tight fitting and of smooth easy-to-clean finish.
- b) Glass must not be used in doors opening into storage or production areas; other clear shatterproof material must be used instead.
- c) All external and internal doors (excluding emergency doors) leading from non-process into process areas must be designed and operated to prevent pest ingress.
- d) All chill doors must be capable of being opened from both sides.

5.39 Windows

- a) Windows opening to the exterior in production areas must be at least two meters above ground, have sloping ledges and if opening, fitted with suitable and effective fly-screens.
- b) They must be constructed of shatterproof material or, if glass / hard plastic, laminated to prevent shattering.
- c) Windows, window frames etc. must be tight fitting, maintained in good condition, free from cracks, moulds, flaking paint, etc., and must be clean.

5.40 Lighting

- a) Lighting in production areas, must be designed to be permanently fixed, easily cleaned and must be protected by shatterproof covering.
- b) Lighting must be adequate at all times for the particular operation and must be of a type that does not distort colour where process decisions are taken on the basis of colour.

5.41 Extraction and Ventilation

- a) Vents from drains, sewers and rainwater drainpipes must not be located within the plant.
- b) Ventilation systems must be designed and constructed so that air does not flow from contaminated areas to clean areas.
- c) All ventilation equipment must be serviced and maintained clean as per the recommendations of the manufacturer(s).

5.42 Pesticides (Chemicals)

Background Information

The term 'Pesticides' includes both biocides such as detergents, sanitisers, sterilisers, disinfectants, rodenticides, etc. as well as plant protection products (PPPs) such as herbicides, insecticides and fungicides. This section applies to all such chemicals in use on the site which must be officially approved by the relevant Competent Authority e.g. Pesticide Control Division (PCD) of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) (Appendix 7.1 Reference Information) under the Biocidal Products Regulations (BPR). There is also a legal requirement for Participants to comply with the Pesticide Regulations including the Sustainable Use Directive 128: 2009 (EC). Accurate records of usage will therefore be important.

Packing Centres will be aware of the need to ensure that all chemicals are stored in a secure place, and segregated from feeds, water, remedies, etc. chemicals. Packing Centres will understand the need for training in the handling of chemicals, will use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and follow manufacturers' recommendations at all times. Packing Centres will also understand the need to ensure that equipment is maintained in good condition to protect the operator from any possibility of contamination with chemicals. Packing Centres will also be aware of the importance of triple rinsing or pressure rinsing empty chemical containers prior to disposal and will ensure that the disposal of obsolete product and empty containers is carried out using a licensed hazardous waste company.

- a) **All chemicals (i.e. chemicals used to sanitise, sterilise surfaces, or to control pests) to be used must be approved for use in a Packing Centre, must carry an authorisation number (e.g. PCS or BPR number) or equivalent approval number and must not cause taint of eggs (Critical).**
- b) All chemicals must be stored safely in their original packages in a dry place.
- c) Chemicals must be handled at a minimum in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 7.12, Chemical Handling which must be displayed so as to be readily accessible (e.g. on a notice board in the store).

- d) Safety information must be available for all chemicals used and must be accessible to all employees (e.g. safety data sheets, instructions for use, labels, etc.).
- e) Safety and protective clothing, footwear and apparatus as recommended by the manufacturer must be available when handling such substances; the relevant components must be within expiry dates (e.g. respiratory filters).
- f) The use for which each chemical is intended must be clearly identified and displayed (e.g. on a noticeboard in the store).
- g) Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they have been authorised and in accordance with the label instructions.
- h) For each chemical used, a record (see sample record in Appendix 7.12 Chemical Use) must be maintained of the following:
- i. Location / LPIS No;
 - ii. Product name;
 - iii. PCS Number;
 - iv. Crop (winter or spring if appropriate);
 - v. Area / tonnage treated;
 - vi. Volume of water used;
 - vii. Date applied;
 - viii. Reason / rationale for use;
 - ix. Professional User number (PU).
- i) The record must demonstrate that all chemicals are used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Note:** The personnel involved must have received training in the use and handling of the chemicals and a record maintained as per criterion 5.6.g.
- j) Any person applying professional use³ pesticides on farm must be registered with DAFM as a Professional User.
- k) The application method employed must demonstrate that the chemical was used in a manner that minimises the impact on the environment and protects sensitive areas (e.g. ground water, areas used by the public, etc.).
- l) Empty chemical containers must be triple rinsed according to DAFM guidelines on Storing and Using Plant Protection and Biocidal Products.
- m) Empty containers must be crushed and /or pierced to prevent re-use and must be clearly identified and controlled pending safe disposal.
- n) There must be a safe disposal method for rinsate from application equipment and / or surplus spray mix (i.e. on suitable untreated field crop or designated fallow ground and where permitted) and records of such must be maintained.

³ Pesticides are categorized as either Professional Use or non-Professional / Amateur Use products. Professional use products are products that may only be applied by Professional Users (PUs) who must be registered with DAFM. Non-Professional / Amateur use products are products that may be used in a home garden situation by any person and there are no restrictions on the use of such products and there is no requirement for such users to be trained or registered with DAFM. Product labels generally indicate whether a product is for Professional use or non-Professional / Amateur but the status of all registered products can be checked at <http://www.pcs.agriculture.gov.ie/getprod.asp>

- o) The use of strong products or chemicals with a strong odour or products that could be injurious to bird health (wood preservatives, fumigants) in the production house or near feeds is prohibited except as required during terminal hygiene cleaning.
- p) All blast and orchard sprayers and all boom sprayers with a boom width of >3m (and older than 5 years) must be inspected and certified by a registered DAFM inspector before it can be used for the application of professional use PPPs. Proof of certification must be available.
- q) Products that have been withdrawn from the market (expired or revoked) should be used up within the allowed time period and thereafter must be controlled pending disposal as hazardous waste.

5.43 Electronic Fly Killers

- a) There must be a programme and records for the inspection of electronic fly killers and for replacement of the light tubes.
- b) Electronic fly killers must be located away from egg packing areas and from packaging equipment or packaging operations.
- c) Electronic fly killers must not be located close to or above exposed unpacked product.

5R19. **Locate the electronic fly killers in order to ensure effective operation and to minimise their potential product contamination.**

5.44 Waste Management and Disposal

Background Information

Containers for use within the plant and skips / compactors are both important elements in the management of waste. SEAS supports the concept of “reduce / reuse / recycle” in the management of all waste materials.

- a) **There must be a documented programme for the management and disposal of all organic and inorganic waste material and appropriate licences or permits must be in place (Critical).**
- b) Waste materials must be controlled in the packing area and must be stored in containers pending collection / disposal.
- c) Packing Centres must have procedures to prevent waste material coming in contact with product.
- d) The plant cleaning schedule must include all waste areas.
- e) Waste containers must be clearly designated and identified according the type of waste (separate waste containers for food and non-food materials) to be disposed of in them.
- f) Waste containers must be available at appropriate locations.
- g) Skips / compactors must be covered at all times except when being filled and be located as far as practicable from the “Clean” area.

- h) Skips / compactors must be sited on a concrete surface that ensures that any leakage is contained and disposed of safely.
- i) Skips / compactors must be emptied according to a documented schedule, and spillages cleaned up immediately.
- j) Discarded wrapping, packaging and other refuse must be placed in designated bins or skips / compactors so that it does not compromise the hygiene of the premises and does not provide a habitat for pests and vermin.

5.45 Storage and Transport of Eggs

- a) Records must show that stock is rotated on a first in first out basis.
- b) Transport of eggs must only be undertaken by approved⁴ transporters and a record of this approval maintained.
- c) Transport inspection procedures must be in place and documented to ensure that only clean suitable transport is used.
- d) All product must be stored in clean, dry, well ventilated stores where the ambient temperature is monitored (min and max) daily at a minimum and recorded.
- e) Measures must be in place to ensure that the temperature of the egg stores does not exceed 22°C.
- f) Egg transport vehicles must be:
 - i. SEAS registered for this activity;
 - ii. The transport compartment must be fully covered for security purposes and to protect against weather, product damage, etc;
 - iii. Dedicated to transport of food materials only;
 - iv. Operated and managed in a manner that eliminates cross-contamination and the risk of damage to eggs in transport.
- g) There must be a cleaning schedule in place and records of cleaning maintained for each vehicle.
- h) All vehicles must be inspected prior to loading for cleanliness and integrity of the surfaces.

⁴ As described in S.I. 810/2007 Part 3

Personnel Hygiene

Background Information

Packing Centres will be aware of their management responsibility to ensure that all aspects of personnel hygiene are addressed and to ensure compliance with the specific criteria of this Standard. Every person working in a Packing Centre will be aware of the importance of maintaining a high degree of personal cleanliness. Food handlers may refer to relevant legislation in Appendix 7.1, Reference Information.

5.46 Hygiene: General

- a) A documented hygiene plan must be in place and communicated clearly to all personnel.
- b) The hygiene plan must include documented flows both for product and personnel that show how hygiene is maintained through prevention of cross contamination.
- c) A documented training programme for staff must be in place.
- d) Training records must be available to demonstrate that all operatives have been trained in the hygiene plan.

5.47 Medical Records

Background Information

Management and employees will be aware of the need to control infectious disease and to have adequate on-going medical screening of employees.

- a) All personnel handling food product must have been approved on the basis of a pre-employment assessment conducted by a doctor or public health professional as suitable to work handling food products.
- b) Packing Centres must have a procedure in place to ensure that no person that is likely to be a carrier of or suffering from a disease likely to be transmitted through food or that has infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea is permitted to handle food or enter any food-handling area in any capacity.
- c) The procedure must ensure that any person so affected who is likely to come into contact with food immediately reports the illness or symptoms, and if possible their causes, to designated personnel that have received documented training in managing this issue.
- d) Personnel must be made aware of their responsibility to notify management of any infectious disease or condition they may be suffering from or have been in contact with that could adversely affect the safety of the product.
- e) All personnel must be made aware of their personal responsibility that where they are taking medication that has the potential to affect their capability to discharge their duties, this must be notified to management.

Note: The HPSC report⁵ on prevention of food borne diseases states that the most effective preventive measure that can be taken to prevent food contamination is effective and thorough training of all staff. The findings of this report could be taken into consideration in designing the hygiene training for food handlers and in defining the conditions under which employees may continue to handle food.

⁵ Food Borne Disease: A Focus On the Infected Food Handler (2004), Health Protection Surveillance Centre.

5.48 First Aid

- a) At least one member of staff who has a current First Aid certificate must be present at all times.

Note: The certified staff member can train other staff members in the basics of first aid to ensure a trained first aid presence at all times when the packing centre is in operation.

- b) There must be fully stocked first aid kits available to treat minor injuries.
- c) Cuts, sores and grazes must be completely covered after treatment with a distinctively coloured waterproof dressing.

5.49 Personal Hygiene

- a) Hands must be washed with unperfumed soap immediately after using a sanitary convenience.
- b) Perfume / aftershave must not be worn.
- c) False nails are not permitted and fingernails must be kept short, clean and unvarnished.
- d) No loose jewellery, except plain wedding rings and sleeper ear-rings may be worn by personnel working in the production area.
- e) No rings or studs to be worn in exposed parts of the body.
- f) All head hair, including facial hair must be contained (e.g. by means of a snood, mop cap or other covering) to prevent contamination of product.

5.50 Personnel Clothing and Locker Rooms

- a) All personnel (food operatives) working within the plant must be provided with suitable protective clothing, suitable headgear and footwear that are maintained in a clean condition.
- b) The protective clothing, headgear and footwear must be worn at all times in areas where eggs are handled or stored and must be re-issued as required.
- c) Used and unused protective clothing must be segregated to prevent contamination.
- d) Protective clothing must be removed before using the toilets or canteen facilities, and must not be worn outside.
- e) Facilities (including individual lockers) must be provided that ensure the separation of personal and protective clothing.
- f) Specific facilities must be in place that provide for the hygienic handling of used or contaminated clothing.
- g) A scheduled laundering of all protective clothing must be in place.
- h) Where work clothing is laundered on site, evidence must be available that the wash cycle exceeds 80°C operating temperature.

- i) All persons (including visitors, contract workers and service personnel) entering production areas of the plant must wash hands and wear protective clothing provided and notices to this effect must be posted in appropriate areas.

5.51 Staff Facilities

- a) Smoking, eating and drinking must only be permitted in designated areas and there must be clear signs to this effect.
- b) All personnel facilities (canteens, locker-rooms, toilets, rest-rooms) must be included in the sanitation programme and maintained in a clean condition.
- c) All toilets, including office toilets, must be clean and adequately ventilated and toilets must not lead directly into the packing area.
- d) Perfume free / unscented liquid soaps and sanitising liquids must be provided & dispensed from wall-mounted units.
- e) Paper towel dispensers and a bin for used paper towels must be provided in every wash area. The use of air driers is not permitted in food production areas.
- f) Advisory signs must be clearly displayed in all toilet areas indicating that hands must be washed after the use of the facilities. The signs must also instruct on how to wash hands correctly.

5R20. Ensure that at least one toilet and one hand basin is available for every 15 males and 10 females in the male and female facilities respectively.

6. Performance Criteria



6. Performance Criteria

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Foreword & Layout

The criteria contained in Sections 3 – 5 of this Standard are designed to ensure best practice in the rearing of point-of-lay pullets and in the production and packing of table eggs. These criteria, while specifically grouped according to traceability, food safety, hygiene, health and safety and welfare, etc., have an overarching sustainability relevance as defined in Section 1. However, the Performance Criteria in this section (Section 6) must also be addressed by the Participants in accordance with the Scheme Regulations 2.5.1 (classification of Critical and General criteria) and 2.6 (Recommendations) criteria.

This section sets out the specific criteria under which data relevant to the Participant's performance must be provided. These are numbered as a), b), c), etc. and it is a condition of participation that information on these criteria (as applicable to the enterprise) is provided to the auditor.

All Participants must be fully aware of the criteria for their enterprise as set out in this Standard. This includes the Introduction (Section 1), Scheme Regulations (Section 2), the Rearer Criteria (Section 3), or the Egg Producer Criteria (Section 4), or the Packing Centre Criteria (Section 5), and the Performance Criteria (Section 6) and the relevant Appendices (Section 7) which offer further information and clarification on various aspects of the applicable criteria.

6.1 Rearing Organisations and Packing Centres - Origin Green

- a) Participation in Bord Bia's Origin Green programme to include:
- b) A documented commitment at senior management level and throughout the organisation to deliver continuous improvement in performance over time.
- c) The identification and documentation of targets in the following areas:
 - i. Raw material sourcing (at least one target);
 - ii. Resource efficiency (at least two targets);
 - iii. Social sustainability (at least one target).
- d) The submission of a written progress report on an annual basis.

6.2 Packing Centres Records (Monthly Where Possible)

- a) Document energy usages for the following:
 - i. Electricity usage for the Packing Process and related operations (e.g. handling, laboratory, refrigeration, lighting);
 - ii. Fuels used for heating premises / facilities;
 - iii. The fuel usage for vehicles in collection and delivery;
 - iv. The mileages incurred in collection and delivery.
- b) Maintain records for eggs for the following:
 - i. Quantities of eggs (kg) of the various sizes sold;
 - ii. Quantities of packaging (kg) used in the packaging of eggs.
- c) Maintain records for packaging and inks for the following
 - i. Quantities of packaging (kg) disposed of (unusable);
 - ii. Quantities of packaging (kg) recycled;
 - iii. Percentage of packaging that is sourced from sustainable sources;
 - iv. Quantity of ink (kg or litres) used in printing.
- d) Document the volumes of water usage per month.
- e) Maintain records of the effluent COD and BOD averages for the egg packing process.
- f) Document the quantity of refrigerant gas used for replacement / top-up in egg storage facilities.

6.3 Egg Producer - Records

Note: These records relate to the current flock.

- a) Record the number and average weight of the pullets placed and date of placement (see Rearer documentation).
- b) Maintain a monthly record and an overall total of the feeds fed during the life of the flock.
- c) Maintain a record of the following for each flock:
 - i. Total quantity and type of the litter used;
 - ii. Total quantity of chemicals used on the farm;
 - iii. Quantity of rodenticides (quantity, brand);
 - iv. Quantity of animal remedies used (product type, quantity).
- d) Record the following in relation to manure:
 - i. Quantity of manure stored;
 - ii. Period of storage (days);
 - iii. Spreading dates (where relevant);
 - iv. Application methods (where relevant) (see also Appendix 7.18).
- e) Create a summary cumulative record of the eggs collected for the flock (see also 4.11.k).
- f) Maintain a record of energy use per month.
- g) Maintain records of mortality and depopulation as follows:
 - i. Mortality x week.
- h) Maintain records for depopulation as follows:
 - i. Average weight of spent hens;
 - ii. Number of spent hens;
 - iii. Age at slaughter;
 - iv. Distance to abattoir.

6.4 Rearer – Records

Note: These records relate to the current flock.

- a) Maintain a monthly record and an overall total of the feeds fed during the life of the crop.
- b) Maintain a record of the following for each crop:
 - i. Total quantity and type of the litter used;
 - ii. Total quantity of chemicals used on the farm;
 - iii. Total quantity of rodenticides (quantity, brand);
 - iv. Total quantity of animal remedies used (product type, quantity).

- c) Record the following in relation to manure:
 - i. Quantity of manure stored;
 - ii. Period of storage (days);
 - iii. Spreading dates (where relevant);
 - iv. Application methods (where relevant) (see also Appendix 7.18).
- d) Maintain a record of energy use per month:
 - i. Electricity in heating and ventilation;
 - ii. Gas / oil or other fuel used in heating.
- e) Slaughter data (total weight of carcasses x age) where relevant
- f) Overall production of eggs (ideally by size, or by weight) where relevant.

6.5 All Farm Participants – Measures to Consider

- 6.5 R1 Obtain and understand relevant to up to date technical information through farming publications, membership of a farming union, participation in a formal discussion group, attendance at events of interest to farming, attendance at animal health information meetings, attendance at co-op advisory meetings, etc.
- 6.5 R2 Establish and maintain access to qualified advisors.
- 6.5 R3 Conduct an on-going review of the operation of the farm to identify opportunities for improvement (e.g. participation in industry initiatives), and to accommodate future developments in conjunction with a qualified advisor.
- 6.5 R4 Participate in existing environmental development / protection scheme(s).
- 6.5 R5 Assess and undertake actions to ensure areas of existing habitats i.e. areas that are undisturbed by daily farming practices (e.g. woodland, glens, scrub areas, hedges, field margins, ponds, water courses, ditches, etc.) are responsibly maintained and enhanced.
- 6.5 R6 Addition / removal of hedgerows, tree planting, etc.
- 6.5 R7 Review water consumption in the house and develop procedures to minimise water use.
- 6.5 R8 Identify and monitor of potential sources of water loss and monitor these (water supply pipes; leaks from taps, drinkers, nozzles; etc.).
- 6.5 R9 Collect rainwater for use in yard / house washing.
- 6.5 R10 Identify the ways in which the farm / farm personnel contribute to local community.
- 6.5 R11 Review heating options and consider using more efficient heating systems.
- 6.5 R12 Review the ventilation systems and consider measures to recover heat from the ventilation process.
- 6.5 R13 Conducting an evaluation of the energy consumption of equipment (e.g. motors), installations (e.g. heating systems) and buildings and identify the possible advantages from implementing upgrades to these.

6.5 R14 Develop other energy efficient measures or strategies (e.g. improving insulation, minimising heat losses through heat leakage).

6.6 Free Range – Records and Measures to Consider

Note: These records relate to the current flock.

- a) Maintain a record of:
 - i. The estimated time spent by the birds outdoors:
 - ii. The estimated % of birds that avail of the outdoors.
- b) Carry out soil testing for pH, P and K at least every 5 years and maintain the test data.

6.6 R1 Take steps to ensure that pH balance and fertility levels are maintained at optimum levels.

6.6 R2 Monitor field conditions and take appropriate action to minimise soil erosion / poaching or compaction.

6.6 R3 Adopt range management techniques that could minimise risk of parasites.

6.6 R4 Use crop biocide application methods that ensure that field margins, hedgerows, watercourses, wildlife corridors and farm tracks are not inadvertently treated during applications.

6.6 R5 Incorporate clover into grassland swards where possible to aid nitrogen (N) fixation and reduce the need for chemical N.

6.6 R6 Exclude birds from access to drains / watercourses.

6.6 R7 Exclude birds from areas subject to poaching.

7. Appendices



Appendix 7.1 Reference Information

Cautionary Notice:

All legislation presented here and elsewhere in this Standard is to be taken on an “as amended” basis. This means that amendments may have been made to the legislation referenced.

This list of legislation is not exhaustive for rearing, egg production or egg packing. Please consult DAFM or FSAI (or equivalent) for further assistance on this.

Bord Bia:

- Origin Green programme: <http://www.origingreen.ie>

Husbandry / Animal Welfare:

- European Communities (Live Poultry & Hatching Eggs) Regulations 1992 (Council Directive (EC) 90/539).
- European Communities (Live Poultry & Hatching Eggs) (Amendment) Regulations 1995 (S.I. No. 45 of 1995) and Council Directive (EC) 120/1993.
- Council Directive (EC) 74/1999, laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens. Amended by Council Regulation (EC) 806 / 2003. Derogated by Decision (EC) 433/2004.
- Commission Directive (EC) 4/2002 adapted by Commission Directive (EC) 83/2006.
- Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport.
- EC (Protection of Animals During Transport) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No 267 of 2006).
- Commission Regulation (EC) 589/2008.
- European Communities (Welfare of Farmed Animals) Regulations (S.I. No 311 of 2010).
- For organic production, Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007. Comm Reg (EC) 889/2008.

Animal Remedies:

- E.C. Animal Remedies (No. 2) regulations 2007. S.I. No. 786 of 2007.

Disease / Salmonella Control:

- Council Regulation (EC) 2160/2003 on the monitoring and control of Salmonella.
 - Commission Regulation (EC) 1168/2006 implementing Regulation (EC) 2160/2003.
 - EC (Control of Salmonella in Laying Flocks of Domestic Fowl) Regulations. S.I. No 247/2008.
 - EC 66/1992 Community Measures for the Control of Newcastle Disease.
 - EC 94/2005 Community Measures for the Control of Avian Influenza.
-

Food Law / Food Safety / Food and Feed Hygiene:

- Regulation (EC) 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council, laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.
- Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs.
- European Communities (Food and Feed Hygiene) Regulations 2005 (S.I. 432 of 2009). Amended by European Communities (Food and Feed Hygiene) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 (S.I. No 387 of 2006) and European Communities (Food and Feed Hygiene) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No 56 of 2007).
- Regulation (EC)1935/2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food.
- European Communities (Drinking Water) (No.2) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 122 of 2014).

Eggs – Hygiene and Storage:

- Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.

Eggs – Marketing Standards:

- Council Regulation (EC) 1308/2013, establishing a common organisation of agricultural markets and on specific provisions in agricultural products.
- Commission Regulation (EC) 589/2008, laying down details as regards marketing standards for eggs.

Marking of Eggs / Labelling, Presentation and Advertising of Foodstuffs:

- Directive (EC) 13/2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs.
- Directive (EU) 1169 2011 on the provision of food information to consumers

Health and Safety:

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Regulations 2005 (S.I. 44 of 1993).

Approved Feed Suppliers:

- The current list of Bord Bia approved feed suppliers can be accessed on www.BordBia.ie/FQAS Approved List
-

Other References:

- Data Protection Amendment Act 2003 Act
- Directive (EC) 4/2002 on the registration of establishments keeping laying hens, covered by Council Directive (EC) 74/1999.
- List of Approved Disinfectants. June 1993 Disease of Animals (Disinfectants) Order, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).
- List of Approved Laboratories - Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).
- Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 Concerning the Making Available on the Market and use Of Biocidal Products as amended by Regulation (EU) No 334/2014.
- S.I. No. 581 Of 2013 European Communities (Pesticide Residues) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2013.
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as outlined by Codex Alimentarius (1997 3rd edition).
- For all ISO Standards, refer to the International Standards Organisation <http://www.iso.org/iso/home.html>
- For Codex Alimentarius, refer to the Codex Alimentarius Commission <http://www.codexalimentarius.org>
- PAS 2050: 2008 Specification for the assessment of the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions of goods and services. Available from <http://www.bsigroup.com>
- S.I. No. 427 of 2013, European Union (Biocidal Products) Regulations 2013.
- Labour Court; Joint Labour Committee Notice AGRI 2010 No. 3.

Guidelines for Best Practice:

- Code of Good Agriculture Practice to Protect Water from Pollution by Nitrates - Departments of Agriculture and Environment July 1996 (S.I. 378 2006).
- DAFM publication: Biosecurity Information for Registered Poultry Flock Owners - published on the DAFM website: www.agriculture.gov.ie/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrol
- DAFM list of approved disinfectants – published on the DAFM website: www.agriculture.gov.ie/animalhealthwelfare/diseasecontrol
- DAFM guidelines on Storing and Using Plant Protection and Biocidal Products.
- Responsible use of rodenticides CRRU Code – see www.crru.ie/best-practice
- FSAI:
 - Guidance Note No. 11. Assessment of HACCP Compliance.
 - GN 10 recall and traceability
 - FAQ egg washing
- EPA: drinking water advice note 14 Borehole construction and wellhead protection www.epa.ie

Downloading Documents:

- Documents relating to the SEAS (Standard, templates, other information relevant to the scheme, etc.) can be downloaded from the Bord Bia website the at www.bordbia.ie/SEAS
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Appendix 7.2 Farmer Declaration Form

Note:

The Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme is a voluntary Scheme. You will be required to sign a declaration form such as this in the presence of the auditor during the farm audit.

Please complete in block capitals:

Flock Owner Name: _____

(Person in whose name the flock is registered with the competent authority where applicable)

Address: _____

Address for Correspondence: _____

(If different to above)

Contact Numbers: Land _____ Mobile _____

Email address: _____

Declaration:

- I declare that compound feeds for poultry will not be fed to other species and I undertake to maintain my feedstuff storage facilities in a manner that prevents cross-contamination from feeding stuffs intended for other species on the farm.
- I have access to or have seen the Requirements for Members (ISO17065) document and agree to the conditions therein.
- I agree to allow farm inspectors and auditors access to my farm during normal business hours and to take feed samples for test purposes.
- I undertake to abide by the conditions applicable to Rearers and Egg Producers as laid down in the Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Standard.
- I acknowledge having received a copy of this Standard and the accompanying documentation.
- I agree to provide full and accurate details of my farming practices that relate to the Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme.
- I declare I am in compliance with the relevant statutory requirements with regard to the operation of my farm.
- I understand that my participation in the Scheme is a demonstration of my commitment to achieving the highest standards in the production of quality point-of-lay birds and eggs and my responsibilities in the food chain.
- I agree to permit my name and Certification Status to be published on the Bord Bia Register / Database.

House / Flock Details

DAFM ID	House No.

Rearer

House Number / ID	Bird Places	Comment

Egg Producer

House Number / ID	Bird Places	Production System (C- Enriched Cage, B – Barn, F – Free Range, O – Organic)

Signed	X
Position	
Date	

Appendix 7.3 Food Safety Management Plan

Background Information

Food Safety Management (FSM) is essential to any food producing system and is normally implemented based on the principles of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP¹) system. FSM is a support system for the safe production of food. When adequately developed and efficiently implemented it provides systematic control of biological, chemical and physical hazards at key stages of production. It is a strategy for prevention rather than detection of safety problems. Food Safety Management requires a farm / packing centre to have a coherent hygiene system in place. It will also address inputs, decision points and outputs. A FSM Plan is unique to each farm or packing centre and must be compiled by a farm / packing centre team who would agree a flow diagram for the process.

A Food Safety Management (FSM) plan shows how product / process safety is ensured through control and prevention. At a minimum the FSM includes:

- A detailed description of the products and process steps (e.g. a flow diagram showing all the steps of each process),
- A detailed description of the hazards (chemical, microbiological and physical / foreign bodies) that could arise at each process step and the risks that these represent,
- Identification of Critical Control Points (CCP) in the plan,
- Definition of the limits that must be met to ensure control of each CCP,
- The monitoring required to ensure that control is maintained at each CCP,
- The corrective action to be taken if a non-conformance occurs for each CCP,
- Identification of the responsibilities, procedures and records applicable for each CCP, and
- Annual verification / testing of the FSM plan to ensure that it is effective.

The implementation of hygiene barriers, bio-security measures and personnel hygiene practices at all levels of production underpin the FSM plan.

An illustrative FSM plan for producers is given below. However, each Producer is advised to seek qualified assistance in creating a FSM plan for his/her own enterprise.

¹ Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as outlined by Codex Alimentarius (1997 3rd edition)

Illustrative Egg Producer Food Safety Management Plan

(Contingent on Compliance with Hygiene and Disease control, Flock Welfare, Housing and Environment, with Verification to be carried out as part of the On-Farm audit)

Step	Control Point No.	Hazard	Preventative Measure	Limits	Monitoring	Corrective Action	Doc. Ref.
Poultry sourcing	CP 1	Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms	Obtain poultry from sources that are certified as Salmonella free.	Sourced birds must be certified Salmonella free	See Salmonella controls	Participate in slaughter policy out and obtain fresh birds from a certified source	Hatchery / Import records; Rearer records
	CP 2	Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms Veterinary drug residues and other chemical contaminants e.g. heavy metals, dioxins	Purchase feed from a Bord Bia approved supplier. Segregate medicated feed	Absence of Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms. Absence of contaminants at unsafe and / or illegal levels	Check feed suppliers current certification on Bord Bia website	Reject delivery. Source alternative supply. Clean bins / lines	Delivery doc. Storage Record
Feed sourcing and storage	CP 3	Pathogenic bacteria of faecal origin	Use a clean supply of potable water and use covered storage	Absence of index bacteria (E coli and Enterococci in 100ml) as independently tested	Annual testing as specified.	Upgrade supply (own source) and retest. Inform Irish Water (public source) and seek new test results from Irish Water to confirm safety. Inform Packing Centre	Test report

Illustrative Rearer Food Safety Management Plan

(Contingent on Compliance with Hygiene and Disease control, Flock Welfare, Housing and Environment, with Verification to be carried out as part of the On-Farm audit)

Step	Control Point No.	Hazard	Preventative Measure	Limits	Monitoring	Corrective Action	Doc. Ref.
Chick Sourcing	CP 1	Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms or avian disease microorganisms	Chicks from certified Hatcheries	Certified free of Salmonella and from non-vaccinated breeding stock	Refer to bird sourcing criteria	Notify the Competent Authority and Bord Bia	Hatchery Records /
House Status	CP 2	Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms	Clean, Disinfect, Disinfect and independent certification of the effectiveness of the THP	Previous flock Salmonella free and effective THP	Visual evaluate and sampling (swabbing after outbreak)	Prevent re-stocking. Review Implementation of Hygiene Programme	House Prep Record
Input: Feed	CP 3	Salmonella in feed	Feed from Bord Bia approved dedicated Transport	Feed Heat Treated	Refer to criteria for feed	Reject Source New Supply	Delivery Dockets
Input: Water	CP 4	E coli or Enterococci in water	Clean Supply stored in protected tanks	Potable Water as tested	Refer to criteria on water testing	Upgrade supply or treatment system	Test Report
Lorry / Modules	CP 5	Salmonella and other zoonotic pathogenic microorganisms. Chemical contaminants e.g. heavy metals, dioxins	Clean & Disinfected Lorries, modules & crates	Truck and modules are visually clean and dry. Trucks and modules have not previously been in contact with chemical or other contaminants	Checked (visual) by trained responsible person	Reject transport / modules and secure new clean supply vehicle / modules	Records

Appendix 7.4 Farm Sampling and Test Procedures

Introduction

The Bord Bia Sustainable Egg Assurance Standard requires that sampling and testing be carried out for the purpose of demonstrating compliance with the Standard.

All sampling and testing should be carried out in accordance with recognised procedures.

All procedures outlined in this document are clearly identified as Mandatory (i.e. must be complied with) or Guideline only.

7.4.1 Egg Producers

1. Mandatory Sampling / Frequencies Summary

Sample Type	Test ¹	Sampling Frequency	Acceptable Criteria
Faecal	Salmonella	At least every 15 weeks commencing Week 22 – 26.	Salmonella not detected
Dust or Faecal	Salmonella	Every month (except where statutory faecal sampling is done)	Salmonella not detected
Water	E.coli and Enterococci	Per annum, between May 1st and Sept 30th.	E. coli and Enterococci count = absence in 100ml
Feed	A Statement that the Feed Supplier is listed on Bord Bia's approved list of feed mills	Per delivery or for current production	Salmonella not detected
Air	Ammonia	Monthly	< 25 ppm or mg/kg

Notes:

- The specific ISO methods for testing and sampling must be used where available and as specified in the Standard.
- The limits, as set out in the criteria specified in the Standard, apply.

1.2 Sampling Procedures

- **1.2.1 Faecal sampling (Salmonella)**
- **1.2.2 Dust sampling (Salmonella)**
- **1.2.3 Water**
- **1.2.4 Feed**
- **1.2.5 Sampling frequencies**

¹ ISO methods: E. coli (ISO method 9308-1) absence in 100ml, Enterococci (ISO method 7899-2) absence in 100ml, or equivalent validated methods.

1.2.1 Mandatory Statutory Salmonella monitoring of Poultry Houses (based on DAFM regulations).

Sample Type: Cage Flocks: 2 x 150 grams of naturally pooled faeces to be taken from all belts or scrapers in the house after running the manure removal system; in the case of step cage houses without scrapers or belts, 2 x 150 grams of mixed fresh faeces must be collected from 60 different places beneath the cages in the dropping pits.

Barn / Free Range Houses: Two pairs of boot swabs or socks shall be taken, without changing overboots between boot swabs.

Sampling must take place at least every 15 weeks during the laying life of the flock, with the first of these samplings taking place at the age of 22 to 26 weeks.

The results of the analysis of all samples, together with the date and place of sampling and identification details of the sampled flock, must be kept at the farm for 3 years. DAFM officials will inspect the results records from time to time.

Samples must be dispatched to a laboratory accredited under ISO 17025 for the test on the day of collection for testing. Samples should be taken on the first 3 days of the week to ensure same day dispatch and analysis as soon as possible thereafter. Avoid taking samples at the weekend.

1.2.2 Dust Sampling

Sample type: Composite dust sample, 25 grams.

To meet the requirements of this Standard, sampling must be done monthly, either as a composite dust sample or faecal swab. However, where the pooled faecal sample (as required by the legislation and described above) is due, it (the faecal sample) alone will suffice.

Sampling – general guideline:

- Wash and dry hands on arrival at farm.
 - Record name, date, time and vehicle registration number in visitors' book.
 - Fill in details, i.e. name, address of farmer, house code, time and date and samplers name on the label of the sealed sterile sample bag to be used in each poultry house.
 - Change into protective clothing (disposable) i.e. coat, boots, headgear, gloves before entering the poultry house.
 - After entering the poultry house, put on sterile disposable gloves.
 - Open sealed sterile bag and collect by gloved hand, sample types as described above. Seal the bag before leaving the house. Remove the gloves and dispose in facility provided.
 - Record details in duplicate sampling book i.e. name of farm, address, type of sample and number, size and age of flock, house code, date and time of sample and signature.
 - Attach by stapling one copy to sample bag at sealed edge and retain duplicate in book for reference.
 - Remove protective clothing and dispose in facility provided.
 - When sampling is completed put all sample bags with attached forms into separate plastic self-sealing bag. Attach a label along the sealed edge and staple in 2 – 3 locations. Sign initials and date to this label, so that tampering is self-evident.
 - Store safely in tamperproof packaging and dispatch to an approved laboratory on the day of collection in a manner that ensures the integrity of the sample is protected.
 - Follow the above procedures for sampling each poultry house.
-

1.2.3 Mandatory Water Sampling²

Purpose:	To monitor E. coli and Enterococci levels in drinking water / water used on the farm.
Sample Type:	Sterile water sample (100 ml)
Sample frequency:	Yearly minimum, between May 1st and September 30th
Sampling frequency:	Minimum yearly, except in the case of high levels of contamination, when the cause should be established and corrective action taken. The supply should be re-sampled within a month and repeated until satisfactory results are obtained.

Notify the Packing Centre and the local authority if the 3rd consecutive sample results are above quality limit.

Use a sterile glass or polypropylene bottle with tamper evident sealing. If Chlorine treatment is used on the water supply add a neutraliser to the bottle e.g. sodium azide.

Water sampling guideline

- Samples should be rotated between taps and storage tanks / outlets at production house / site / Packing Centre site.
- The bottles should not be opened until required for filling with the water.
- Bottles should not be previously rinsed out before taking the sample.
- In collecting the sample, the bottle should be held near its base with one hand and with the other the cap should be loosened. On no account must the stopper be laid down or allowed to touch anything. Remove cap without touching the rim or its internal surfaces.
- Fill bottles completely. Recap.
- Label the bottle with the name and address of the owner, the house identification code, source of supply, date and name of sampler. Specify test requirements.
- Place the bottle in suitably secure packaging supplied by laboratory and seal using tamper evident seal. Seal should be initialled and sealed.
- Transport to laboratory, hold the temperature below 4°C during a maximum transport time of 6 hours.
- If results are required for legal purposes maintain chain of custody.

Sampling from taps guideline

- Select a tap that is fed from the service mains and not from a cistern or holding tank.
- When a sample of mains water is to be taken from tap, any external fittings, such as an anti-splash nozzle or rubber tube should be removed.
- The outside and inside of the tap should be carefully cleaned with particular attention to removal of collections of grease inside the nozzle. The tap should then be turned on full and the water allowed to run to waste for two to three minutes in order to flush the interior of the nozzle and to discharge stagnant water in the service pipe.
- After water run off turn off the tap, dry the outer surface with a clean cloth.
- Sterilise the tap either by a blowlamp, or by soaking a piece of cotton wool in methylated spirit, igniting and holding with a pair of tongs close to the nozzle.

² The sampling must be done independently (e.g. by a Field Officer) and the analysis by a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 for testing against these specific organisms

- Allow the tap to cool by allowing water to run to waste for a few seconds. Fill the sample bottle from a gentle stream of water, taking care to avoid splashing. Seal label and transfer to laboratory for testing as described under general above.

1.2.4 Feed Sampling Guideline

Sample Type: Composite meal sample (500 grams)

Sample frequency: One per delivery

Take a meal sample (500g) from the feed compartment of the truck (e.g. from the discharge).

1.2.5 Environment Sampling Guideline

Sample Type: Ammonia (by specialised test)

Sample frequency: Monthly

The Producer must ensure that the levels of Ammonia in the house are monitored monthly using recognised monitoring equipment (such as Draeger sampler and analysis tubes). The result of the test must be entered in the house Management Checklist.

7.4.2 Rearers

A Salmonella test must be carried out on birds during the rearing period as follows:

- On day of delivery of the chicks to the holding.
 - Samples shall be taken from the internal linings of the boxes in which the chicks were delivered to the holding from the hatchery, with a minimum of one box-liner being sampled for every 500 chicks delivered and each sample to consist of at least one centimetre square from each liner, and
 - Samples shall be taken of the carcasses of all dead chicks, up to a maximum of 60, found dead on arrival on the day of the delivery to the holding.
- At 4 weeks of age (dust samples).
- At 8 weeks of age (dust samples).
- Within 2 weeks of movement to laying phase / laying unit (prior to 1st thinning)³.
 - Pooled faecal samples, made up of separate samples of fresh faeces each weighing not less than one gram taken at random from a number of sites in the building in which the birds are kept, shall be collected.
 - The number of sites from which separate faeces samples are to be taken in order to make pooled samples shall be as follows:

Number of birds kept in a building	Number of faeces samples to be taken in the building or group of buildings
1 – 24	Number equal to number of birds, up to a maximum of 20
25 – 29	20
30 – 39	25
40 – 49	30
50 – 59	35
60 – 89	40
90 – 199	50
200 – 499	55
500 or more	60

³ This must be done within an adequate period that ensures a negative result is available to the rearer before thinning or depopulation occurs.

Appendix 7.5 Supply and Sale of Animal Remedies

Marketing Authorisation

Animal remedies may not be placed on the market prior to the granting of marketing authorisation. The types of authorisation acceptable are as follows:

1. VPA (Veterinary Product Authorisation or equivalent) number. The VPA number is given to the product by the Health Products Regulatory Authority (or equivalent) when the product is approved for sale and supply in Ireland.
2. TSA (Therapeutic Substances Act) number. The TSA number was given to the vaccine product by the Department of Agriculture when they were originally approved. This number will be replaced by the VPA as the products come up for review in the future.
3. EMA (European Medicines Agency). The EMA assigns a number to the product when the product is approved for sale and supply in Europe. However, a VPA (or equivalent) number should also be available for the product when sold in Ireland.

Buying Animal Remedies Generally

Note: (Reproduced from the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine (DAFM) website, October 2015)

Where can I buy animal remedies?

This depends on the sales category (route of supply) given to the product when it was licensed:

- If it is a 'Licensed Merchant' (LM) product, you can buy it from any Licensed Merchant outlet, from a pharmacy (which stocks animal remedies) or from the vet who looks after your animals - you do not need a prescription for such products.
- If it is a 'Pharmacy Only' (PS) or 'Prescription Only Exempt' (POM(E)) product, you can buy it from a pharmacy or from the vet who looks after your animals - you do not need a prescription for such products.
- If it is a 'Prescription Only' (POM) product, you first have to have a written prescription for the product from the vet who looks after your animals and you are then free to purchase the medicine from that vet, from a pharmacy or, for certain 'POM' products, from a Licensed Merchant's outlet. However, your vet may issue a prescription by electronic means where he / she:
 - (i) Supplies an animal remedy at the same time as he or she prescribes and an animal remedy.
 - (ii) Has obtained your agreement or the agreement of the person in charge of the animal to be treated.
 - (iii) Endorses the veterinary prescription with the word "dispensed" and
 - (iv) Signs the prescription electronically at the time of prescribing.

How will I know the sales category of an animal remedy?

Licence holders are required to show the route of supply (in the above format) on the labelling and associated packaging. A product without this information on the label is likely to be not licensed for the Irish market; if you are supplied with such an incorrectly labelled product, you should contact your local District Veterinary Office as possession of such a product may be an offence.

Can I buy animal remedies from salespersons calling to my farm?

Salespersons are not allowed to call to farms for the purpose of selling and supplying animal remedies. However, certain suppliers have licences under which their salespersons are allowed to call to farms to take orders for 'non-POM' animal remedies which are supplied subsequently through a separate delivery service. These salespersons are required to carry a copy of their 'solicit order' licence and farmers should ask to see a copy of the licence.

Can I buy animal remedies from a mail order catalogue?

Yes, but only if the seller is authorised to do so. A limited number of suppliers are licensed to sell 'non-POM' animal remedies by mail order. Before buying from any such supplier, you should look for confirmation that the seller has a mail order licence or, if in any doubt, you should contact DAFM.

Can I buy animal remedies on the internet?

In general, farmers should be very careful about buying medicines on the internet because of the risk of buying unauthorised products. DAFM licenses suitable Irish-based internet sites to sell 'non - POM' animal remedies. Such sites are required to display a DAFM authorisation reference. If in any doubt about a particular site, you should contact DAFM.

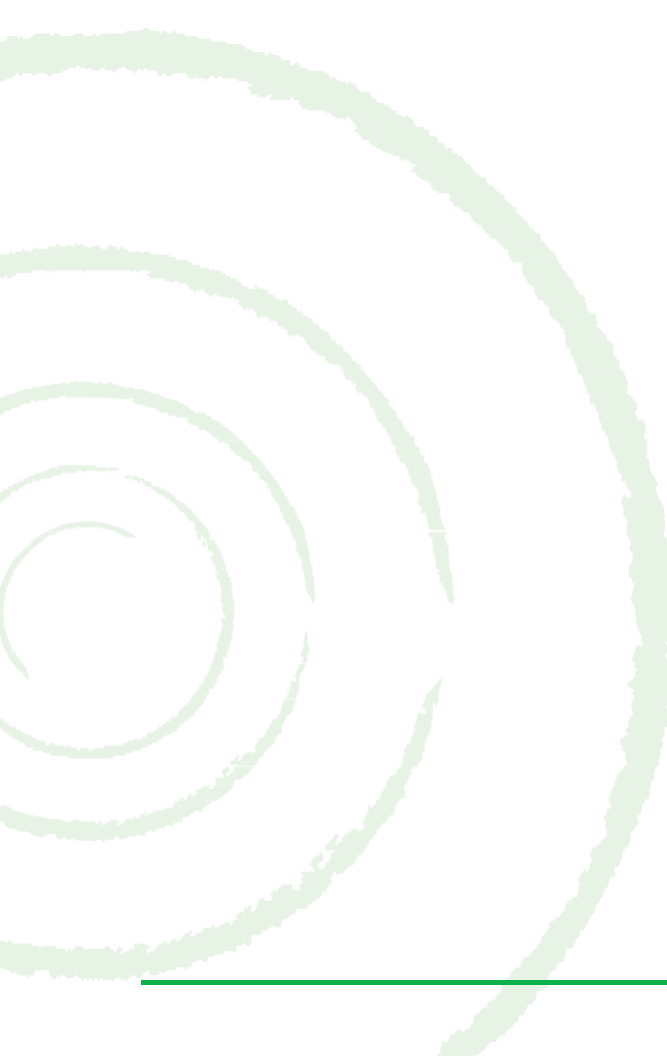
Appendix 7.6 Animal Remedy Storage

Note

This is a recommendation for the safe storage of animal remedies. It is not intended as a definitive guide to the safe handling and storage of animal remedies and does not replace any applicable statutory requirement.

Recommendation for the safe storage of animal remedies

- The remedies / medicine store should be of a sufficient size and strength to hold all animal remedies, whether unopened or partially used that may be in stock at any one time.
- Only animal remedies recommended to be stored at room temperature should be kept in the medicine store.
- The remedies / medicine store should be located indoors and should be out of reach of children.
- The store should be kept locked at all times. The key should be kept in a safe location. This location should be made known to all relief farm workers.
- The store should contain a clear warning label.
- The store should not be located in direct sunlight or adjacent to any source of heat or cold.
- All spillages should be removed immediately from the store and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers recommendations.



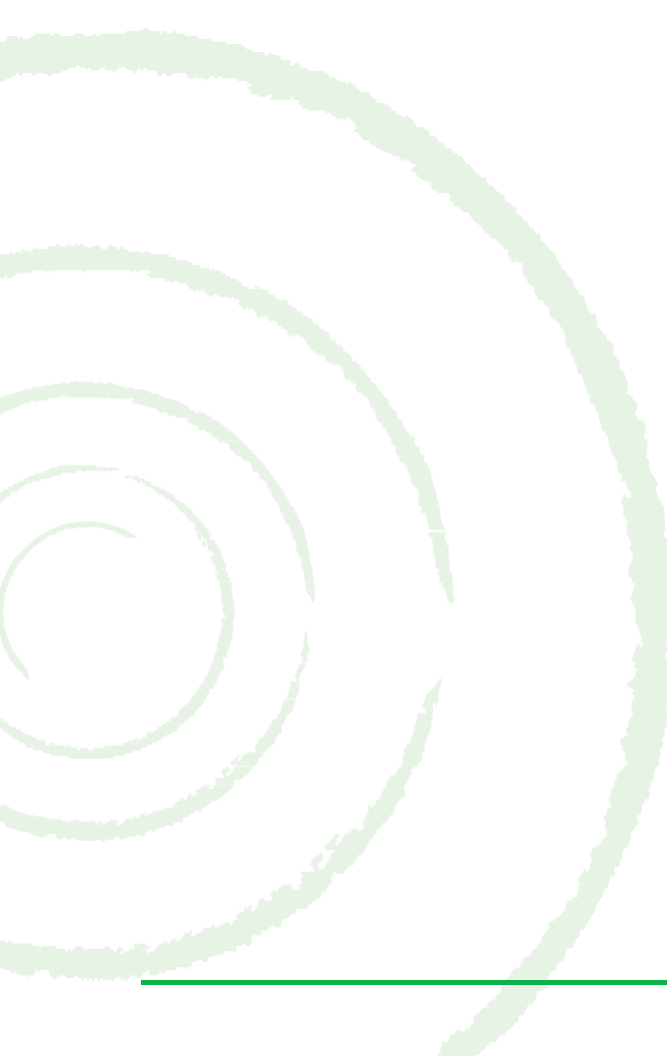
Appendix 7.9 Animal Health & Welfare Plan

Areas to be addressed by the Producer's Health and Welfare plan and supporting documentation must include the following at a minimum. Documented details as required under all the headings below must be maintained.

The Producer, in co-operation with the veterinarian and Field Officer, must have developed documented policies with regard to each of the following and must have records supporting the implementation of the policies:

- Training of staff
- Humane culling
- Beak trimming (Rearing only)
- Management practices to deal with various conditions (e.g. aggression)
- Group disease control programme
- Use of remedies (where used)
- Sourcing of chemicals
- Management of visitors
- Control of catching teams

Note: See also the relevant criteria in the Standard for those aspects which are required to be checked.



Appendix 7.10 Heat Stress Avoidance

The following issues need to be considered in preventing heat stress in birds.

High Risk Times

- May to September
- During catching and while crated from May to September
- During first catch all year round

Settings and Stocking densities

- Set the computer maximum temperature alarm settings to 3oC above house set temperature
- Set the fail-safe thermostat alarm settings to 4oC above house set temperature
- Confer with processor regarding stocking densities for summer months
- Check that the ventilation equipment is capable of operating at full capacity for prolonged periods

During hot periods

- Observe the birds more frequently for signs of heat stress and take any necessary action
- Remove the covers from the auxiliary fans and set the fan thermostats to 2oC above the house set temperature
- Monitor the weather forecasts for temperature extremes and plan accordingly
- On very hot days, activate the auxiliary fans in advance of the thermostat settings to get ahead of temperature climb
- Ensure that the water supply is adequate to meet the extra demand

During Catching and especially the first catch

- Observe the birds throughout the catching and loading process for signs of stress
- Monitor the house temperatures and take appropriate corrective action
- Keep doors closed so as to ensure even airflow throughout the house
- Stop catching where heat stress symptoms are observed and set all fans to maximum to reduce temperatures until the problem is addressed

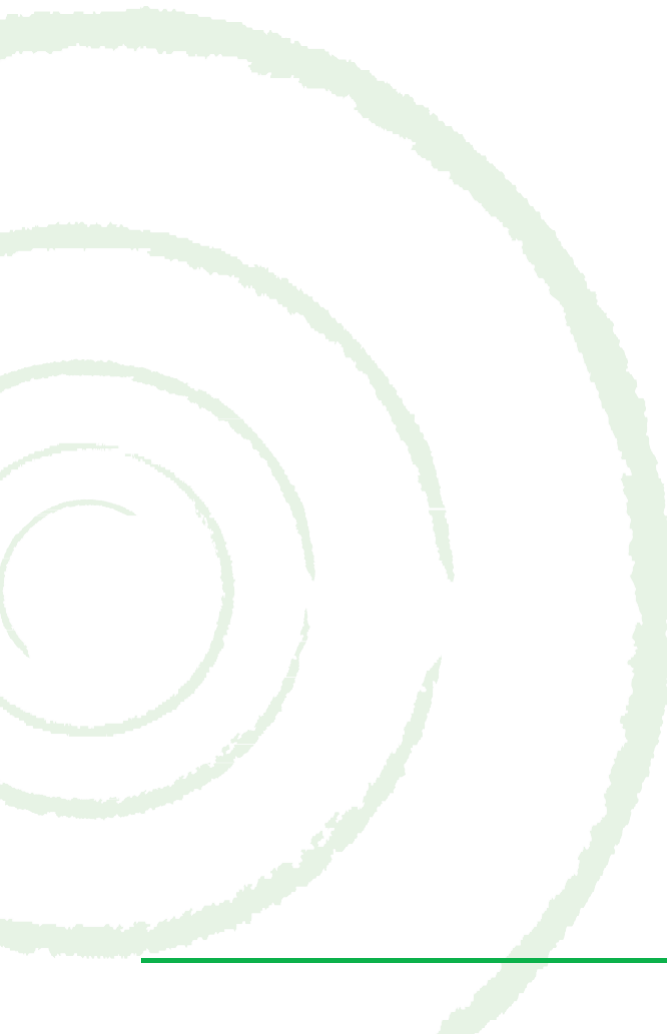
Catching during hot weather

- Reduce bird numbers per crate
 - Ensure that trailers that are loaded are dispatched immediately
 - Through good planning, avoid catching at the hottest times of the day
-

Appendix 7.11 Poultry Transport

Prior to loading spent hens for transport, the farmer must establish that the following are in place for all shipments of live poultry:

- The transporter is authorised or licensed.
- Transport crates and containers have been well cleaned and disinfected before catching or loading.
- Bird transport to slaughterhouse will be done directly i.e. without calling at other poultry sites.
- Truck drivers are correctly trained and/or informed in a manner that ensures that they understand the importance of personal hygiene and are aware of the means by which infection can be spread on hands, clothing and equipment.
- Truck wheels are spray-disinfected at the site access point before entering the site and before leaving it.
- Appropriate records and official documents are fully completed and accompany the birds to their destination. This is essential to maintain the traceability system along the food chain.



Appendix 7.12 Chemical Handling

Note:

This is a recommendation for the safe handling of chemicals. It is not intended as a definitive guide to the safe handling of chemicals and does not replace any applicable statutory requirement.

The term chemicals used here includes the following: biocides (e.g. rodenticides, disinfectants, insecticides), detergents (for washing), herbicides, weed-killers, crop pest control / disease control products.

Producers should:

- Purchase only approved chemicals.
- Store in designated storage facilities, which are labelled and locked, and well away from food.
- Not transfer chemicals to other storage containers, especially soft drinks, bottles or food containers.
- Maintain only minimum stocks of chemicals (to avoid out of date chemicals).
- Read the label before opening the chemical and observe all safety precautions. Use chemicals in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- Wear the correct personal protection equipment for the chemical and operation involved.
- Have a supply of clean water for washing off splashes.
- Wash hands and exposed skin before eating or drinking and shower down after the job is complete.
- Thoroughly rinse all equipment used, and store safely.
- Keep a record of all chemicals purchased, as well as when, where, and by whom they were used.
- Dispose of unused chemicals in a safe manner and so as not to harm the environment.

Below is a sample Chemical Use record illustrating its use.



Appendix 7.13 House Management Checklist

House Identification Number	
Week Ending	
Age of Birds / Date housed	
Number Birds	
Meal Batch Number	
Water Test Next Due	

Checks	Check Frequency	Result / Comment
Water Supply and Drinkers	Daily	
Water Meter Reading	Daily	
Feeding System	Daily	
Flock Mortality	Daily	
Culling (Number of birds)	Daily	
Ventilation	Daily	
Lighting (operating as per programme)	Daily	
House Temperature Max	Daily	
House Temperature Min	Daily	
Litter quality	Daily	
Flock Appearance	Daily	
Egg Store Temperature Max	Daily	
Egg Store Temperature Min	Daily	
Clean and Tidy Egg Store	Weekly	
Foot Dips (Correct Strength)	Weekly	
Sweep Floors	Weekly	
Dust Cages	Weekly	
Check External Bait Points	Weekly	
Check Internal Bait Points	Weekly	
Inspect for Red Mite	Weekly	
Check Alarm Operation	Weekly	
Maintenance Check	Weekly	
Fly Monitoring	Weekly	
Belt Inspection (if appropriate)	Weekly	
Generator Operation (where installed)	Weekly	
Average Feather Loss Score	Monthly	Head/Neck Back/Vent

Corrective Actions Required	Date Completed

Feather Scoring Guidelines¹

Assess and score 5 birds in each of 10 different areas of the house and / or range.

Visually assess the head / neck area and also the back / vent area of the bird without handling the bird.

Scoring feather loss

- 0 =** No / Minimal Feather Loss: No bare skin visible and only single feathers missing.
- 1 =** Slight Feather Loss: Damaged feathers or 2 or more adjacent feathers missing resulting in visible bare skin but the bare patches / areas are not greater than 5cm in any dimension.
- 2 =** Significant Feather Loss: Bare skin visible and the bare patches are greater than >5cm in any dimension.

¹ Based on the University of Bristol FeatherWel guidelines: www.featherwel.org

Appendix 7.14 Terminal Hygiene Programme

(For the Cleaning and Disinfection of Poultry Houses)

A comprehensive cleaning and disinfection programme must be documented and in operation and recorded. The procedures outlined hereunder sets out the minimum criteria which must be addressed by any programme that the Producer may draw up. This procedure may need to be modified to meet the specific needs of the site.

Terminal Hygiene and Cleaning Procedure

Management

- There must be supervision by management to ensure the procedures are carried out effectively.
- A Terminal Hygiene Checklist must be completed, and signed off, to demonstrate the adequacy of procedures.
- Any visible organic material is a failure and the house must not be restocked.
- In addition, if any salmonella has been found in relation to the previous flock, drag swabs must be taken and, after further cleaning, tested clear of salmonella prior to restocking.

Depopulation

- Depopulate flock and, while the house is still warm, spray for mites and beetles.
- Where there are spent birds to be removed, ensure that they are disposed of to minimise risk of disease.

Dry Clean

- Remove any residual food from the feeding system and bulk feed bins.
- Lift / dismantle and remove all relevant equipment (including portable equipment, feeders, drinkers, nest boxes, slats, etc.) from inside the house for cleaning.
- Remove litter / manure in a covered vehicle from the poultry site.
- Vacuum / blow down all surface dust from ceilings, rafters, edges, water pipes, inlets, fans, switches, egg conveyance equipment, etc.
- Sweep floor thoroughly and remove all remaining debris to a removal vehicle.
- Clean / blow down bulk feed bins.
- Turn off power to all electrical devices.

Washing

- Washing should remove all dirt and debris.
 - Use high-pressure hose nozzle 80-100 bar or 900-1200 PSI. Start work at the back of the house and proceed towards the front of the building and the wash water storage tank.
 - Wash all surfaces (including as relevant ceilings, walls, passageways, steps, platforms, cages, egg rollers, egg conveyors, cross belts, manure pit).
 - Pay particular attention to underside of all equipment.
 - Wash down bulk feed bins.
 - Clean and disinfect the drinking system and the water lines. This is a very necessary procedure in order to avoid transfer of infection from flock to flock via the drinking water system.
 - Drain the header tank and clean to remove any debris.
-

- Fill the tank then with a suitable disinfectant solution.
- Ensure that the disinfectant solution is allowed to fill the drinking system
- Leave the disinfectant solution stand for 2 hours (or as the manufacturer recommends) and then thoroughly flush out the full water system.
- Identify and complete any necessary repairs.
- A visual inspection using a checklist should be carried out after final wash, and before starting the disinfection programme.

Disinfection of House and Equipment¹

- Select a suitable broad-spectrum disinfectant and dilute with clean water and follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Set pressure washer / orchard sprayer at low pressure 10-20 bar or 140-280 PSI and saturate all surfaces for the manufacturer's recommended contact time (usually 1 hour).
- Only return disinfected equipment to a disinfected house.
- Allow all surfaces to dry thoroughly.
- Check working order of all electrical equipment etc.
- Close and secure the house.

Note: Fumigating, misting or fogging is only effective on an airtight house. Wear protective clothing and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

- Afterwards close and secure the house to prevent recontamination.
- Put in place a rodent control and monitoring programme.

Free Range: Additional requirements

- Wash concrete apron / hard-core / stone strip outside the pop-holes.
- Skim topsoil from area adjacent to concrete / hard-core / stone strip. Remove from site, and replace with fresh sand/soil mix and compact down firmly. If time and weather permit, sow grass seed.
- Check and repair perimeter fencing.
- Refill potholes with fresh sand / soil mix.

Additional information

- Ensure that there is a system of safe disposal of containers in place.
- Disposal of rinsate from application equipment and / or surplus spray mix may be done on designated fallow ground and records of such must be maintained.

¹ **In addition to the hygiene & disinfection requirements outlined above the following guidelines with regards to disinfection should be considered:**

- Consider spraying the perimeter of the houses with a suitable insecticide.
- Take into account that disinfectants are effective only on visually clean surfaces.
- Fumigating, misting or fogging is only effective on an airtight house.
- Bear in mind that fumigation with formaldehyde is potentially damaging to health
- Wear protective equipment and clothing and follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- See also SEAS Criteria Chemicals (Rearer sub-section 3.16; Egg Producer sub-section 4.14; Appendix 12, Chemicals Handling)

Appendix 7.15 Poultry Catching

Hygiene and Welfare for Catching Teams for Point of Lay and Spent birds

Background Information

It is in the interest of the farm to promote co-operation and harmony with the catching team. These workers operate in unpleasant conditions, doing repetitive work that does not allow for social interaction.

The Rearer / Producer (as relevant) must ensure efficient loading, good bio-security practices and the maintenance of bird welfare.

Vehicles

- All vehicles and loading equipment must be clean and disinfected before being brought on-site.
- All equipment entering the site must have been washed clean and disinfected (lorries, trailers, forklifts and modules).
- Use the farm disinfectant to spray the wheels of all vehicles before entering the site.
- Disinfect the forklift before leaving site.

Personnel

- Catching teams must undertake a training programme to ensure they are properly trained for the task and understand the requirements.
- All catchers must wear protective clothing and footwear including face masks & gloves.
- All personnel must wash hands thoroughly on arrival.
- Disposable or site dedicated protective overalls, hairnets and footwear must be worn by all.
- Used shoe covers and face masks should be placed in litter bin provided
- Washable overalls should be hung for laundry.
- Consumption of food within the poultry house is prohibited.
- All personnel must use foot dips before entering poultry houses.
- Ensure that no person that is likely to be a carrier of or suffering from a disease likely to be transmitted or that has infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea is permitted to handle birds or to enter the production house.

Operational Issues

- Ensure that the spent hens have been fasting for 12 hours prior to actual slaughter time.
 - Dim the lights in the house and use curtains to reduce natural light at doorways.
 - Move quietly to minimise stress on the flock.
 - Catch birds by the shanks or feet to avoid bruising and broken limbs.
 - Care must be taken to ensure birds are not placed on their backs in crates.
 - Modify stocking densities per module or crate according to temperature conditions.
 - Reduce the house temperature by approximately 20C, one hour prior to catching. This reduces bird movement and will lower bruising.
 - Raise drinker and feeder lines before catching starts.
-

- Catching must not commence until the lights are dimmed and the house is darkened sufficiently for catching to proceed without causing undue stress on the flock.
- Care must be taken when first opening doors, in daylight, not to frighten the birds.
- After catching, lights should be increased to full intensity. Temperature should be raised to approximately 23°C and the birds moved evenly over the house. This will give a more even temperature through the house. The lights and temperature should then be dropped back to their normal level.
- In warm weather stocking densities in crates must be reduced.
- Use side curtains on modules during the winter months.

Recording

- Record catching team personnel details in site visitor record.
-

Appendix 7.16 Emergency Procedure

Guidelines

The priorities for site staff are:

- Maintenance of human life and the avoidance of situations likely to cause injury or harm to staff are paramount.
- Flock safety, health and welfare.

Each Participant should:

- Carry out a risk assessment on the premises / farm
- Develop an emergency response procedure for predictable situations / identified risks such as:
 - Gas Leak
 - Fire
 - Power Failure
 - Personal Injury
 - Equipment Failure
 - Flock Problem

Packing centres are required to have a Safety Statement in place that deals with the procedures to be followed in emergencies.

Post a list of emergency telephone numbers beside a telephone (and near an exit) and a separate list of useful numbers nearby.

Emergency Telephone Numbers	
Doctor	
Fire Brigade	
Gardaí	
Ambulance	
Other Contacts	
Safety Officer	
Site Manager	
Gas Service Centre	
Service Engineer	
Group Veterinarian	
Other	

Appendix 7.17 House Specification Data

The following data will be required for each house to permit full assessment	
House ID	Age Placed (Weeks)
Number Placed	Date Placed
House Area (sq m)	Available Area (sq m)
Lobby Area (sq m)	No. Birds / sq m
Slatted Area Total (sq m)	No. Drinkers / 100 Birds
Scratch Area Total (sq m)	Drinking Space / Bird (cms)
Nesting System	Circular Feeding Space / Bird (cms)
Total Area Occupied by Nestboxes (sq m)	Linear Feeding Space / Bird
No. Birds / Nestbox	No. Birds / m Perch Space
Area Obstructed (e.g. by Feeder Bins)	Pop-Hole Metres / 1000 Birds
No. Drinkers	Litter Type
Used area / drinker	Litter Source
Available Drinking Space per Drinker (m)	No. Lighting Points Slatted Area
No. Circular Feeders	No. Lighting Points Scratch Area
Available Circular Feeding Space per Feeder (m)	Food Bin Capacity
Used area / Feeder	Water Tank Capacity
Length Linear Accessible Feeder Space (m)	Grazing Area Available (ha)
Linear metres Perch Space	Ventilation Max Capacity (Cu m / Min)
Pop-Hole Length Total	Fail Safe System for Water?
Total No. Pop-Holes	
Signed	Date

House Measurement Procedure

Available floor area is to be calculated in accordance with the (EU) 1308: 2013, (EC) 589: 2008 and (EC) 74: 1999 as summarized in the following parameters. The number of birds permitted in the house is limited by the lowest complying factor.

The following restrictions apply:

1. General Measurement

Particular	Limit applying
Colony Size	4,000
Flock Size (house)	32,000
Land area	<1,000 birds / hectare
Scratch Area	At least 250cm ² per hen AND At least 33% of the available floor space
Perching	At least 15cm per bird where each 15cm segment is complete Perches must be placed at least 30cm apart and 20cm from the wall
Feeders	At least 10cm/bird (linear feeders) AND / OR At least 4cm/bird (circular feeders) (Free range / Barn)
Drinkers	At least 1 nipple drinker / cup for every 10 birds AND / OR At least 1 bell drinker per 100 birds
Nest Box	Individual: At least 1 / 7 hens AND / OR Group: At least 1 m ² nest space / 120 birds
Useable Area	Area >= 30cm wide AND Slope < 14%, AND Headroom >= 45cm, AND Excluding nesting areas
See also sub-sections 4.19 to 4.40 for further detail	

2. Pop Holes: Free Range

Flock Size	Pop Holes	Height	Length
500 birds or under	2	45cm	60cm
501 to 1,000 birds	4	45cm	60cm
1,001 to 1,500 birds	4	45cm	90cm
1,501 to 2,500 birds	6	45cm	90cm
2,501 – 3,500	Min. 6	45cm	9m (total)
3,501 to 4,500	Min. 8	45cm	12m (total)
4,501 to 5,500	Min. 10	45cm	16m (total)
5,501 to 6,500	Min. 12	45cm	20m (total)
Each additional 1,000 birds	+ 2	45cm	+ 4m
See also 4.29.b&c for additional specific restrictions			

3. Pop Holes: Barn

Veranda	Where verandas are used as a scratch area, pop holes must be distributed evenly along the building.
General	There must be several pop holes giving direct access to the outer area, at least 45cm high and 40cm wide and extending along the entire length of the building. A total opening of 2m must be available per group of 1,000 birds
See also 4.40 for additional specific restrictions	

Appendix 7.18 Poultry Manure Management

1. Location of New Houses

- Select a site that is at least 400 metres from the nearest dwelling.
- Evaluate the area and the amenities present and select the location and aspect so as to minimise the impact.

2. Operation of Production House

- Ensure that there are no dead birds in the manure. Where there is a risk of this, the manure cannot be used for land application.
- Operate an effective hygiene programme in the unit to minimise odours.
- Have well designed house and ventilation system with wash water storage facilities.
- Maintain buildings in good repair, especially guttering and down-pipes.
- Have well designed feeders and drinkers, so that feed wastage and spoilage are kept to a minimum.
- Minimise waste packaging materials and containers.

3. Manure Storage and Spreading

- Keep a record of the date restrictions for applying manure and fertiliser that apply to your area.
- Ensure compliance with the Nitrates Directive when applying manure to the home farm.
- Where the manure is used on the farm for crop production, ensure that the manure is evaluated for nutrients and ensure that these values are used in calculating nutrient delivery to the crop.
- When cleaning out the house and removing manure and/or emptying liquid manure from the pit, ensure that account is taken of the weather conditions in order to minimise the impact of odour and run-off.
- Transport the poultry manure in covered vehicles.
- Spread the manure more than 200 metres downwind from the nearest poultry house.
- Do not spread Poultry manure or wash water on land in use for the production of ready to eat crops or on land to which free-range flocks have access.
- Poultry manure and wash water should be applied to land observing the following “buffer zones”:

Buffer zones for spreading poultry manure	
Area	Buffer Zone (m)
Hospitals, schools, churches	200
Dwelling houses	100
Lakes and main river channels	20
Small watercourses and field drains	10
Public Roads	10
Domestic wells	50
Public water supply (depending on vulnerability)	50-300

Note also the need for recording set out in the criteria in Section 6.3 and 6.4 in relation to manure records.

4. Conditions to Avoid

Avoid spreading manure in the following conditions:

- During the period specified for the farm / area.
- On heavy, wet soils, when heavy rain is forecast within 48 hours.
- When the wind direction is towards population centres or 'neighbouring' houses.
- When the risk of causing odour nuisance to the public is greatest e.g. Sundays or public holidays.
- After daylight hours.

5. Manure Treatment Guidelines

Where a serious disease occurred in a flock, the manure must be treated with special caution. The following options must be considered in conjunction with the Competent Authority and veterinarians:

- Composting of solid manures is a particularly effective method of controlling microbial pathogens, but for best results the process needs to be actively managed. The manure should be treated as a batch and turned regularly (at least twice within the first 7 days) either with a front-end loader or preferably with a purpose-built compost turner. This should generate high temperatures over a period of time (e.g. above 55°C for 3 days) which are effective in killing pathogens and this temperature should be monitored. Allow the compost to mature as part of the treatment process. The whole process should last at least 3 months.
- Lime treatment of liquid manure (addition of quick lime or slaked lime to raise the pH to 12 for at least 2 hours) is an effective method of inactivating bacterial pathogens. Allow the slurry to mature as part of the batch treatment process for at least 3 months prior to land spreading.
- Batch storing solid manures and slurries should be for at least 6 months (i.e. no additions of fresh manure are made to the store during this period) in order to be effective in killing pathogens.

See also guidelines on safe use of manures which is available from DAFM and Teagasc.

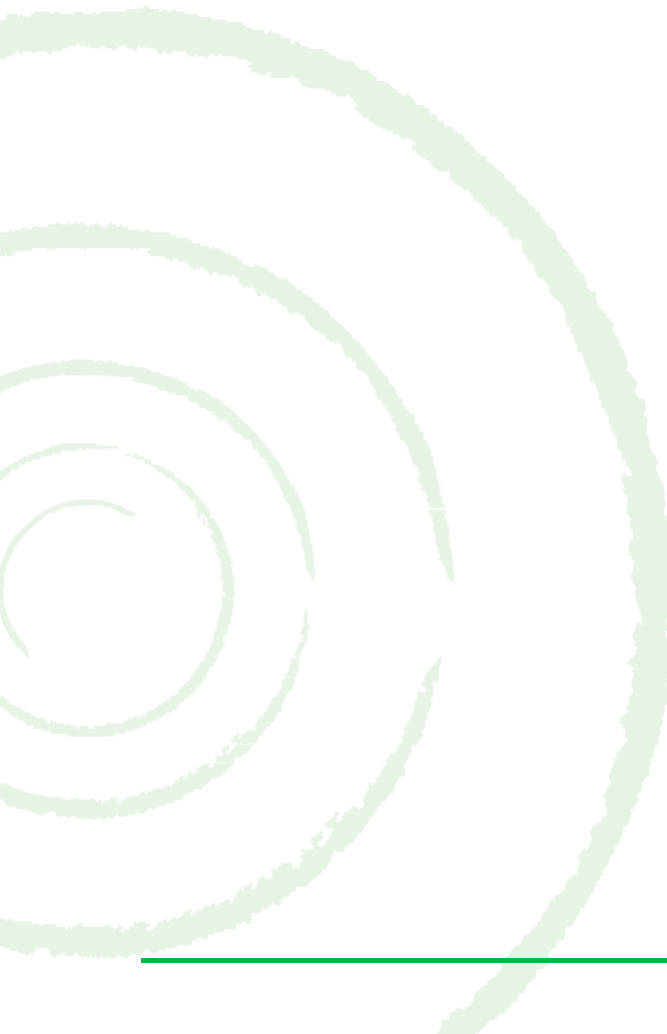
Note: The disposal of poultry manure in the event of an outbreak of either Avian Influenza (AI) or Newcastle disease (ND) is covered by EU legislation i.e. Council Directive 2005/94 for AI, and Council Directive 92/66 for ND.

Appendix 7.19 Rearer House Preparation

Preparation of the House

- Fresh bedding must be spread evenly to cover the floor.
- Houses must be pre-heated gradually at least 24 hours before the birds arrive.
- The temperature must be stabilised.
- Space heaters or brooders must be set up to ensure that there are no extremes of temperature in the house.
- Independent thermometers must be placed around the house with at least two of them at bird level, to monitor uniformity of temperature.
- Fresh, clean water must be available to the day-olds immediately on their arrival at the farm. Starter ration must also be available.
- Trays and paper may be used to supplement pan or track feeders.
- Feeders and drinkers must not be placed directly under a heat source.
- Before the birds arrive, a final house-check is essential to ensure that temperatures are at the correct levels and that there are no water leaks.
- The Field Officer must approve the house before re-stocking.

A house preparation sheet must be completed before the arrival of each batch of day-old chicks that records the following at a minimum:



House Preparation Checklist

Restocking Date:

Supplies

Starter Crumb Ordered	
Heating fuel supply checked / ordered	
Shavings supply checked / ordered	
Overalls & Shoe covers supply checked / ordered	
Restocking Date Confirmed	
Foot Dip Disinfectant supply checked / ordered	

Site

Free from debris	
Vegetation controlled	
No rodent cover	
Concrete aprons clean & disinfected	
Clean and Tidy	
Secure	

House

Power washed thoroughly	
Disinfected	
House condition checked and repaired as necessary	
Source of litter	
Quantity and depth of litter / shavings applied	
Brooders / Heaters switched on / lit.	
Temperature readings	
Foot dip at entrance doors	
Protective clothing and overshoes available	
Paper towels and soap available	

Equipment

Feeders checked, repaired	
Drinkers – leak free	
Water meter reading	
Lighting – even – wattage and number of light points	
Ventilation system & controls operations checked	

Supplementary Equipment

Generator	
Alarm System	
Fire Extinguishers	

Signed:

Date:

Certified by:

Date:

Appendix 7.20 Egg Quality Criteria

1. Egg Grading Standards

Grade A table eggs from hens (*Gallus gallus*) may be marketed under this Sustainable Egg Assurance Scheme.

The eggs must be graded as follows:

Very Large (XL)	-	73g and more
Large (L)	-	from 63g up to 73g
Medium (M)	-	from 53g up to 63g
Small (S)	-	under 53g
Mixed weight	-	Contains eggs of different sizes, min. net weight on box.

This weight grading must be indicated on packs by the respective letter or by the respective terms or by a combination of both. In addition, the respective weight ranges may be shown on packs and eggs. The DAFM recommendation is that, insofar as consumer information is concerned, the use of terms “very large, large...” etc. is preferable to letters, while the use of weight gradings alone is not acceptable.

2. Marking / Labelling

Egg packaging should bear nutritional information in accordance with (EU) 1169/2011 (See Appendix 7.1, Reference Information). Where a nutrition related claim is being made, this declaration is mandatory and must be fully supported by documentation. Since 13th December 2016 nutrition information has been mandatory for most pre-packaged foodstuffs. However, there are a number of foodstuffs that are exempt from the mandatory requirement to provide nutrition information and these are listed in Annex V of the legislation. These include unprocessed products that comprise a single ingredient, which includes eggs.

Eggs must be identified by the system of production (e.g. eggs from Organic, Free Range or Barn may not be used in Caged egg packaging).

The following descriptions only can be used on egg packaging and marketing information and the descriptions cannot be used together:

Description	Code on the egg
Organic	0
Free Range	1
Barn	2
Cage ¹	3

e.g. eggs cannot be described as “Organic Free Range”

¹ Only enriched cage / colony is permitted

3. Egg Quality Characteristics

Quality characteristics must be determined by a recognised test method (e.g. candling or an equivalent test).

Egg quality factors may be divided as follows:

External Factors	Internal Factors
Clean oval shape	Albumen condition
Smooth strong shell	Yolk centrally held
Uniformity of shell colour	Distinct thick inner, thin outer albumen
	Yolk firm, rotund, free of specs or mottling

The following table summarises the factors by which eggs must be graded by the Candling procedure.

Factor	First Quality Grade A
Appearance	Normal shape, clean, flawless.
Shell	Smooth and strong. Free from areas of weakness, cracks, dark spots, patches and dirt.
Air Space	Not to exceed 6mm. in depth by visual assessment. Non-tremulous.
Yolk	Outline indistinct, well centred, and round in shape. Very slight movement on twirling. No mottling or patchiness.
Albumin	Translucent. Free from discoloration, cloudiness, blood spots and meat spots.
Miscellaneous	No germ cell development moulds, rot or taint. Must not be washed or cleaned in any way.

Appendix 7.21 Welfare in the Workplace

Employers must provide adequate and appropriate welfare facilities for employees while they are at work. The minimum statutory conditions applicable in Ireland are set out by the Labour Court in the Joint Labour Committee notice AGRI 2010 No 3 (see Appendix 1 reference Information).

Acceptable working conditions take into account payment for work undertaken and the ability of the worker to balance their commitments to work, family and community. Working hours, employee health and safety, and the potential of employees to fulfil the needs of others within their environments must be considered on the farm. The text in the page below contains a sample policy as a guideline to farmers who wish to implement a 'welfare in the workplace' policy on the farm.

Note: This document is based on the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) principles published by the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform Working Group on Dairy, which has adopted the Guide to Good Dairy Farming Practice – a joint publication of the International Dairy Federation (IDF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), published in January 2004.

Welfare in the Workplace Policy

1. Wages and benefits received by employees / workers will comply with the minimum required under local and National legislation and are paid according to an agreed schedule.
 2. There will be no discrimination of employees on any grounds.
 3. All employees are equally free to fulfil their religious and cultural needs in their leisure time.
 4. All employees will not be subject to threatening or abusive behaviour, and will not be allowed to use threatening or abusive behaviour against others.
 5. Employees are encouraged to report of complaints without fear.
 6. All workers (permanent or temporary) are assisted to obtain information regarding their legal rights and obligations and are issued with a work contract that complies with national and local legislation and that specifies the conditions of work including those related to Health and safety (see also section 3.14 relating to assessment of risks on the farm).
 7. All workers (permanent and temporary) are given a work contract. The work contract ensures that the weekly hours worked are limited (max 48 hrs.), that overtime is voluntary and limited (max 12 hrs.), that work breaks and shift breaks and rest days are agreed, and that access to toilet facilities is available at all times.
 8. Work is provided on an equal opportunity basis and pay is based on skill level.
 9. The work contract for full time employees is based on the living wage as set out in National and local legislation
 10. When promotional opportunities are available, this is offered on a performance basis.
 11. The work contract sets out the employee's right to paid leave, holiday pay, sick leave, work related sick pay and parental leave.
 12. Wage deductions are clearly set out so as to be clearly understood and are not used as a disciplinary measure.
 13. Workers are encouraged to have independent health insurance.
 14. Workers have a right to association and to join labour unions and the effective functioning of unions is facilitated.
 15. Workers right to collective bargaining is acknowledged.
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16. Children under 15 years of age are not allowed to be employed.
 17. Language and cultural barriers are taken into account to ensure understanding of signs, instructions, safety procedures and important communications.
 18. Workers that are vulnerable (i.e. are under 18 years of age, or have physical or mental disabilities, or are pregnant, or are inexperienced, or are physically unable, or are ill, or have a respiratory difficulty) are not required to handle hazardous chemicals or engage in unsuitable or hazardous work (including working in unhealthy situations, or when alone).
 19. Workers from the ages 15–18 are not required to engage in work that is hazardous, or that could jeopardise physical, moral or mental well-being.
 20. No bonded or forced labour is allowed on the farm.
 21. Accidents are recorded and, where necessary, communicated to the Health and Safety Authority; prompt medical treatment is made available and corrective action is taken to prevent a recurrence.
 22. Where workers are required to handle fuels, chemicals or potentially hazardous materials (e.g. mouldy hay), medical testing for workers is provided as necessary and training on spill prevention and handling of such materials.
 23. Access to safe drinking water is provided for all personnel on the farm.
 24. Workers' children under 18 years of age are encouraged to attend school.
 25. Employees and workers are encouraged and supported to become involved in general educational activities and to undertake training on all aspects of sustainable agricultural practices.
 26. In so far as it is possible, the activities of the farm will contribute to the economic and social benefit of the local community.
 27. Access to clean accommodation and cooking facilities is provided to farm workers where necessary.
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