

Code of Practice for the Welfare of Livestock:

Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens

Draft for Consultation

CONSULTATION

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Preface

This preface is not part of the Code; instead, it explains the purpose of the code. The legal text in boxes throughout this document is also not part of the Code but highlights relevant legislation. The text in these boxes is the law as it stands on the date of publication or reprinting of the Code (please turn to the back cover for this information). You should be aware that any of the legal requirements quoted here could change. You should check that these are an accurate statement of the law as it currently stands.

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and the Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) implement Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes and Council Directive 2007/43/EC which lays down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production.

Regulation 4 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended)¹ states that:

(1) A person responsible for a farmed animal must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the conditions under which it is bred or kept comply with Schedule 1.

(2) In complying with the duty in paragraph (1), a person responsible for a farmed animal must have regard to its—

- (a) species;
- (b) degree of development;
- (c) adaptation and domestication; and
- (d) physiological and ethological needs in accordance with good practice and scientific knowledge.

¹ [Welfare of Farmed Animals \(Wales\) Regulations 2007 \(as amended\)](#)

Regulation 6 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states that:

(1) A person responsible for a farmed animal—

(a) must not attend to the animal unless he is acquainted with any relevant code of practice and has access to the code while attending to the animal; and

(b) must take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person employed or engaged by him does not attend to the animal unless that other person—

(i) is acquainted with any relevant code of practice;

(ii) has access to the code while attending to the animal; and

(iii) has received instruction and guidance on the code.

(2) In this section, a “relevant code of practice” means a code of practice issued under section 14 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or a statutory welfare code issued under section 3 of the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968 relating to the particular species of farmed animal to which a person is attending.

To cause unnecessary suffering to an animal under the control of man is an offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Although it is not a legal requirement to follow a code, failure to do so may be used as evidence when someone is being prosecuted for causing unnecessary pain to livestock.

Section 9(1) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006² states that:

A person commits an offence if he does not take such steps as are reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure that the needs of an animal for which he is responsible are met to the extent required by good practice.

Section 9(2) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 states that:

For the purposes of this Act, an animal’s needs shall be taken to include -

(a) its need for a suitable environment,

(b) its need for a suitable diet,

(c) its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns,

(d) any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and

(e) its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

Section 10 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 states that:

(1) If an inspector is of the opinion that a person is failing to comply with section 9(1), he may serve on the person a notice which –

(a) states that he is of that opinion,

² [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#)

- (b) specifies the respects in which he considers the person is failing to comply with that provision,
 - (c) specifies the steps he considers need to be taken in order to comply with the provision,
 - (d) specifies a period for the taking of those steps, and
 - (e) explains the effect of subsections (2) and (3).
- (2) Where a notice under subsection (1) (“an improvement notice”) is served, no proceedings for an offence under section 9(1) may be instituted before the end of the period specified for the purposes of subsection (1)(d) (“the compliance period”) in respect of –
- (a) the non-compliance which gave rise to the notice, or
 - (b) any continuation of that non-compliance.
- (3) If the steps specified in an improvement notice are taken at any time before the end of the compliance period, no proceedings for an offence under section 9(1) may be instituted in respect of –
- (a) the non-compliance which gave rise to the notice, or
 - (b) any continuation of that non-compliance prior to the taking of the steps specified in the notice.
- (4) An inspector may extend, or further extend, the compliance period specified in an improvement notice.

The requirements of Council Directive 2007/43/EC do not apply to hatcheries or when fewer than 500 chickens or breeding chickens are kept. The requirements of Council Directive 2007/43/EC also do not apply where birds are reared to extensive indoor, free range or organic marketing standards. Although not a legal requirement, the additional welfare provisions for conventionally reared meat chickens when applied to all systems of production can help to ensure bird welfare. The Council of Europe made recommendations concerning meat chickens and grandparent stock in 1995 and its recommendations, where not covered in legislation, are included in this Code.

During on-farm welfare inspections carried out by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Local Authorities, inspectors will assess compliance against legislation and the Code. Not complying with the welfare-related legislation outlined in the boxes throughout the Code is an offence. In cases that go to court for prosecution, meeting the requirements of the Code, or not, can be used to help establish a person’s liability.

There may be other legislation and requirements not related to welfare and not outlined in the Code but that you must be familiar with and comply with.

Section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 states:

- 4 (1) A person commits an offence if—
- (a) an act of his, or a failure of his to act, causes an animal to suffer,

- (b) he knew, or ought reasonably to have known, that the act, or failure to act, would have that effect or be likely to do so,
- (c) the animal is a protected animal, and
- (d) the suffering is unnecessary.

(2) A person commits an offence if—

- (a) he is responsible for an animal,
- (b) an act, or failure to act, of another person causes the animal to suffer,
- (c) he permitted that to happen or failed to take such steps (whether by way of supervising the other person or otherwise) as were reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent that happening, and
- (d) the suffering is unnecessary.

(3) The considerations to which it is relevant to have regard when determining for the purposes of this section whether suffering is unnecessary include—

- (a) whether the suffering could reasonably have been avoided or reduced;
- (b) whether the conduct which caused the suffering was in compliance with any relevant enactment or any relevant provisions of a licence or code of practice issued under an enactment;
- (c) whether the conduct which caused the suffering was for a legitimate purpose, such as—
 - (i) the purpose of benefiting the animal, or
 - (ii) the purpose of protecting a person, property or another animal;
- (d) whether the suffering was proportionate to the purpose of the conduct concerned;
- (e) whether the conduct concerned was in all the circumstances that of a reasonably competent and humane person.

(4) Nothing in this section applies to the destruction of an animal in an appropriate and humane manner.

Introduction

1. This Code is intended to encourage all those who care for meat chickens and breeding chickens to adopt high standards of husbandry. Without good stockmanship, animal welfare can never adequately be protected. Adherence to these recommendations will help keepers to maintain the standards required to comply with legislation.

Those who have care for chickens should demonstrate:

- Caring and responsible planning and management;
- Skilled, knowledgeable and conscientious stockmanship;
- Appropriate environmental design;
- Considerate handling and transport; and Humane slaughter.

2. The welfare of meat chickens and breeding chickens is considered within a framework that was developed by the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) and known as the “Five Freedoms”. These form the guiding principles for the assessment of welfare within any system, together with the actions necessary to safeguard welfare within the constraints of an efficient livestock industry. The Five Freedoms should be considered in conjunction with FAWC’s three essentials of stockmanship.

The Five Freedoms are:

- 1 **FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST** – by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour;
- 2 **FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT** – by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;
- 3 **FREEDOM FROM PAIN, INJURY OR DISEASE** – by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment;
- 4 **FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR** – by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals’ own kind; and
- 5 **FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS** – by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering.

The Three Essentials of Stockmanship are:

- 1 **KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.** Sound knowledge of the biology and husbandry of farm animals, including how their needs may be best provided for in all circumstances.
 - 2 **SKILLS IN ANIMAL HUSBANDRY.** Demonstrable skills in observation, handling, care and treatment of animals, and problem detection and resolution.
 - 3 **PERSONAL QUALITIES.** Affinity and empathy with animals, dedication and patience.
3. This Code, and the recommendations within it, applies to all parts of meat chicken production as well as breeding chickens under all types of husbandry systems. For the purposes of this code, “flock-keeper” means the owner of the birds or the person responsible for looking after them.
4. The table below summarises the various legal provisions relating to animal welfare on farm for different types of meat chicken production systems.

Type of meat chicken production system	Legislation in Wales		
	Animal Welfare Act 2006	Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) Schedule 1	Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) Schedule 5A
Holdings with <500 chickens	✓	✓	-
Broiler breeder flocks	✓	✓	-
Hatcheries	✓	✓	-
>500 birds conventionally reared, stocking density up to 33kg/m ²	✓	✓	✓
>500 birds conventionally reared, stocking density more than 33kg/m ² up to 39kg/m ²	✓	✓	✓
^a Free range chickens, maximum stocking density 27.5kg/m ²	✓	✓	-
^a Extensive indoor chickens, maximum stocking density 25kg/m ²	✓	✓	-
^b Organically reared chickens, maximum	✓	✓	-

	Legislation in Wales		
Type of meat chicken production system	Animal Welfare Act 2006	Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) Schedule 1	Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) Schedule 5A
stocking density 21kg/m ²			

^a as referred to in points (b), (c), (d), (e) of Annex V to Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 which sets out detailed rules as regards the marketing standards for poultry meat for the application of the Single CMO Regulation (EC) No 1308/2013.

^b in accordance with the relevant EU Organic Regulations - Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008.

5. No person should operate or set up a meat chicken or breeding chicken unit unless the welfare of all the birds can be safeguarded. This can be achieved by ensuring that the buildings and equipment, and the skills and ability of the flock-keeper, are appropriate to the husbandry system and the number of birds to be kept.
6. The relevant animal welfare legislation applies to owners as well as any person looking after the chickens on their behalf, wherever the chickens are located. A written protocol can be of value in ensuring that all parties are clear about their responsibilities in respect of welfare. However, the obligations imposed by the law will still apply.
7. Welfare and health considerations, in addition to productivity, should be taken into account when choosing a strain for a particular purpose or production system. Broiler Chickens should stem from balanced breeding programmes, which consider all aspects of health, welfare and productivity. Management decisions and the production system should be optimised to promote chicken health, welfare and productivity
8. Legal requirements are highlighted in text boxes. **This Code applies in Wales only and has been issued by the National Assembly for Wales.**

Definitions

9. For the purposes of this code definitions are summarised below. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are taken directly from the relevant legislation, whilst others are included to provide an explanation for the purposes of the Code.

'breeding chicken' means an animal of the species *Gallus gallus* whose progeny are either parent stock or meat chickens;

'conventionally reared meat chickens' are meat chickens except for those

(as defined in regulation 2 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007):

- (a) on holdings with fewer than 500 meat chickens or with only breeding stocks of chickens;
- (b) on hatcheries;
- (c) to which the term "Extensive indoor (barn reared)", "Free range", "Traditional free range" or "Free range – total freedom" can be used within the meaning of point (b), (c), (d) or (e) of Annex V to Commission Regulation 543/2008/EC which sets out detailed rules as regards the marketing standards for poultry meat for the application of the Single CMO Regulation (EU) 1308/2013; or
- (d) organically reared in accordance with the relevant EU organic regulations - Council Regulation 834/2007/EC and Commission Regulation (EC) 889/2008.

'cumulative daily mortality rate' (*) means the sum of daily mortality rates;

'daily mortality rate' (*) for conventionally reared meat chickens, means the number of chickens which have died in a house on the same day, including those that have been culled either for disease or because of other reasons, divided by the number of chickens present in the house on that day, multiplied by 100;

'flock' means a group of chickens which are placed in a house or a holding and are or have been present in this house at the same time;

'grandparent stock' means an animal of the species *Gallus gallus* whose progeny are parent stock;

'Hock burns' are marks found on the upper joints of chickens, the marks are caused by ammonia in the waste of other chickens.

'holding' means a production site on which chickens are kept;

'house' means a building on a holding where a flock of chickens are kept;

'injurious pecking' is when birds perform maladaptive pecking behaviours directed at other birds. It includes gentle and severe feather pecking, vent pecking and cannibalistic pecking;

'keeper' (*) means any natural or legal person responsible for or in charge of chickens in terms of contract or by law whether on a permanent or temporary basis;

'laparoscopy' is the examination of the abdominal cavity by insertion of an instrument called a laparoscope;

'meat chicken' means an animal of the species *Gallus gallus* kept for meat production;

'mutilation' is a procedure which involves interference with the sensitive tissues or bone structure of an animal, otherwise than for the purpose of its medical treatment;

'parent stock' means an animal of the species *Gallus gallus* whose progeny are layers or meat chickens;

'Pododermatitis' is the term used for any swelling of a **chicken's** toe or foot pad.

'stocking density' means the total live weight of chickens which are present in a house or a holding at the same time per square metre of useable area;

'total mortality rate' is the total number of birds that died or were culled during a flock's whole rearing period, divided by the original number of birds placed on the first day, multiplied by 100;

'useable area' (*) for conventionally reared meat chickens, means a littered area accessible to the chickens at any time.

Recommendations Applying to all Husbandry Systems

Stockmanship and Staffing

Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states that:

1. Animals shall be cared for by a sufficient number of staff who possess the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence.

Paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states that:

7. A record must be maintained of:

- (a) any medicinal treatment given to animals, and
- (b) the number of mortalities found on each inspection of animals

Schedule 1, paragraph 8 states that the record referred to in paragraph 7 must be retained for a period of at least three years from the date on which the medical treatment was given, or the date of the inspection, as the case may be, and must be made available to an inspector on request.

Paragraph 13 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2010³ states:

13.—(1) The person responsible must maintain, for each house in which chickens are kept, a record of—

- (a) the number of chickens introduced;
- (b) the useable area;
- (c) the hybrid or breed of the chickens (if known);
- (d) the number of chickens found dead, with an indication of the causes (if known), as well as the number of chickens culled with cause, on each inspection;
- (e) the number of chickens remaining in the flock following the removal of chickens for sale or slaughter.

(2) The record must be—

- (a) retained for at least three years, and
- (b) made available to an inspector on request

Paragraph 2 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 states:

³ [Welfare of Farmed Animals \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

2 (1) A keeper must hold a certificate recognised by the Welsh Ministers for the purposes of Article 4(3) or 4 of Council Directive 2007/43/EC⁴ (certificates of completion of training courses or equivalent experience).

(2) The Welsh Ministers must publish from time to time, in such a way as the Welsh Ministers considers appropriate, a list of certificates recognised by the Welsh Ministers for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1).

10. It is essential that well-motivated and competent personnel are employed to carry out all necessary tasks. Staff should be managed and supervised, fully conversant with the tasks they will be required to undertake and competent in the use of any equipment. See appendix 2 for advice about the British poultry passport training modules.
11. Keepers of all meat chickens, breeding birds and those handling birds in hatcheries, including those employed by contractors, should be given appropriate training before being given responsibility for animals. This requires the acquisition of specific skills which may be developed on-farm, working with an experienced person, or by following a course offered by a suitable training provider. Keepers should demonstrate competence and understanding before they are given responsibility for birds. Training should continue throughout the duration of employment, and refresher courses should be undertaken regularly. Wherever possible, the training should be of a type which leads to formal recognition of competence.
12. All keepers should demonstrate full understanding of the welfare needs and basic biology of the birds. Keepers should have shown that they are capable of safeguarding birds under all foreseeable conditions before being given responsibility for a flock. A good flock-keeper will have a compassionate and humane attitude, will be able to anticipate and avoid potential welfare problems, and have the ability to identify those that do occur and respond to them promptly. As a minimum, they should be able to:
 - recognise whether or not the birds are in good health;
 - understand the significance of behavioural changes in the birds; and
 - appreciate the suitability of the total environment for the birds' health and welfare.
13. Guidance on specific training requirements and qualifications for those keepers who look after flocks of more than 500 produced birds is available at appendix 3:

Catching and Handling Chickens

14. The catching and handling of birds without causing them injury or stress requires skill. It should only be undertaken by competent persons, i.e.

⁴ [Council Directive 2007/43/EC](#)

those who have been appropriately trained for the task and have received clear guidance and instructions from the owner or keeper. Responsibility for the management of the operation should be clearly allocated.

15. Mechanical bird collection systems may have advantages for welfare. Only systems that the manufacturer has shown to be satisfactory from the point of view of bird health and welfare should be used. Where they are utilised, operators must be competent in their use and be vigilant for signs of stress or smothering, just as with manual catching. Such systems should only be used where risks to bird health and welfare have been evaluated and minimised as far as possible before general commercial use.
16. High standards of catching and handling must be applied irrespective of the potential economic value of the birds. Surplus meat chickens including breeders at the end of lay awaiting disposal should be treated as humanely as those intended for retention or sale.
17. Catching and handling should be carried out quietly and confidently, exercising care to minimise stress and avoid unnecessary struggling which could bruise or otherwise injure the birds. Panic among the birds should be avoided in order to minimise the risk of injury. Catching should take place in low or blue light to minimise fear responses.
18. Birds must be caught with care and should be lifted directly into the transport module. Catching should preferably be by holding them round the body which avoids inverting them. If caught by the legs, it should preferably be by both legs. If birds need to be carried this should either be by holding them round the body or by both legs. Birds must not be carried by the wings or by the neck.
19. When breeding birds are transferred to laying facilities, care should be taken when lifting them out of a crate or when tipping them out of an open-topped container.

Feed and Water

Paragraphs 22-27 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended), on feed, water and other substances state that:

22. Animals must be fed a wholesome diet which is appropriate to their age and species and which is fed to them in sufficient quantity to maintain them in good health, to satisfy their nutritional needs and to promote a positive state of well-being.
23. Animals must not be provided with food or liquid that contains any substance that may cause them unnecessary suffering or injury and must be provided with food and liquid in a manner that does not cause them unnecessary suffering or injury.

24. All animals must have access to feed at intervals appropriate to their physiological needs (and, in any case, at least once a day), except where a veterinary surgeon acting in the exercise of his or her profession otherwise directs.

25. All animals must either have access to a suitable water supply and be provided with an adequate supply of fresh drinking water each day, or be able to satisfy their fluid intake needs by other means.

26. Feeding and watering equipment must be designed, constructed, placed and maintained so that contamination of food or water and the harmful effects of competition between animals are minimised.

27.-(1) No other substance, with the exception of those given for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes or for the purpose of zootechnical treatment, may be administered to animals unless it has been demonstrated by scientific studies of animal welfare or established practice that the effect of that substance is not detrimental to the health or welfare of the animals.

(2) In sub-paragraph (1), "zootechnical treatment" ("triniaeth söotechnegol") has the meaning given in Article 1(2)(c) of Directive 96/22/EEC⁵ concerning the prohibition on the use in stockfarming of certain substances having a hormonal or thyrostatic action and of beta-agonists.

Paragraph 6 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended), on drink and feed. states:

6.-(1) Drinkers must be positioned and maintained in such a way that spillage is minimised.

(2) Feed must be either continuously available or meal fed.

(3) Feed must not be withdrawn from the chickens more than 12 hours before the expected slaughter time.

20. All birds should have daily access to feed. When introducing birds to a new environment, the keeper should ensure that the birds can find and access feed and water.

21. To prevent birds having access to stale or contaminated feed or water, these should be replaced on a regular basis. Provision must be made for supplying water in freezing conditions.

22. For indoor housed systems, the maximum distance which any bird should have to travel in a house to reach feed and water should not be more than 4 metres. However, in some situations, such as some outdoor production systems, it may be necessary for the birds to travel more than 4 metres; in these situations, all birds must be adequately provided for in terms of stocking density, feeding and drinking space, and the distribution of feeders and drinkers, to allow for such movements.

⁵ [Directive 96/22/EEC](#)

23. Sudden changes in the type, quantity and make-up of feed should be avoided. Any changes in diet should be introduced gradually.
24. Compounded feeds which have been prepared for other species should be avoided as certain substances can be toxic to birds.
25. For meat chickens, feed should not be withheld for more than 12 hours before the birds are slaughtered or delivered to a new farm. This period of 12 hours must be an inclusive period which includes the catching, loading, transport lairaging and unloading time prior to slaughter. Prior to transport, water should be provided up to the start of the catching procedure. Transporters of chickens must minimise the length of the journey and carry out transport without delay.
26. Water meters should be fitted where this is possible in each house, to enable daily monitoring of water usage. Daily records of water consumption provide an early warning of potential problems and a water meter is a necessary management tool.
27. Daily access to water throughout the period of lighting and a sufficient number of drinkers, correctly maintained, well distributed and adjusted for height and pressure, should be provided. In long poultry houses, and in those with significant floor slopes, water pressure regulators should be provided to help prevent spillage or leakage.
28. Leakage or spillage from water drinkers can significantly increase the moisture content of the litter with a negative impact on litter quality and consequently bird health. Leaks should be fixed as soon as possible. Litter replacement may be necessary in the short term in badly affected areas, in conjunction with raised ventilation and temperatures to remove excess moisture. However, long term solutions should be found and specialist advice should be sought where appropriate.
29. Suitable, correctly balanced nutrition, designed specifically for the age and strain of the bird, is important for rearing healthy meat and breeding chickens. Feed management practices should incorporate nutritional guidance for the bird strain type provided by the breeder's recommendations and the company supplying the birds, in addition to any veterinary advice, to avoid development of certain conditions such as ascites ("water belly"), sudden death syndrome and lameness.
30. Whilst environment and genetics should also be considered as part of managing the conditions listed in the above paragraph, control of growth rate by careful nutrient management, whilst not impacting overall on final body weight, may reduce their incidence. However, any changes in diet quantity or quality should be managed collaboratively with nutrition specialists and veterinary advisers.

Health

Inspection

Paragraph 2-3 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) requires that:

2.-(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), animals kept in husbandry systems in which their welfare depends on frequent human attention must be thoroughly inspected at least once a day to check that they are in a state of well-being.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), animals kept in husbandry systems in which their welfare does not depend on frequent human attention must be inspected at intervals sufficient to avoid any suffering.

3. Where animals are kept in a building, adequate lighting (whether fixed or portable) must be available to enable them to be thoroughly inspected at any time.

Paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states:

11.-(1) A keeper must ensure that all chickens kept on the holding are inspected at least twice a day.

(2) Special attention must be paid to signs indicating a reduced level of animal health or welfare.

(3) Chickens that are seriously injured or show evident signs of health disorder (including those having difficulties in walking, severe ascites or severe malformations), and are likely to suffer, must receive appropriate treatment or be culled immediately.

31. A farm health and welfare plan developed in consultation with the supervising veterinary surgeon should be implemented for each farm. This should set out health and husbandry activities covering the whole of the production cycle for each type of house used. It should also establish management procedures and control measures to reduce the risk of infections and injury.

32. The health and welfare plan should outline the biosecurity arrangements for staff and equipment, and should detail the hygiene and disinfection procedures to be used. This plan may be in the form of a documented standard operating procedure. The plan should be developed with appropriate veterinary advice, reviewed against performance indicators, and updated annually.

Further advice about farm health and welfare planning is available through Farming Connect - see appendix 2.

33. In order to reduce the risk of welfare problems developing, systematic inspections of all flocks should be undertaken at least twice each day at

appropriate intervals. Young birds, in the first few days of life, should be inspected at least three times a day.

34. Flock inspection should include an assessment of body condition, any variation in the growth of birds within the flock, locomotion, gait, respiration, condition of plumage, indications of head or vent pecking, condition of droppings, eyes, skin, beak, legs, feet and claws, and where appropriate, combs and wattles. Any abnormality may indicate a problem which should be given immediate attention, and if appropriate, remedial attention.
35. Health and welfare inspections may be linked with other visits to the poultry houses but each inspection should be undertaken as a distinct and separate inspection.
36. In order to ensure a thorough inspection, the flock-keeper should walk within three metres of every bird and encourage it to move, taking care not to frighten the birds with sudden, unaccustomed movement, noise or changes in light levels. The aim should be to pass close enough to the birds to see them clearly and for them to be induced to move away. This should enable the identification of any individual that is sick, injured or weak. Any such birds should immediately be removed and treated, or humanely killed.
37. Keepers should establish in advance the best course of action to take should problems be identified, and ensure that veterinary or other expert advice is available when needed.
38. Light levels during inspection should be sufficient to ensure that all birds in all parts of the house can be seen.
39. While it may not always be possible to examine each bird individually during routine inspection a good indication of flock health should be achieved on each occasion. Where birds are not being fed on *ad lib* diets, inspection is particularly effective at feeding time when any birds which are not fit can be identified by their slowness to feed.
40. Birds with considerable difficulty in walking, reaching food or water, severe ascites, malformations, severe wounds or seizures, or which are moribund, should be humanely culled immediately unless they can be treated and are likely to recover without unnecessary suffering. Dead birds should be removed without delay.
41. When a bird is killed on farm at the hatchery this must be carried out using a permitted method in accordance with the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014 in conjunction with Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. Written procedures or protocols for carrying out humane killing should be included in the farm health and welfare plan. For further information refer to industry guidance.

Waste

42. Much of the waste arising from Meat Chickens will be classed as animal by-products. There are various options available for the use and disposal depending on the type of waste e.g. carcasses of birds and hatchery waste.

Any person handling animal by-products needs to comply with Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 and implementing Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 and The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2014.

Disease Control and Biosecurity

Paragraphs 5-6 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states:

5. Any animals which appear to be ill or injured must be cared for appropriately and without delay; where they do not respond to such care, veterinary advice must be obtained as soon as possible.

6. Where necessary, sick or injured animals must be isolated in suitable accommodation with, where appropriate, dry comfortable bedding.

Paragraph 12 of Part 2 of Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 states:

12. After the final depopulation of a house and before a new flock is introduced—

(a) any part of a house, and any equipment or utensil, which has been in contact with chickens must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected; and

(b) all litter must be removed and clean litter provided.

43. Important indications of good health are clear, bright eyes, alertness, posture, vigorous movements if unduly disturbed, active feeding and drinking, singing and vocalisation, appropriate egg production in the case of breeding chickens, and clean and healthy skin, hocks and feet. Any departure from normal may indicate a problem which should be given immediate attention.

44. A disease challenge may first be noticed by a change in water consumption, a reluctance to eat, changes in litter quality, or in the general behaviour of the flock. A marked change in water use should be investigated. Veterinary attention should be sought at an early stage in any outbreak of disease so that the cause can be determined and appropriate action taken.

45. Measures to control diseases caused by external parasites should be taken by using the appropriate housing and management practices and where necessary parasiticides. It is particularly important to take measures to prevent the establishment of red mite infestation in breeding chicken flocks; any measures taken must not cause harm to the birds.
46. All those in contact with birds should practice strict hygiene and disinfection procedures. Used litter must be removed from the house and the site before re-stocking so as to reduce the risk of carryover of disease. Bird accommodation should be first dry-cleaned to remove organic material, washed and then disinfected. Where possible the site should be managed so that all houses are empty simultaneously to facilitate effective cleaning, disinfection and disinfestation. An “all in – all out” approach with periods when there are no birds on site will also act to provide a disease break. Where multi-aged sites are unavoidable they should be managed according to a regular routine attending to the youngest flocks first through to the oldest.
47. When planning new sites, consideration should be given to providing the maximum possible distance between the proposed site and existing sites to improve biosecurity. A useful guide is the recommended 3km that defines the radius of a Protection Zone in the control of notifiable diseases such as avian influenza. The distance between houses on a site should also be considered, along with the proximity to wild bird sources.

Leg Health

48. Lameness and leg disorders are a major welfare concern in meat chickens. There are many causes of leg disorders leading to poor leg health including those linked to nutrition, microbial infection and genetics. In the standard commercial chicken reared up to six weeks of age this has been associated with selection for rapid growth. Data is available showing that slower growing strains have fewer leg problems. Nutritional deficiencies and imbalances in calcium, phosphorus and Vitamin D can lead to an increase in bone deformities and lameness. Lameness can also be caused by bone or joint infection, so effective prevention and control of viral and bacterial disease plus good litter management are essential.
49. Keepers should monitor all birds for signs of lameness, leg weakness or abnormal gait on a daily basis. Any bird which is unable to move about freely and find feed and water must be humanely killed as soon as it is detected unless it can be treated and is likely to recover without unnecessary suffering. When recording mortalities and culls it is useful to record the cause so that lameness can be monitored within and between flocks. Lameness can increase towards the end of production and careful consideration should be given by the flock-keeper as to whether such animals affected are legally fit to travel.

50. If a lameness problem develops, management and husbandry practices must be immediately assessed. Any changes should be instigated as soon as practically possible and where appropriate following veterinary and/or technical advice of the breed supplier.
51. If a problem arises with managing litter and bird health, the flock-keeper may choose to grow meat chickens below their maximum potential by making changes to the feed composition, feed structure and feeding routine. This should be carried out with appropriate veterinary and technical advice. In addition, the potential effects of dietary change on litter condition should be closely monitored
52. Lameness may develop as a result of infections acquired in the parent flock or hatchery. High standards of biosecurity and hygiene in the parent flock, in the handling of the eggs, at the hatchery and in subsequent handling and transport of the chicks should be maintained.
53. Certain management practices can limit or reduce the level of lameness in the flock. Increasing the activity of birds in the day and encouraging proper rest at night, for example through manipulation of the lighting patterns (increasing light intensity during light periods combined with a longer uninterrupted dark period) can reduce lameness. Increased activity can also be achieved by enriching the environment, and by reducing the stocking density.
54. Lameness may develop as a result of infections acquired from the parent flock or hatchery. High standards of biosecurity and hygiene in the parent flock, during the handling of the eggs, at the hatchery and in subsequent handling and transport of the chicks should be maintained. Husbandry measures and practices on the breeding farm should be designed to minimise the numbers of floor eggs. Heavily soiled eggs should not be set as hatching eggs. Prior to crating and loading, an assessment of birds' fitness to travel must be undertaken. Careful consideration should be given by the flock-keeper as to whether lame birds are legally fit to travel. If they are not, they should be humanely culled on farm. Birds with severe and painful conditions such as advanced plantar necrosis are unfit for transport. Small or emaciated birds should not be transported to a slaughterhouse but humanely culled on farm.

Monitoring health and welfare at the slaughterhouse

Paragraphs 14-15 of Part 3 of Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states:

14 (1) For the purposes of Section III (food chain information) of Annex II to Regulation 853/2004⁶, the daily mortality rate and cumulative daily mortality

⁶ [Regulation 853/2004](#)

rate and the hybrid or breed of chickens from a flock with a stocking density in excess of 33 kilograms per m² of usable area is treated as relevant food safety information.

(2) A food business operator operating a slaughterhouse must–

- (a) under the supervision of the official veterinarian, record the number of chickens from such a flock that are dead on arrival at the slaughterhouse; and
- (b) provide that information on request to the official veterinarian.

(3) In this paragraph–

"cumulative daily mortality rate" means the sum of daily mortality rates;

"daily mortality rate" means the number of chickens which have died in a house on the same day including those that have been culled either because of disease or because of other reasons, divided by the number of chickens present in the house on that day, multiplied by 100.

15 (1) An official veterinarian conducting controls under Regulation 854/2004⁷ in relation to chickens must evaluate the results of the post-mortem inspection to identify possible indications of poor welfare conditions in their holding or house of origin.

(2) If the mortality rate of the chickens or the results of the post-mortem inspection are consistent with poor animal welfare conditions, the official veterinarian must communicate the data to the keeper of those chickens and to the Welsh Ministers without delay.

55. All meat chickens undergo ante and post mortem assessment at the slaughterhouse (i.e. before and after slaughter). For conventionally reared meat chickens the results of these assessments are fed into the 'trigger system' (see Appendix 2). The trigger system sets levels for conditions, including dead on arrival (DOA), the cumulative daily mortality rate and seven other conditions. Scores above trigger levels will generate a report which is sent to keepers and to the Animal and Plant Health Agency for action. Trigger reports should lead to prompt action by the flock-keeper to ensure that problems identified at the slaughterhouse are investigated and resolved to protect any remaining birds in the current flock or in subsequent flocks. Each year approximately 4% of batches of conventionally reared meat chickens processed through GB slaughterhouses generate a trigger report. For further information on the trigger system see appendix 2.

56. Keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens reared above a stocking density of 33 kilograms per m² of useable area must provide the cumulative daily mortality rate for each house of birds, including the hybrid or breed, on the food chain information report. All keepers of conventionally reared meat chickens are encouraged to provide these data as well as the stocking density of the birds at the point of

⁷ [Regulation 854/2004](#)

depopulation in conjunction with The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007.

Mutilations

Section 5 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 states:

- (1) A person commits an offence if—
 - (a) he carries out a prohibited procedure on a protected animal;
 - (b) he causes such a procedure to be carried out on such an animal.
- (2) A person commits an offence if—
 - (a) he is responsible for an animal,
 - (b) another person carries out a prohibited procedure on the animal, and
 - (c) he permitted that to happen or failed to take such steps (whether by way of supervising the other person or otherwise) as were reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent that happening.
- (3) References in this section to the carrying out of a prohibited procedure on an animal are to the carrying out of a procedure which involves interference with the sensitive tissues or bone structure of the animal, otherwise than for the purpose of its medical treatment.
- (4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply in such circumstances as the appropriate national authority may specify by regulations.
- (5) Before making regulations under subsection (4), the appropriate national authority shall consult such persons appearing to the authority to represent any interests concerned as the authority considers appropriate.

57. Mutilations cause pain to chickens and should only be carried out where necessary to avoid a more severe welfare outcome. They should only be applied after consideration of possible alternative interventions in each case and not as a routine practice.
58. Mutilations of chickens are banned under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) exempt certain procedures from this ban, provided that they are carried out by a person permitted to carry out the procedure and:
 - in accordance with any relevant requirement in Schedules 2 to 9 (of the regulations);
 - in such a way as to minimise the pain and suffering it causes to the animal;
 - in hygienic conditions; and
 - in accordance with good practice.

The Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2007⁸ allows veterinary surgeons or other persons permitted to carry out the procedures under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 or the Veterinary Surgery (Exemptions) Order 2015 to carry out a number of permitted procedures on poultry.

Beak trimming

The Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2007, on beak trimming of poultry, states:

5. Beak trimming of poultry

- (1) For all poultry, the beak trimming procedure must be performed using a suitable instrument.
- (2) For all poultry, any subsequent haemorrhage from the beak must be arrested by cauterisation.
- (3) For all poultry the procedure must be performed on–
 - (a) both the upper and lower beaks, with not more than one third of each removed, or
 - (b) the upper beak only, with not more than one third removed.
- (4) For laying hens and chicks that are intended to become laying hens, which are kept on establishments with 350 or more such birds, beak trimming–
 - (a) may only be performed in order to prevent feather pecking or cannibalism;
 - (b) may only be carried out using infra-red technology;
 - (c) may not be performed on birds which are aged 10 days or over; and
 - (d) must be carried out by a person who has been provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training so that they are qualified to perform the procedure.
- (5) Sub-paragraphs (4)(b) and (c) do not apply where the procedure is carried out in an emergency in order to control an outbreak of feather pecking or cannibalism.
- (6) For conventionally reared meat chickens the procedure–
 - (a) may only be performed in order to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism;
 - (b) may not be performed on birds which are aged 10 days or over;
 - (c) must be carried out by a person who has been provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training so that they are qualified to perform the procedure; and

⁸ [The Mutilations \(Permitted Procedures\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2007 \(as amended\)](#)

(d) must only be carried out following a consultation with and on the advice of a veterinarian.

59. Beak trimming of meat chickens should not be necessary because they are normally slaughtered before reaching sexual maturity. Consideration should be given to environmental enrichment before beak trimming is considered necessary. Possible methods of environmental enrichment should be risk-assessed and any nutritional deficiencies in feed should be investigated as a possible cause of any incident of injurious pecking.

Housing

Paragraphs 11-12 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

11. Materials used for the construction of accommodation, and in particular for the construction of pens, cages, stalls and equipment with which the animals may come into contact, must not be harmful to them and must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

12. Accommodation and fittings for securing animals must be constructed and maintained so that there are no sharp edges or protrusions likely to cause injury to them.

CONSULTATION

60. Expert advice should be sought before any buildings for housing birds are constructed or modified. It is important to ensure that housing and equipment is suitable for the intended use. Only housing and equipment that has been comprehensively tested, and which will not compromise bird health and welfare, should be used. When bringing in new, or used equipment, keepers should at all times consider the significant risk of introduction and spread of disease between houses or between farms.
61. Sites for accommodating meat and breeding chickens should be selected taking into consideration the risks from outside environmental factors such as noise, light, vibration, atmospheric pollution and predators. Where appropriate, advantage should be taken of natural features to provide shelter and to protect birds from predators and vermin.

Ventilation and temperature

Paragraphs 13 and 18-21 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

13. Air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations must be kept within limits which are not harmful to the animals.

18. All automated or mechanical equipment essential for the health and well-being of the animals must be inspected at least once a day to check that there is no defect in it.

19. Where defects in automated or mechanical equipment of the type referred to in paragraph 18 are discovered, these must be rectified immediately or, if this is impossible, appropriate steps must be taken to safeguard the health and well-being of the animals pending the rectification of those defects including the use of alternative methods of feeding and watering and methods of providing and maintaining a satisfactory environment.

20. Where the health and well-being of the animals is dependent on an artificial ventilation system –

(a) provision must be made for an appropriate back-up system to guarantee sufficient air renewal to preserve the health and well-being of the animals in the event of failure of the system; and

(b) an alarm system (which will operate even if the principal electricity supply to it has failed) must be provided to give warning of any failure of the system.

21. The back-up system referred to in paragraph 20(a) must be thoroughly inspected and the alarm system referred to in paragraph 20(b) tested at least once every seven days in order to check that there is no defect, and, if any defect is found at any time, it must be rectified immediately.

Paragraph 8 of Part 2, Schedule 5A, to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states:

8.–(1) Ventilation must be sufficient to avoid overheating.

(2) Ventilation, in combination with heating systems, must be sufficient to remove excessive moisture.

CONSULTATION

For birds being stocked at the higher densities (i.e. above 33kg/m²) paragraph 5 of Part 2, Schedule 5A to the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states, in addition to paragraph 8 (1) and (2):

5. The keeper must –

(a) maintain and, on request, make available to the Welsh Ministers, documentation in the house giving a detailed description of the production systems, in particular information on technical details of the house and its equipment, including –

(i) a plan of the house including the dimensions of the surfaces occupied by the chickens;

(ii) ventilation and any relevant cooling and heating system (including their location), and a ventilation plan, detailing target air quality parameters (such as airflow, air speed and temperature);

(iii) feeding and watering systems (and their location);

(iv) alarm and backup systems in the event of a failure of any equipment essential for the health and well-being of the chickens;

(v) floor type and litter normally used; and

(vi) records of technical inspections of the ventilation and alarm systems;

(b) keep up to date the documentation referred to in subparagraph (a);

(c) ensure that each house is equipped with ventilation, and if necessary, heating and cooling systems designed, constructed and operated in such a way that –

(i) the concentration of ammonia does not exceed 20 parts per million and the concentration of carbon dioxide does not exceed 3,000 parts per million, when measured at the level of the chickens' heads;

(ii) when the outside temperature measured in the shade exceeds 30°C, the inside temperature does not exceed the outside temperature by more than 3°C; and

(iii) when the outside temperature is below 10°C, the average relative humidity measured inside the house during a continuous period of 48 hours does not exceed 70%.

62. Ventilation rates, air distribution and house conditions should at all times be adequate to provide sufficient fresh air for the birds, without draughts, and to keep the litter dry and friable. Air quality, including dust level and concentrations of carbon monoxide, should be monitored, controlled and kept within limits to ensure the welfare of the birds.

63. Extremes of temperature should be avoided. Birds should be protected from cold draughts. Ventilation should be appropriate for the age and type of flock.

64. Chicks should be placed in a pre-heated house or with brooders when they arrive and their behaviour monitored carefully. Young chicks are

particularly susceptible to extremes of temperature and an even distribution of the chicks in the house will indicate that they are thermally comfortable. As birds develop their secondary feathering, they can tolerate a fairly wide range of temperatures but every effort should be made to avoid creating conditions which will lead to chilling, huddling and subsequent smothering. In addition, low temperatures have been associated with increased susceptibility to conditions such as ascites.

65. Birds on restricted feed are more susceptible to low temperatures but less so to high temperatures. If the temperature is allowed to fall there may be a need to increase feed or provide environmental heating.
66. In less well ventilated buildings which are stocked at the higher densities, additional heat, coupled with a higher level of ventilation, may be required to reduce relative humidity levels below 70%.

Heat stress

67. Birds should not be exposed to strong, direct sunlight or hot, humid conditions long enough to cause heat stress, as indicated by prolonged panting. Attention should be paid to air throughput, distribution and especially air movement at bird level during periods of hot weather.
68. Keepers should plan ahead to avoid heat stress. During the summer months consideration should be given to reducing stocking density at the time of ordering or placing of day-old chicks. If suffering or mortality occurs, the onus will be on the person responsible for the birds to demonstrate that the measures taken were appropriate for the design of the building, its locality and the predicted maximum temperature/humidity at the time.
69. During hot and humid conditions, birds should be checked more frequently for signs indicating heat stress, but not disturbed unduly.
70. Steps should be taken to minimise the potential for heat stress by increasing ventilation and air speed at bird level. Portable back-up fans can help to increase ventilation during periods of hot and humid weather. The air temperature within a building may be reduced by improved insulation and the correct use of evaporative cooling of incoming air, taking care to avoid a combination of high temperature and high humidity. Spraying of cold water on the roof should be considered as a last resort, and only when temperature and humidity levels are excessive. The heat output of the birds may be reduced by lowering the stocking density, or by changing the feeding patterns.

Further advice about heat stress is available at Appendix 2.

Additional ventilation requirements for conventionally reared meat chickens stocked about 33 kg/m²

71. For flocks stocked at densities in excess of 33 kg/m², the ventilation system should be capable of delivering an air speed of at least 1 m/second over as much of the floor area as is possible in conventionally ventilated buildings. In buildings with tunnel ventilation, the ventilation system should be capable of delivering an air speed of at least 2 m/second. For naturally ventilated buildings, inlets and outlets should be sufficiently large to allow as high an air speed as possible over the birds. Free-standing fans can be introduced to provide additional air movement at bird level.

Lighting

Paragraphs 14-16 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state that:

14. Animals kept in buildings must not be kept in permanent darkness.
15. Where the natural light available in a building is insufficient to meet the physiological or ethological needs of any animals being kept in it, appropriate artificial lighting must be provided.
16. Animals kept in buildings must not be kept without an appropriate period of rest from artificial lighting.

Paragraph 10 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended), states:

- 10 (1) All houses must have lighting with an intensity of at least 20 lux during the lighting period, measured at bird eye level and illuminating at least 80% of the usable area.
- (2) A temporary reduction from that lighting level is permitted where necessary following veterinary advice.
- (3) Within seven days from the time when the chickens are placed in the house and until three days before the expected time of slaughter, the lighting must follow a 24-hour rhythm and include periods of darkness lasting at least six hours in total, with at least one uninterrupted period of darkness of at least four hours, excluding dimming periods.

72. All meat chickens should be housed at light levels which allow them to see clearly and which stimulate activity. This is achieved by lighting systems designed, maintained and operated to give a minimum light of 20 lux at bird eye height over at least 80% of the useable area. If light levels are reduced at thinning to keep birds calm, the light should be returned to a minimum of 20 lux without delay if any birds remain in the house after thinning. A gradual increase in light intensity at this time, similar to a dawn or dusk period, could reduce the risk of back scratching. Where there is concern that returning the lights to 20 lux will result in compromised bird

welfare, a temporary reduction in lighting level is permitted on a case-by-case basis but only as a result of following veterinary advice on each occasion.

73. Conventionally reared meat chickens must be given a period of darkness lasting at least six hours in each 24 hour period, with at least one uninterrupted period of darkness of at least four hours, excluding dimming periods. Preferably the period of darkness provided would be uninterrupted, lasting at least six hours in a 24 hour rhythm. Keepers should be mindful that the lights being switched back on after the dark period is likely to lead to a significant increase in bird activity which may cause problems such as back scratching. Greater attention to management practices will therefore be required to ensure that bird welfare is maintained when the light is restored. For example, sufficient feeders and drinkers should be available to allow all birds to eat and drink at the same time following the period of rest. Attention will also need to be paid to litter condition, particularly under nipple drinker lines, which could become wet due to the number of birds drinking at the same time. If this is the case, the addition of more litter should be considered.
74. A 'dawn and dusk' light provision with gradual increases and reductions in lighting may help manage the change in activity levels of the birds. Housing that exposes birds to natural daylight can effectively provide this transition and the natural wavelength light spectrum may have additional beneficial effects on bird behaviour, such as increased activity levels and improved leg health in addition to improved litter quality. However, there should be a facility to reduce exposure to natural daylight if bird welfare is compromised by high light levels, for example, scratching or injurious pecking, or for specific management procedures, for example, catching

Litter

Regulation 5(1) of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 states that a person responsible for poultry (other than those kept in the systems referred to in Schedules 2 to 4) kept in a building must ensure they are kept on, or have access at all times to, well-maintained litter or a well-drained area for resting.

Paragraph 7 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states that all chickens must have access to litter which is dry and friable on the surface.

75. Housed chickens spend their lives in contact with litter and their health and welfare are linked to its quality. Conditions such as pododermatitis, hock burn, foot pad lesions and breast blisters are consequences of poor quality litter. Well-designed equipment and good management are important to maintain good litter quality. The ventilation capacity should be sufficient to avoid overheating and to remove excess moisture. The feed composition should be well balanced to avoid problems with wet or

sticky droppings. Specialist advice should be sought and acted on and stocking density should be reduced if poor quality litter is a persistent problem.

76. The material that is used as litter must be of an appropriate quality. It must be suitable to provide dry bedding material and not contain anything that could be toxic or cause injury to the birds.
77. Litter should be kept loose and friable on the surface and measures should be taken to minimise the risk of mould and mite infestation. Litter should be inspected frequently for signs of deterioration and appropriate action should be taken to rectify any problem. Litter should also be inspected to ensure it does not become excessively wet or dusty. A drinker system which minimises water spillage should be used, such as water nipples with drip cups positioned at an appropriate height for all birds. Nipple drinkers without cups may be used if they are well managed and the water pressure is checked frequently to ensure there is no leakage.

Stocking density and freedom of movement

Paragraphs 9 and 10 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

9. The freedom of movement of animals, having regard to their species and in accordance with good practice and scientific knowledge, must not be restricted in such a way as to cause them unnecessary suffering or injury.
10. Where animals are continuously or regularly confined, they must be given the space appropriate to their physiological and ethological needs in accordance with good practice and scientific knowledge.

Paragraphs 3 to 5 of Schedule 5A, Part 2, of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

- 3.–(1) Unless sub-paragraph (2) applies, the stocking density must not exceed 33 kilograms per m² of usable area.
- (2) A stocking density in excess of 33 kilograms and up to 39 kilograms per m² of usable area may be used if the requirements of paragraph 5 are complied with.
- 4.–(1) A keeper must ensure that the Welsh Ministers are notified of the intended stocking density of each house where it is intended to keep chickens at a density in excess of 33 kilograms per m² of usable area, and of any subsequent change to that notified density.
- (2) Notification must be made in such manner and form as the Welsh Ministers may require.
- (3) Notification (including notification of any change) must be given at least 15 working days before stocking at that density or changed density takes place.

(4) In this paragraph "working day" means a day other than a Saturday or a Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a day which is a bank holiday in England and Wales under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971.

5. The requirements of this paragraph are that the keeper must—

(a) maintain and, on request, make available to the Welsh Ministers, documentation in the house giving a detailed description of the production systems, in particular information on technical details of the house and its equipment, including—

(i) a plan of the house including the dimensions of the surfaces occupied by the chickens;

(ii) ventilation and any relevant cooling and heating system (including their location), and a ventilation plan, detailing target air quality parameters (such as airflow, air speed and temperature);

(iii) feeding and watering systems (and their location);

(iv) alarm and backup systems in the event of a failure of any equipment essential for the health and well-being of the chickens;

(v) floor type and litter normally used; and

(vi) records of technical inspections of the ventilation and alarm systems;

(b) keep up to date the documentation referred to in subparagraph (a);

(c) ensure that each house is equipped with ventilation and, if necessary, heating and cooling systems designed, constructed and operated in such a way that—

(i) the concentration of ammonia does not exceed 20 parts per million and the concentration of carbon dioxide does not exceed 3,000 parts per million, when measured at the level of the chickens' heads;

(ii) when the outside temperature measured in the shade exceeds 30°C, the inside temperature does not exceed the outside temperature by more than 3°C; and

(iii) when the outside temperature is below 10°C, the average relative humidity measured inside the house during a continuous period of 48 hours does not exceed 70%.

78. A variety of factors need to be taken into account to promote good welfare when setting and monitoring stocking densities. The observance of any particular maximum stocking density is important but cannot, by itself, ensure the welfare of the birds. There is a close relationship between stockmanship, litter management, environmental control and stocking density. Birds will be maintained in good condition only if the balance is right and the onus is on the producer to demonstrate that welfare is not compromised whatever the stocking density.

79. The decision to stock at a particular density should be made on a house basis and should take account of house-specific management factors.

There are several management factors that should influence the keeper's decision to stock at a particular density. These include the health and welfare of previous flocks, such as reports from the slaughterhouse, and limitations of environmental controls within a house, which may vary by season and weather conditions. In order to stock conventionally reared meat chickens above 33kg/m² there must be compliance with the additional factors set out in legislation.

80. Irrespective of the type of system, all chickens should have sufficient freedom of movement to be able, without difficulty, to stand normally, turn around and stretch their wings. They should also have sufficient space to be able to sit without interference from other birds.
81. Stocking density should be reduced and specialist advice taken if problems occur, in particular excessive heat or humidity due to inadequate ventilation or poor litter quality. If disease or environmental problems arise in a particular building or system, reducing the stocking density in subsequent flocks may lessen the likelihood of recurrence. Consideration should be given in advance of predicted hot weather to stocking at a reduced density.
82. Thinning is stressful for the birds and should be avoided. If thinning is necessary, it should be carried out with care to maintain biosecurity and to ensure minimal disturbance to birds whose feed and water have been temporarily withdrawn. A written protocol should specify procedures to minimise the effect on birds and the biosecurity risk, including the risk of introducing zoonotic diseases into the flock, and procedures to minimise feed and water withdrawal.
83. For conventionally reared meat chickens, notification to the Welsh Ministers of intended stocking density of each house was made in 2010 via a form sent by APHA to all known keepers. If keepers change the stocking density of birds reared in a house from that notified in 2010 or build new houses, APHA must be notified 15 working days before the birds are placed. This notification should be done by sending the form at Appendix 2.

Environmental Enrichment

84. Environmental enrichment, by providing birds with more choice in activities, can improve bird health and welfare by reducing injurious pecking and aggressive interactions between birds.
85. Providing birds with straw bales, perches, low barriers and pecking objects (such as brassicas, scattered whole grain and bales of shavings), can also improve leg health by increasing the amount of time birds spend standing, walking and running and reduce the amount of time birds spend sitting and resting.
86. Environmental enrichment can be more easily provided in some systems than others.

Automatic or Mechanical Equipment

Paragraphs 18 to 21 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

18. All automated or mechanical equipment essential for the health and well-being of the animals must be inspected at least once a day to check that there is no defect in it.

19. Where defects in automated or mechanical equipment of the type referred to in paragraph 18 are discovered, these must be rectified immediately, or if this is impossible, appropriate steps must be taken to safeguard the health and well-being of the animals pending the rectification of those defects including the use of alternative methods of feeding and watering and alternative methods of providing and maintaining a satisfactory environment.

20. Where the health and well-being of the animals is dependent on an artificial ventilation system –

(a) provision must be made for an appropriate back-up system to guarantee sufficient air renewal to preserve the health and well-being of the animals in the event of failure of the system; and

(b) an alarm system (which will operate even if the principal electricity supply to it has failed) must be provided to give warning of any failure of the system.

21. The back-up system referred to in paragraph 20(a) must be thoroughly inspected and the alarm system referred to in paragraph 20(b) tested at least once every seven days in order to check that there is no defect, and, if any defect is found at any time, it must be rectified immediately.

Paragraph 9 of Schedule 5A of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended) states that in all houses:

- (a) the sound level must be minimised, and

(b) ventilation fans, feeding machinery or other equipment must be constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a way that they cause the least possible amount of noise.

87. All equipment and services, including feed hoppers, screw augers, feed chain and delivery systems, drinkers, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers and alarm systems, should be cleaned and inspected regularly and kept in good working order. Generators or other energy backup systems must also be available, tested and maintained regularly.
88. Ventilation, heating, lighting, feeding, watering and all other equipment or electrical installations should be designed, sited and installed so as to avoid risk of injuring the birds.
89. All automated equipment upon which the birds' welfare is dependent must incorporate a fail safe or standby device and an alarm system to warn the flock-keeper of failure. Defects should be rectified immediately or other measures taken to safeguard the health and welfare of birds. Alternative ways of feeding and of maintaining a satisfactory environment should therefore be ready for use.

Contingency Planning

90. Measures should be put in place for contingency planning following an assessment of possible hazards. Contingency plans should deal with events such as the disruption of feed, power or water supply; heat stress; natural disasters such as floods and fires; arrangements for dealing with restrictions placed in case of notifiable disease, including dealing with delays in moving birds to slaughter and the compulsory temporary housing of free-range birds. Plans should also include arrangements for both killing and disposal of flocks when depopulation is required in the event of notifiable disease or due to contamination of feed or pasture with toxins.
91. Where buildings need to be locked, arrangements should be made to allow rapid entry in case of an emergency.

Additional Recommendations for Free Range Systems

Paragraph 17 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) states that animals not kept in buildings must, where necessary and possible, be given protection from adverse weather conditions, predators and risks to their health and must, at all times, have access to a well drained lying area.

Poultry keepers should also refer to EU Marketing Standards for Poultry meat, Commission Regulation (EEC) No 543/2008⁹ regarding stocking densities, feed requirements, access to the range and minimum age at slaughter

92. Factors such as soil type, drainage, size of colony and frequency of flock rotation are very important in deciding the number of birds that a particular area can support. Heavy, poorly drained soil can carry fewer birds than land which is light and well drained.
93. Land on which free range birds are kept for prolonged periods may become “fowl sick”, i.e. contaminated with organisms which cause or carry disease to an extent which could seriously prejudice the health of the birds on the land. Birds should be routinely monitored to check for signs indicative of a build up of pathogens on the land. The time taken for land to become fowl sick depends on the type of land and stocking density. Appropriate measures should be taken to prevent fowl sickness or to provide a new ranging area by moving the housing (in the case of portable units) or by rotating the ranging area outside fixed buildings.
94. Sufficient housing should be available to the birds at all times and it may be necessary to exclude birds from the range in bad weather if there is a danger that their welfare will be compromised.
95. Birds should be encouraged to use the outdoor area by provision of adequate, suitable and properly managed vegetation, overhead cover forming corridors leading out from the house and distributed around the range, and a supply of fresh water away from the house, which can induce birds to range. Supplementary feed should not be routinely provided outdoors to avoid attracting wild birds, rodents and other animals into the flock. If ponds are located near to the range area, they should be fenced off and/or netted to discourage wild birds, in particular water fowl, from landing.

⁹ [Commission Regulation \(EEC\) No 543/2008](#)

Additional Recommendations for Breeding and Grandparent Chickens

96. Breeding birds are selected for specific traits including, for example, the production of fertilised eggs or meat production. Consequently, their husbandry requirements can be different from those of their progeny. Highly competent stockmanship, a high standard of housing and equipment and good control of the environment are essential.

Feed and Water

97. The rearing and management of breeding chickens is a careful balance of appropriate feeding and light management in the puberty phase and appropriate management in lay, so that hens achieve an optimal growth and maintain persistency of lay. In the rearing phase, an appropriate growth curve for the breed, as indicated by the breed supplier, should be followed. During rearing, feed intake should be balanced to avoid birds being fed too much which could lead to obesity, increases in mortality and seriously compromised health, welfare and production.
98. If feed intake is restricted too much, birds are likely to experience stress and hunger. Balancing the control of feed intake, with growth and feed type, is necessary to ensure the optimal transition of birds into adulthood.
99. Birds must be offered food at least daily throughout the production cycle with the exception of the day of transportation as they may travel more comfortably with an empty crop. Increased feed should be given to breeding birds on the day before travel and water should be made available up to the time of catching.
100. Particular attention should be paid to ensure that competition is avoided and all birds get an appropriate quantity of the feed. Feeding equipment should be capable of delivering small quantities of feed rapidly, accurately and evenly to all birds and the amount of trough space allocated should allow adequate access to feed for all birds. Feed should have good physical qualities e.g. hard pellets. Scatter feeding reduces displacement behaviours and increases foraging. If feed is scattered, it should be distributed over a sufficient area to allow access for all birds to be fed.
101. In addition to routine daily checks, the body weight and condition of the birds should be systematically monitored as a minimum, on a weekly basis. Prompt, appropriate adjustments should be made to feed allocation according to what is found.
102. The nutritional quality of feed must be carefully monitored and controlled. It is advisable to check the nutritional content of feed to ensure it comprises the right specification, especially if any problems arise. Keepers must be particularly vigilant after changes in feed batches.

103. During the first six weeks of life, feed should be adequate to ensure good skeletal development. The level of feed intake throughout rearing should be managed to achieve a steady daily growth rate and not be less than that recommended in the breeders' manuals.
104. Birds whose feed quantity is restricted may show increased drinking and displacement behaviour such as environmental pecking (e.g. pecking at the empty feeder and the wall or 'spot' pecking). Higher water intakes can impact negatively on litter quality. Increasing the fibre content of the feed increases the time taken for birds to consume their food and can reduce their water intake, thereby improving litter condition.
105. It may be necessary to manage the supply of water in relation to the feeding system and programme to reduce excessive drinking and to maintain litter quality. However, an adequate supply of fresh drinking water must be provided each day. When access to water is time limited it is vital that there is generous provision of drinkers with adequate flow to enable all birds to drink without undue competition.
106. During lay, cockerels and hens have different nutritional requirements and may be fed differently within the same house. The equipment used to prevent cockerels taking feed intended for hens should be carefully adjusted to ensure that access for hens is maintained and cockerels are not injured. However, some systems and stages in the flock cycle require both males and females to be fed similar amounts of feed together and so it may be desirable to remove cockerel excluders from female feeding systems. Breeding birds must not be induced to moult by stopping feed and water, in conjunction with the Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97 Chapter V paragraph 2.

Aggression, Injurious Pecking and Environmental Enrichment

107. The provision of enrichment such as unopened bales of shavings, good quality straw, scattering of bio-secure wholegrain or other enrichment to encourage normal scratching and pecking behaviour, may help to prevent or reduce injurious and aggressive pecking in the rearing period which adversely affects the welfare of the birds. Along with the provision of natural light it can encourage activity which is good for leg health.
108. To enrich the environment, insoluble grit should be offered (either spread on the litter or supplied in separate containers, in a measured amount) from about six weeks of age. This will also help the gizzard to break down any litter or feathers which may have been consumed and encourage scratching. Foraging behaviour has the added advantage of improving litter quality.
109. Suitable perches in the rearing house may provide a form of enrichment to aid the birds in performing another of their natural behaviours. Perches will also aid

the birds' adaptation from litter to raised, perforated floors when they move to the laying phase

Mutilations - Beak Trimming

110. It is not usually necessary to beak trim female breeding and grandparent chicks routinely. For male breeding and grandparent chicks, beak trimming may be appropriate to prevent injury to other birds from aggressive or injurious pecking. If so, only the tip of the beak should be removed from these. If so, only the tip of the beak should be removed. This should be done before 10 days of age, preferably at day old using infra-red technology. Beak trimming of older birds should only be carried out in an emergency when advised by a veterinary surgeon.

Buildings and Accommodation

111. Breeding and grandparent birds should be reared in houses in which temperature, humidity, ventilation rates, light levels and photoperiods are carefully regulated. A well designed house will incorporate insulation, ventilation fans and vents, effective light proofing, and a lighting system providing controllable light levels with uniform distribution.
112. Ventilation rates, air distribution and house conditions must at all times be adequate to provide sufficient fresh air appropriate for the age of the birds, without draughts. Air quality, including dust levels and concentrations of carbon monoxide, should be controlled and kept within limits so that the welfare of the birds is not negatively affected.
113. Recommended minimum light intensities and photoperiods for breeding and grandparent birds should be obtained from specialists and breeding companies supplying the stock.
114. If aggression or injurious pecking occurs then specialist advice should be obtained.
115. Careful attention should be paid to the hen to cockerel ratio to ensure the development of optimal male-female relationships and avoid aggression from females towards immature males, or to protect females from too mature (older) cockerels in the breeder house. Where relationship problems occur, consideration should be given to providing barriers or baffles along the litter area of the breeder house, which can reduce stress in females by allowing them to retreat from cockerels.
116. In winter it can be difficult to maintain the correct temperature in breeder houses. As a result, air and litter quality can deteriorate resulting in respiratory, leg and foot pad problems. In these circumstances, supplementary heating should be available and provided.

Stocking Density and Freedom of Movement

117. Stocking density for breeding birds should not exceed 28 kg/m² calculated by dividing the total weight of all the birds (males and females) in the house by the total area available to the birds.

Breeding Procedures

Paragraphs 28 and 29 of Schedule 1 of the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) state:

28.-(1) Natural or artificial breeding or breeding procedures which cause, or are likely to cause, suffering or injury to any of the animals concerned, must not be practised.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) does not preclude the use of natural or artificial breeding procedures that are likely to cause minimal or momentary suffering or injury or that might necessitate interventions which would not cause lasting injury.

29. Animals may only be kept for farming purposes if it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of their genotype or phenotype, that they can be kept without any detrimental effect on their health or welfare.

118. Birds should come from balanced breeding programmes, balancing health, welfare and production goals simultaneously.
119. Identification of birds should be encouraged, to enable future feedback of information within the breeding pyramid and better application of breeding for welfare, based on data from the supply chain. Welfare problems can best be reduced by breeding for birds with lower welfare problems.
120. Husbandry measures and practices at breeding premises should be designed to minimise floor eggs and heavily soiled eggs, which should not be sent as hatching eggs. Littered nests are preferred by breeding females and may reduce the numbers of floor eggs if litter substrate is placed in a nest, whatever the base type (metal, wood, rubber mat).

Disposal of Surplus Chicks and Embryos in Hatchery Waste

Paragraph 44 of Schedule 2 of The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (Wales) Regulations 2014¹⁰, on surplus chicks in hatchery waste, states:

44.—(1) No person may kill surplus chicks which are less than 72 hours old in hatchery waste except by one of the following methods—

- (a) maceration in accordance with Table 1 of Chapter I and Chapter II of Annex I;
- (b) exposure to a gas mixture in accordance with Table 3 of Chapter I and Chapter II of Annex I and this paragraph; or

¹⁰ [The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing \(Wales\) Regulations 2014](#)

(c) where there is no other method available for killing, cervical dislocation in accordance with Table 1 of Chapter I and Chapter II of Annex I.

(2) No person may kill surplus chicks which are less than 72 hours old in hatchery waste by exposure to a gas mixture unless the chicks are placed in the gas mixture and remain in the gas mixture until dead.

(3) The killing of surplus chicks which are less than 72 hours old in hatchery waste must be as rapid as possible.

121. Surplus chicks and embryos in hatchery waste should always be killed humanely, by a trained and competent person in accordance with the welfare at the time of killing requirements, using gas killing or purpose designed high speed maceration.
122. Embryos in shell must not be killed using gas mixtures as it is very difficult to achieve sufficiently high concentrations of gas to kill in shell embryos. When using carbon dioxide or gas mixtures to kill surplus chicks, the operator should check thoroughly to ensure that all birds are dead. When using any of the permitted gas mixtures it is essential that the levels of each gas are monitored and maintained as any build up in the oxygen content will significantly reduce the effectiveness of the system and is likely to result in birds taking longer to die or possibly regaining consciousness. The rate of delivery of birds should be such as to ensure that birds are not crushed or suffocated during exposure to gas mixtures. For further information see the Humane Slaughter Association's Code of Practice for the Disposal of Chicks in Hatcheries.

Other Legislation and Recommendations Affecting Meat Chickens, Breeding Birds and Hatcheries

The main requirements are summarised below. This does not represent an exhaustive list and note that some legislation is regularly updated and/or amended. All UK legislation can be found at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

Council of Europe

This Code takes account of the Council of Europe recommendations concerning domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*)¹¹. These set out general principles of husbandry and care and include a section on meat chickens.

Transport

See Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 (the protection of animals during transport and related operations)¹², the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007¹³ and associated guidance¹⁴ for information on transporting meat chickens.

Slaughter

See Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 (the protection of animals at the time of killing)¹⁵, and associated domestic legislation and guidance for information on welfare at slaughter and killing meat chickens.

The Humane Slaughter Association has a Code of Practice for the Disposal of Chicks in Hatcheries¹⁶.

Free range and organic systems

See Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008¹⁷ for poultry meat marketing criteria (e.g. requirements for use of special marketing terms such as 'free range') including stocking density, feed requirements, range access, and minimum age at slaughter. EU requirements are enforced in Wales by the Poultry meat (Wales) Regulations 2011¹⁸. Separate enforcement provisions exist for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

11 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016805165ec>

12 <http://extwprlegs1.fao.org/docs/pdf/eur69655.pdf>

13 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/517/contents/made>

14 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/farm-animal-welfare-during-transportation>

15 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/325000/regulation_1099_2009_en.pdf

16 <http://www.hsa.org.uk/shop/publications-1/product/code-of-practice-for-the-disposal-of-chicks-in-hatcheries>

17 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:157:0046:0087:EN:PDF>

18 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/452/contents/made>

See Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007¹⁹ and Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008²⁰ for organic production requirements. The EU requirements are enforced in the UK by the Organic Products Regulations 2009²¹.

Food hygiene

See Regulation (EC) 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council²² for specific hygiene rules on the hygiene of foodstuffs. Section III of Annex II of this Regulation requires food business operators operating slaughterhouses, as appropriate, to request, receive, check and act upon food chain information as set out in this Section in respect of all animals, other than wild game, sent or intended to be sent to the slaughterhouse.

Animal by-products

See Council Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009²³ and Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011²⁴ for the EU requirements for storage, transport and disposal of animal by-products such as dead carcasses, manure and litter.

The EU requirements are enforced by The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (Wales) Regulation 2014²⁵.

For further information on animal by-products, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-by-product-categories-site-approval-hygiene-and-disposal>

19 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF>

20 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:250:0001:0084:EN:PDF>

21 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/842/pdfs/ukxi_20090842_en.pdf

22 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:139:0055:0205:EN:PDF>

23 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:300:0001:0033:EN:PDF>

24 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:054:0001:0254:EN:PDF>

25 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/517/contents/made>

Appendix 2

Guidance and Record Keeping

GB Poultry Register

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/poultry-registration>

<http://gov.wales/docs/drah/publications/130404-gb-poultry-register-form-en.pdf>

Broiler Trigger Reports

Each year approximately 4% of batches of conventionally reared meat chickens processed through GB slaughterhouses generate a trigger report.

Table 1: Trigger levels in use for Process 1. A trigger report is generated if the level of a post-mortem condition is exceptionally high (defined as greater than 6 standard deviations above the average).

Post-mortem condition	Process 1 trigger level (%)
Ascites/Oedema	2.02
Cellulitis & Dermatitis	3.00
Dead on Arrival (DOA)	1.51
Emaciation	0.67
Joint lesions	0.43
Septicaemia/Respiratory	9.28
Total rejections	11.76
Cumulative Daily Mortality Rate	11.85
FPD score*	167

Table 2: Trigger levels in use for Process 2. A trigger report is generated if the Cumulative Daily Mortality Rate is unusually high (defined as greater than 3 standard deviations above the average = 7.37%) and, additionally, the level of three or more other post-mortem conditions is high (defined as above the average).

Post-mortem condition	Process 2 trigger level (%)
Ascites/Oedema	0.21
Cellulitis & Dermatitis	0.20

Dead on Arrival (DOA)	0.12
Emaciation	0.04
Joint lesions	0.02
Septicaemia/Respiratory	0.49
Total rejections	1.11
FPD score*	60

*The FPD score is not a percentage but is a score of the severity and extent of lesions (between 0 and 200) based on scoring 100 feet.

Farm Health Planning

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/>

Poultry Registers advice

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/animalwelfare/livestockwelfare/poultry/broiler-chickens/training/?lang=en>

Heat Stress

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69373/pb10543-heat-stress-050330.pdf

Stocking Density

Form to be sent to APHA to notify them of change in stocking density of conventionally reared meat chickens. The WF90 meat chicken notification form is available on the GOV.UK website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/meat-chicken-notification>

Training

The British Poultry Training scheme, administered by Poultec and recognised by BPC, NFU and Defra, is an example of a scheme which meets the requirements of Annex IV to Council Directive 2007/43/EC to fulfil the training requirements for conventionally reared meat chickens in England. There may be other providers who can also meet these requirements.

Further details of the Poultec scheme can be found at www.poultrypassport.org.

CONSULTATION