

# Manual Agriculture Catalogue of criteria for dairy farming




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## 1 Basic criteria for livestock farming, hygiene and animal health

The livestock owner must comply with basic criteria for animal welfare, hygiene and animal health. The basic criteria correspond to the requirements of the **QS Guideline Agriculture Cattle Farming** in the chapters listed below. In the animal welfare audit, the focus is on the inspection of production in the shed. A comprehensive document check is only carried out if there are indications of existing nonconformities.

If abnormalities are detected with regard to injuries, lameness or severe soiling, corrective actions (action plan including deadlines) must be defined with the involvement of the stock care veterinarian. The livestock owner must implement the action plan on time and document this.

 Action plan and its implementation, if applicable

### **Animal welfare, hygiene and animal health:**

- 3.2.1 Monitoring and care of the animals
- 3.2.2 General husbandry requirements
- 3.2.3 Handling sick and injured animals
- 3.2.4 Shed floors
- 3.2.7 Space allowance
- 3.3.1 Feed supply
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- 3.3.3 Handling and storage of feed
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- 3.6.1 Buildings and annexes
- 3.6.2 Farm hygiene
- 3.6.4 Carcass storage and collection
- 3.6.5 Pest monitoring and control

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## 2 ITW criteria

All cattle (including purchased cattle) must be kept under ITW conditions at all times.

*[Note: Transitional limited consideration: in accordance with QS, all cattle (including purchased cattle) must be kept under ITW conditions for at least the last six months before slaughter. From January 1, 2027, all cattle (including purchased cattle) must be kept under ITW conditions for at least the last eight months prior to slaughter.]*

### 2.1 Participation in QS antibiotics monitoring

The livestock owner must participate in antibiotics monitoring.

 Antibiotics monitoring info letter, antibiotics database

### 2.2 Participation in the indexed slaughter findings data programme

The livestock owner must participate in the indexed slaughter findings data programme. The diagnostic data is collected in accordance with the specifications of the **QS guideline diagnostic data in cattle slaughter**.

 Info letter diagnostic data, diagnostic data database

### 2.3 Further training measures

The livestock owner or a responsible employee (e.g. herd manager, farm manager) must participate in relevant, specialised further training measures on livestock farming once per calendar year. Proof of this must be provided. Proof must be provided for the first time for the initial audit.

 Proof of further training, e.g. confirmation of participation in specialist lectures


### 2.4 Special husbandry requirements

All animals must be able to move freely at least some of the time. Pure tethering is prohibited.

If the animals are kept tethered, they must be able to move for at least two consecutive hours per day on at least 120 days per year. Exercise can be achieved through grazing, access to a free-range yard or access to an exercise pen. The exercise area must be at least 4.5 m<sup>2</sup> per animal and consist of a continuous area of at least 16 m<sup>2</sup>. A diary must be kept of each animal's exercise time. A plan showing the available net area and the maximum possible number of animals must be available at the end of audit.

The following minimum dimensions must be complied with when keeping animals in stalls:

	Stall width [cm]	Stall length [cm]
Dairy cattle in short stalls	110	165
Dairy cattle in medium-length stalls	110	200

 Documentation on the utilisation of the movement area; Plan with net area and possible number of animals

## Daylight

Every shed must have daylight incidence, with the light entering the animal area as evenly as possible.

If the animals are kept indoors, the lighting intensity and duration must be appropriate for the animals. If the incidence of light is insufficient, the shed must be artificially lit.

A lighting period of more than eight hours is recommended.

A light intensity of at least 80 lux must be ensured for at least ten hours a day in the area where the calves are kept. The lighting must be adapted to the daily rhythm and distributed as evenly as possible.

## Shed climate

The air conditions in the entire shed must be appropriate for the animals. Windows and air inlets must be open, except in adverse weather conditions. There must be no signs of inadequate air conditions such as condensation, pungent odours or similar.

## 2.5 Increased space allowance


In loose housing, all animals must be able to lie down at the same time. In cubicle pens, each animal must have a cubicle at its disposal (animal to cubicle ratio 1:1).

In dairy cattle husbandry (including dry cows), the unrestricted usable area (lying and walking area) in a loose housing system without cubicles must be at least 4 m<sup>2</sup> per animal weighing over 350 kg.

In calf housing and rearing, an unrestricted usable area must be available at all times at least in accordance with the table.

Weight section LG	Space allowance
Up to 150 kg	1.5 m <sup>2</sup> /animal
Over 150 to 220 kg	1.8 m <sup>2</sup> /animal
Over 220	2.5 m <sup>2</sup> /animal

A farm plan showing the available net area per group of animals kept together, the maximum possible number of animals and, if applicable, the number of cubicles must be available at the end of audit.

 Farm plan with net area certificate, possible number of animals and, if applicable, number of cubicles

## 2.6 Cleanliness of the animals

All animals must be clean. Discolouration and soiling must be kept to a minimum, and coarse soiling such as heavy accumulations of faeces must be avoided. No more than 10 % of the animals may have severe clod formation in the coat.

## 2.7 Scrubbing devices

All animals in group housing (in loose housing, exercise yards or crates) must be offered a functional scrubbing device (e.g. scrubbing brush) adapted to the animal species, at least one per group or crate, so that each animal can use a scrubbing device. Scrubbing devices do not have to be offered in the pasture.

The scrubbing devices must be available at a ratio of at least 1:60 animals and must be freely accessible.

## 2.8 Intensified veterinary stock care

The livestock owner must ensure that the agreements laid down in the veterinary care contract are complied with; with regard to the number of visits to the company, apart from acute cases of illness, the veterinarian must visit the company once before the initial audit and then regularly at least twice a year.

As part of the veterinary stock care, special attention must be paid to the care of the animals. This must be noted in the visit log. Basic feed analyses, ration calculations and drinking water analyses should be taken into account.

The veterinarian must document the care of the herd, the herd visits and their results and the evidence must be kept by the company.

If a need for action is jointly identified, an individual animal health and hygiene management plan must be drawn up for the company. This plan must include a regular, planned, systematic and consistent application of veterinary knowledge and expertise in accordance with the state of the art. If necessary, an action plan must also be drawn up that defines the individual activities (of the veterinarian and livestock owner).

The veterinary examination findings drawn up as part of the veterinary care or for curative treatment must be handed over to the company after each visit.



Veterinary visit reports or similar documents, action plan, vaccination plan

## 2.9 Soft lying surface

All animals must be provided with soft or elastically deformable lying surfaces. The use of litter is permitted, as is the use of soft surfaces (e.g. rubber mats). The soft lying surface must be large enough for all animals to lie on at the same time. In cubicle pens, all cubicles must be equipped with a soft surface.

## 2.10 Calving crate

All heifers and cows must be able to calve either in the pasture or separately in the shed. If at least 10 m<sup>2</sup> of soft lying area per cow is available in a barn system (e.g. manure barn, compost barn), it is not necessary to separate the calving cows.


If separation is necessary, a calving pen with a soft and non-slip lying surface must be available. The lying surface must be designed in such a way that liquids can be absorbed or drained off during calving. Alternatively, an appropriate collection pen can be used, which can also hold all calving animals during seasonal calving. The calving pen must be cleaned after each calving and must be large enough to allow the animals to turn around and for labour assistance to be carried out.

An area of approx. 10 m<sup>2</sup>/cow and visual contact with the herd is recommended. *[Target value: minimum dimensions of 12 m<sup>2</sup>/cow for individual pens and 8 m<sup>2</sup>/cow for collective pens - these values will be targeted in the next phase of the ITW Rind programme].*

## 2.11 Dehorning of calves

The dehorning of calves is only permitted with sedation in cattle under six weeks of age.

Painkillers must be used with every dehorning to alleviate post-operative pain. The medication prescribed by the veterinarian for this purpose must be used in accordance with the prescription.


 Proof of medication, combined document, herd book

## 2.12 Udder health

The somatic cell count/ml parameter must be documented at least four times a year at individual animal level for the entire herd. At least 55 % of the animals must have less than 100,000 cells/ml. If this value is not reached, the company must initiate measures in consultation with its supervising veterinarian.

The quarterly individual animal examination of the herd for somatic cell count/ml and the preparation of an action plan can only be waived if the company can prove that the average somatic cell count in the milk delivered has been below 200,000 cells/ml on average over the past three months.

The measures, including the specified deadline, must be documented in an action plan and submitted at the end of the audit. The action plan must be drawn up in consultation with the veterinarian and must aim to treat animals with elevated cell counts in a targeted manner in order to permanently reduce the somatic cell count/ml in the milk delivered [*target value: 150,000 cells/ml - this value will be targeted as the limit value in the next phase of the ITW Cattle programme*]. It must include the specific measures planned and specify the time frame in which these are to be implemented. It must be countersigned by the veterinarian and its proper implementation must be confirmed by the veterinarian upon conclusion.

 Documentation of the individual animal examination and, if applicable, veterinary action plan; documentation of the levels in the milk delivered, if applicable

### 3 Definitions and related documents

**Definition:**

The location is always considered:

Epizootic unit per VVVO number in combination with production scope, regardless of the number of sheds

**Related documents:**

QS guideline Agriculture Cattle farming

Initiative Tierwohl programme manual

**Initiative Tierwohl GmbH**

GF: Dr Alexander Hinrichs, Robert Römer  
Schwertberger Str. 14  
53177 Bonn  
Tel +49 228 336485-0  
Fax +49 228 336485-55  
[info@initiative-tierwohl.de](mailto:info@initiative-tierwohl.de)