Requirements catalogue meat industry

Conditions of participation for slaughtering/deboning companies, meat wholesalers, broker, marketers and processing companies

Structure

1 Introduction 2

2 Conditions of participation 2

2.1 Participant, participation 2

2.2 Application and registration 2

2.3 Abattoirs 3

2.3.1 Verification of eligibility 3

2.3.2 Diagnostic data collection 4

3 Requirements for slaughtering/deboning companies, meat wholesalers, broker, marketers and processing companies 4

3.1 Control and verification obligation 4

3.2 Identity for poultry, pork and beef 5

3.2.1 [K.O.] Reporting of slaughtered animals 5

3.2.2 [K.O.] Labelling of identified goods 6

3.2.3 [K.O.] Goods separation 7

3.2.4 [K.O.] Traceability system 7

3.2.5 [K.O.] Verification of approval 7

Annex 1 9

Annex 2: Recognition of programmes and standards for the marketing of products as ITW goods 11

1 Introduction

In the Initiative Tierwohl (hereinafter "ITW" for short), companies and associations from agriculture, the meat industry and food retailing have jointly set themselves the goal of promoting more animal-friendly and sustainable meat production. In the future, they want to continue to offer poultry, pork and beef in excellent quality and great variety, but at the same time make animal welfare even more the basis of their actions. To this end, a comprehensive programme to promote animal welfare on farms has been developed with business, science and stakeholders.

This requirements catalogue represents the Initiative Tierwohl's conditions of participation for slaughtering/deboning companies, meat wholesalers, broker, marketers and processing companies, which are primarily aimed at quality assurance officers, animal welfare officers, live animal buyers and production staff.

The Initiative Tierwohl is offered for pig production (2001), turkey production (3004), broiler production (3001) and cattle (1001, 1002, 1016, 1008), in three programmes with increasing levels of animal welfare:

- *Stall plus Platz*
- *Frischluftstall*
- *Auslauf/Weide*

In the following, 'ITW goods' refers to products from all ITW programmes (*Stall plus Platz, Frischluftstall* and *Auslauf/Weide*) for the production scopes concerned.
As soon as the *Frischluftstall* and *Auslauf/Weide* programmes are offered for the production scopes duck production (3016), sow production (2004) and piglet rearing (2008), this also applies to ITW goods for these production scopes.

The ITW programmes *Stall plus Platz, Frischluftstall* and *Auslauf/Weide correspond to* levels 2 to 4 of the *System zur einheitlichen Kennzeichnung der Haltungsform.*

2 Conditions of participation

2.1 Participant, participation

Access to the Initiative Tierwohl is open to all companies. Companies that participate in a certified quality assurance programme (e.g. QS) and are authorised to deliver under the scheme are eligible to participate. Quality assurance schemes of other standard owners recognised by QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH can be confirmed by the operating company's committees as a comparable standard for the respective type of animal.

2.2 Application and registration

Companies that decide to participate in the Initiative Tierwohl can register using the registration form or contact the head office directly by e-mail. Subsequently a participation agreement is concluded with the operating company. The costs incurred in this connection are borne by the companies themselves. The eligibility of delivery in the ITW scheme **for meat industry companies** applies to all ITW programmes: *Stall plus Platz*, *Frischluftstall* and *Auslauf/Weide*.

2.3 Abattoirs

2.3.1 Verification of eligibility

Abattoirs approved for the Initiative Tierwohl must check for each delivery of animals for slaughter whether the respective livestock owner is eligible to deliver in the Initiative Tierwohl system.

Please note that for delivered

- Slaughter pigs the production scope 2001,
- Sows the production scope 2004,
- Piglets the production scope 2004 or 2008,
- Chicken the production scope 3001,
- Turkeys the production scope 3004,
- Peking ducks the production scope 3016,
- Cattle the production scope 1001,
- Calves the production scope 1002,
- Slaughter cows the production scope 1001, 1008 or 1016

must be selected. Only for slaughter animals delivered under one of these production scopes may the slaughter quantity be reported to the neutral external service provider commissioned by the operating company.

Pig and poultry

The participating recipients of ITW slaughter animals (abattoirs) are to honour the implemented animal welfare measures of the participating livestock owners by paying an appropriate price surcharge for ITW animals. The price surcharge is shown separately as a price component in the invoices.

The committees in the ITW have made a recommendation on the amount of the price surcharge for animals from the *Stall plus Platz* programme (Annex 1). There is no recommendation on the price surcharge for the *Frischluftstall* and *Auslauf/Weide* programmes.

A bonus system was introduced for pig production to expand the identity and include piglet production in market financing from 2027. The participating abattoirs pay €1.50 (from 1 January 2027, the amount will rise to €2.50) into the conversion fund for each ITW fattening pig (regardless of the ITW programme) that has only been kept under ITW conditions during the fattening period. This amount will be settled via the external service provider when the slaughtered animals are reported. The obligation to make contributions ends upon the switch to the market-based solution, and no later than 30 April 2027.

Cattle

The participant recipients of ITW slaughter animals (abattoirs) should reward the animal welfare measures implemented by the participating livestock owners by paying an appropriate price surcharge for ITW animals. This also applies to slaughter cows from ITW-recognised programmes and standards (see Annex 2) whose meat (trade class category "cow meat") is to be marketed as ITW meat. The price surcharge shall be shown separately as a price component in the statements.

The committees in the ITW have made a recommendation on the amount of the price surcharge (Annex 1).

Shed ID

Farms that use different Haltungsformen (housing systems) may participate in different ITW programs. The prerequisite is that uniform husbandry conditions exist within a single shed or building (under one roof). Companies are assigned a shed ID appended to their registration number according to the German Livestock Transport Regulation (VVVO-Number), which is issued by the ITW database upon registration. Companies that participate in one ITW program using their entire registration number do not receive a shed ID.

Traceability must be ensured through unique animal labelling and documentation at the slaughterhouse. For pigs, the shed ID is integrated into the slaughter stamp; for poultry, the crates are labelled with the shed ID during destocking; and for cattle, each individual animal is assigned the registration number according to the German Livestock Transport Regulation (VVVO-Number), including the shed ID, on delivery notes.

2.3.2 Diagnostic data collection

The collection and reporting of diagnostic data is mandatory for abattoirs participating in the Initiative Tierwohl. The *guideline slaughtering/deboning* in connection with the *guideline diagnostic data in pig slaughtering* (only available in german) or the *guideline diagnostic data in poultry slaughtering* or the *guideline diagnostic data in cattle slaughtering* (only available in german) of QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH, in the respective valid version, shall apply.

3 Requirements for slaughtering/deboning companies, meat wholesalers, broker, marketers and processing companies

Participation in the Initiative Tierwohl entails the following obligations for companies, among others:

- The companies must register with the neutral external service provider commissioned by the operating company by 15 October at the latest for the 1st and 2nd quarters of a year and by 15 April of the following year at the latest for the 3rd and 4th quarters, the quantities of the identified pork, poultry and/or beef (plus offal of these animal species) purchased from the participating suppliers and delivered to participating recipients, as well as articles made from these (meat preparations and meat products), differentiated according to the respective suppliers and recipients. From the report on 15 April 2027 onwards, the quantities must be reported differentiated according to ITW programmes (*Stall plus Platz*, *Frischluft*, *Auslauf/Weide*). This quantity report must be made in accordance with the quantity report templates published in the **download area** of the Initiative Tierwohl website.
- In order to ensure the traceability and plausibility of the quantity flows in the ITW, the company will provide the service provider of the operating company (§ 2 para. 1 e, participation agreement) with the reported sources of supply and quantities of ITW animals and ITW meat as well as the recipients and quantities of sales of ITW goods, certified by an auditor, on request by 15 April of each subsequent year.
- Subject to sufficient availability of ITW goods, the participating companies in the meat industry offer ITW goods for the ITW programme *Stall plus Platz* in the assortments according to the currently valid versions of the branch agreements.

3.1 Control and verification obligation

Deboning companies, meat wholesalers as well as broker (hereinafter referred to as *intermediaries*), marketers and slaughtering and processing companies must pass an annual neutral inspection by a certification body ap-

proved by the Initiative Tierwohl. Within the framework of this inspection, the requirements of chapter 3.2 Identity for poultry, pork and beef are checked. The inspection is carried out on the basis of the "Checklist for marketers, intermediaries, abattoirs and processing companies". The commissioning of the audits is done by the companies themselves.

3.2 Identity for poultry, pork and beef

A prerequisite for the marketing of meat, offal, meat preparations and meat products with the Initiative Tierwohl seal is that the meat and the offal come from animals kept by certified livestock owners who were eligible to deliver in the Initiative Tierwohl at the time the animals were delivered to the abattoir. All companies involved in marketing are obliged to give an assurance on the supply of ITW goods only to those companies participating in the ITW.

With the delivery of the goods, the participating companies will only give an assurance of compliance with the ITW-specific animal welfare criteria to the companies participating in the ITW. ITW goods may only be marketed to recipients not participating in the ITW as conventional goods without an assurance of specific animal welfare criteria.

If goods produced with partly the same animal welfare criteria are to be marketed to companies that do not participate in the ITW, the marketer must ensure that the verification of animal welfare requirements on the livestock farming companies takes place within the framework of independent audits and not as part of the ITW inspection system.

Since 1 July 2021, meat preparations and meat products can also be marketed as identified goods. For this purpose, the requirements for the production of identified meat preparations and meat products must be complied with (see *Information sheet on the labelling of meat preparations and meat products*).

Furthermore, it has been possible since 1 March 2024 to label and market convenience products with a low ITW meat content (< 50%) (see *Information sheet on the use of the ITW seal for composite products on final consumer packaging*).

Mechanically separated meat may not be used as ITW goods (for the production of food).

3.2.1 [K.O.] Reporting of slaughtered animals

The abattoirs must report the slaughter quantities (for pigs: number of animals; for cattle: number of animals subdivided according to species; for poultry: kilograms of live weight) delivered for slaughter by the participating livestock owners as ITW-animals to the neutral external service provider commissioned by the operating company at least on a quarterly basis. From 1 January 2027, notifications must specify the ITW programme from which the animals originate (i.e. *Stall plus Platz, Frischluftstall*, *Auslauf/Weide*) for the production scopes concerned. Until that date, all ITW animals must be reported without differentiation according to ITW programme. Only animals fit for human consumption are to be taken into account for these reports. Animals unfit for slaughter, dead in transport or rejected in the post-mortem inspection are not to be reported. Quantity reporting is carried out via appropriate access by the abattoirs to the database, which is operated by the neutral external service provider commissioned by the operating company. The details are published on the homepage of the Initiative Tierwohl in the download area.

3.2.2 [K.O.] Labelling of identified goods

Meat, offal meat preparations and meat products as well as convenience products that are marketed as identified goods must be clearly labelled at the time of outgoing goods.
Various options are available to business customers for labelling ITW goods on packaging or containers/packages (not an exhaustive list):

- ITW Seal
- Addition 'ITW+XX'
- Product codes, article numbers with a link to the specification (e.g. letter codes, e.g. 'XX' or number codes, e.g. 1719)

In addition, a clear assignment of the accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes, invoices) must be ensured so that a systematic assignment of ITW goods is guaranteed throughout the entire process. This is also possible by labelling in the footnote of the accompanying documents.

The labelling system must be documented and must be comprehensible to third parties.

ITW goods can in principle also be used as QS goods, provided that corresponding regulations have been defined in the company and a clear reference to the supplier of the ITW/QS products can be established.

ITW goods from higher ITW programmes may be used as ITW goods in lower ITW programmes.

Simultaneous use of the ITW labelling and the Haltungsform labelling

A clear reference must be made between the level of the Haltungsform and the ITW programme. The reference can either be made directly via labelling on the goods (e.g. HF2 ITW Stall plus Platz or HF2 ITW2, HF3 ITW Frischluftstall or HF3 ITW3, HF4 ITW Auslauf/Weide or HF4 ITW4) or via a defined code (with a link to the specification). This also applies to business customer relationships when additional animal welfare programmes are used.

ITW labelling of raw materials for the production of pet food

When labelling raw materials in category 3 (animal by-products of category 3) for pet food, compliance with the legal requirements and the requirements for the clear labelling of ITW must be ensured.

Raw materials that are fit for human consumption and are intended for the production of pet food must be systematically and clearly distinguished from raw materials for food production (e.g. mechanically recovered meat).

The internal company regulations cover both labelling directly on the goods or on the container/packaging and the assignment of goods to the corresponding accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes, invoices) and specifications. Please also refer to the ***Information sheet on labelling pet food in the Initiative Tierwohl*** (only available in german).

<u>In the business customer relationship applies:</u>

Identified ITW goods with appropriate labelling or goods marketed with the assurance of compliance with ITW-specific animal welfare criteria may only be sold to companies that participate in the ITW.

<u>The following applies to the production of end consumer packaging:</u>

Goods labelled as identified goods may only be marketed to recipients who participate in the Initiative Tierwohl. When marketing identified goods in end consumer packaging, the goods must be labelled in accordance with the requirements of the respectively valid styleguide product labelling.

3.2.3 [K.O.] Goods separation

A comprehensible system for the separation of identified and non-identified goods as well as separation of different ITW programmes must be implemented in the company. Clear labelling and (batch) separation of identified and non-identified goods as well as separation of different ITW programmes must be guaranteed throughout the entire company at all stages of production.

3.2.4 [K.O.] Traceability system

The labelling and registration system introduced in the company must at all times enable a clear identification of the identified goods, separated according to different ITW programmes, and traceability of the goods using an example from production or outgoing goods. It must be possible for third parties to trace which products were delivered as identified goods from which ITW programme, from whom these goods were purchased and to whom these products were sold. A customer list of all recipients of ITW goods must be available.

3.2.5 [K.O.] Verification of approval

In order for ITW goods to be accepted in incoming goods and issued as identified products, the company must have eligibility of delivery in the ITW scheme.

If goods are to be accepted as ITW goods, it must be checked in the **Animal Welfare database** whether the delivering company (location) is eligible to deliver for the corresponding animal species in the ITW at the time of delivery (for livestock owners with correct production scope and VVVO No. and eligibility of delivery for the corresponding ITW programme (*Stall plus Platz*, *Frischluft*, *Auslauf/Weide*)). Only the highest ITW programme with eligibility of delivery is displayed in the public search. The eligibility of delivery then automatically applies to the lower ITW programmes as well. Only then may the goods be accepted as such. Each location in the meat sector (slaughtering/deboning, processing, intermediaries) must be registered with the Initiative Tierwohl so that an eligibility of delivery can be granted in the ITW scheme.

The requirements of the QS scheme apply to the commissioning of logistics companies as well as for the company's own storage locations with QS production scope 88 (own logistic meat and meat products).

Service providers for storage and transport activities (including order picking, relocation, freezing and thawing) of ITW goods must be registered in the QS database and authorised to deliver. The same applies to company-owned storage locations for QS production scope 88. Separate participation in the ITW is not required.

The client/shipper (ITW participant) is responsible for fulfilling the requirements. When commissioning corresponding storage and transport activities, the client is obliged to inform the service provider if the delivery or storage involves ITW goods and that these are to be treated as QS products.

When delivering identified goods (carcasses, meat, offal and meat preparations, meat products as well as convenience products), it must be ensured that the customer also has an eligibility of delivery in the Initiative Tierwohl for the corresponding animal species.
The eligibility of delivery of:

- intermediaries and marketers
- abattoirs (pig, poultry and cattle)
- processing companies
- companies in the pet food process chain

must be checked in the Animal Welfare database.

You will find a list of the currently approved participants in the food retail and gastronomy sectors in the download area on the homepage of the Initiative Tierwohl.

Annex 1

The recommendations regarding price surcharges apply exclusively to ITW animals in the ITW programme *Stall plus Platz*.

Recommendation on price surcharge for poultry:

The additional effort of livestock owners (poultry fattening) in the Initiative Tierwohl is to be compensated by the recipients of the fattening poultry with a price surcharge on the market price. The committees of the Initiative Tierwohl have agreed on the following recommendations on the level of the price surcharge for ITW fattening poultry:

chicken (per kg of live weight)	turkey hens (per kg of live weight)	turkey cocks (per kg of live weight)
2,97 Cent	3,64 Cent	4,38 Cent

There is no recommendation on the level of the price surcharge for **peking ducks**.

Recommendation on price surcharge for pig:

The additional effort of livestock owners (pig fattening) in the Initiative Tierwohl is to be compensated by the recipients of fattening pigs with a price surcharge on the market price.

Time period	Recommendation on price surcharge
1 January 2026 – 31 December 2026	▪ € 7.50 per ITW fattening pig for fattening pig producers who only purchase ITW piglets ▪ € 6.00 per ITW fattening pig for fattening pig producers who do (also) purchase not ITW piglets
1 January 2027 – 30 April 2027	▪ € 7.50 per ITW fattening pig for fattening pig producers who only purchase ITW piglets ▪ € 5.00 per ITW fattening pig for fattening pig producers who do (also) purchase not ITW piglets

Recommendation on price surcharge for slaughter cattle:

The additional effort of livestock owners (cattle farming) in the Initiative Tierwohl is to be compensated by the recipients of the slaughtered cattle with a price surcharge on the market price as follows:

- Recommendation for **ITW slaughter cattle**: 0.1070 EUR/kg slaughter weight

Recommendation on price surcharge for slaughter cows (trade class category "cow meat"):

If slaughtered as ITW animals, slaughter cows from companies participating in the Initiative Tierwohl or from companies from recognised standards and programmes shall be remunerated by the recipients with a price surcharge on the market price as follows:

- Recommendation for **ITW slaughter cows**: 0.04 EUR/kg slaughter weight

No recommendation was made for a price surcharge for **ITW fattening calves**. The price surcharge is to be agreed freely between market participants.

Annex 2: Recognition of programmes and standards for the marketing of products as ITW goods

ITW "Stall plus Platz"

- Farms certified under the QMilch programme with the QM+ supplementary module and/or according to the DLG-Bronze program and listed in the ITW database as authorised to deliver for the relevant programme may supply their cows as ITW "Stall plus Platz" animals.

ITW "Frischluftstall"

- Farms certified under the QMilch programme with the QM++ supplementary module and/or according to the DLG-Silber programme and listed in the ITW database as authorised to deliver for the relevant programme may supply their cows as ITW "Frischluftstall" animals.

ITW "Auslauf/Weide"

- Farms certified under the QMilch programme with the QM+++ add-on module and/or according to the DLG-Gold programme and listed in the ITW database as authorised to deliver for the relevant programme may supply their cows as ITW "Auslauf/Weide" animals.

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