

SCHEDULE 3

Regulation 6(1)(b)

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS THAT APPLY TO THE KEEPING OF LAYING HENS

PART 1

Interpretation

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1. In this Schedule—

“litter” means any friable material enabling the hens to satisfy their ethological needs;

“nest” means a separate space for egg laying, the floor components of which do not include wire mesh that can come into contact with the animals, for an individual hen or for a group of hens; and

“usable area” means an area, other than a nesting area, used by laying hens at least 30cm wide with a floor slope not exceeding 14% and with headroom of at least 45cm.

PART 2

General additional conditions

Inspection

2. All hens must be inspected by the person responsible for the hens at least once a day.

Noise

3. In all systems in which laying hens are kept—

(a) the sound level must be minimised;

(b) constant or sudden noise must be avoided; and

(c) 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.

Light

4. All buildings must have—

(a) light levels sufficient to allow all hens to see one another and be seen clearly, to investigate their surroundings visually and to show normal levels of activity and where there is natural light, light apertures must be arranged in such a way that light is distributed evenly within the accommodation; and

(b) after the first days of conditioning and to prevent health and behavioural problems a lighting regime that—

(i) follows a 24-hour rhythm and includes an adequate uninterrupted period of darkness lasting about one third of the day, so that the hens may rest and to avoid problems such as immunodepression and ocular anomalies; and

(ii) provides a period of twilight of sufficient duration when the light is dimmed so that the hens may settle down without disturbance or injury.

Cleaning and disinfection

5.—(1) Those parts of buildings, equipment or utensils which are in contact with the hens must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected regularly and, in any case, every time depopulation is carried out and before a new batch of hens is brought in.

(2) While the cages are occupied—

- (a) the surfaces and all equipment must be kept satisfactorily clean;
- (b) droppings must be removed as often as necessary to prevent cross-infection and the build-up of disease carrying organisms; and
- (c) dead hens must be removed every day.

Accommodation

6. Cages must be suitably equipped to prevent hens escaping.

7. Accommodation comprising 2 or more tiers of cages must have devices, or appropriate measures must be taken, to allow inspection of all tiers and removal of hens without difficulty.

8. The design and dimensions of the cage door must be such that an adult hen can be removed without undergoing unnecessary suffering or sustaining injury.

PART 3

Additional conditions applicable for keeping laying hens in conventional cages

Accommodation, feed, water and ethological needs

9. All conventional (unenriched) cage systems must comply with the following requirements of this paragraph:—

- (a) at least 550cm² of cage area, measured in a horizontal plane, which may be used without restriction, in particular not including non-waste deflection plates liable to restrict the area available, must be provided for each laying hen;
- (b) a feed trough which may be used without restriction must be provided and its length must be at least 10cm multiplied by the number of hens in the cage;
- (c) unless nipple drinkers or drinking cups are provided, each cage must have a continuous drinking channel of the same length as the feed trough mentioned in sub-paragraph (b) and where drinking points are plumbed in, at least 2 nipple drinkers or 2 drinking cups must be within reach of each cage;
- (d) cages must be at least 40cm high over at least 65% of the cage area and not less than 35cm at any point;
- (e) floors of cages must be constructed so as to support each of the forward-facing claws of each foot and floor slope must not exceed 14% or 8 degrees when made of rectangular wire mesh and 21.3% or 12 degrees for other types of floor; and
- (f) cages must be fitted with suitable claw-shortening devices.

10. On and after 1st January 2012 no person shall keep any laying hen in any conventional (unenriched) cage system.

PART 4

Additional conditions applicable for keeping laying hens in enriched cages

11. All cage systems (other than those referred to in Part 3) must be enriched to comply with the requirements of this Schedule.

Accommodation

12. Laying hens must have—

- (a) at least 750cm² of cage area per hen, 600cm² of which shall be usable area; the height of the cage other than that above the usable area shall be at least 20cm at every point and no cage shall have a total area that is less than 2000cm²;
- (b) a nest;
- (c) litter such that pecking and scratching are possible; and
- (d) appropriate perches allowing at least 15cm per hen.

Feed

13. A feed trough which may be used without restriction must be provided and its length must be at least 12cm multiplied by the number of hens in the cage.

Water

14. Each cage must have a drinking system appropriate to the size of the group and where nipple drinkers are provided, at least 2 nipple drinkers or 2 drinking cups must be within the reach of each hen.

Inspection

15. To facilitate inspection, installation and depopulation of hens there must be a minimum aisle width of 90cm between tiers of cages and a space of at least 35cm must be allowed between the floor of the building and the bottom tier of cages.

Ethological needs

16. Cages must be fitted with suitable claw-shortening devices.

PART 5

Additional conditions applicable for keeping laying hens in non-cage systems

Feed and water

17. All systems must be equipped in such a way that all laying hens have—

- (a) either linear feeders providing at least 10cm per hen or circular feeders providing at least 4cm per hen;
- (b) either continuous drinking troughs providing 2.5cm per hen or circular drinking troughs providing 1cm per hen, and in addition, where nipple drinkers or drinking cups are used, there must be at least one nipple drinker or cup for every 10 hens and where drinking

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points are plumbed in, at least 2 drinking cups or 2 nipple drinkers must be within reach of each hen;

- (c) at least one nest for every 7 hens and if group nests are used, there must be at least 1m² of nest space for a maximum of 120 hens;
- (d) perches, without sharp edges and providing at least 15cm per hen; perches must not be mounted above the litter; the horizontal distance between perches must be at least 30cm and the horizontal distance between the perch and the wall must be at least 20cm; and
- (e) at least 250cm² of littered area per hen, the litter occupying at least one third of the ground surface.

Floors

18. The floors of installations must be constructed so as to support each of the forward-facing claws of each foot.

Accommodation

19. In addition to the requirements of paragraphs 17 and 18—

- (a) if systems of rearing are used where the laying hens can move freely between different levels—
 - (i) there must not be more than 4 levels;
 - (ii) the headroom between the levels must be at least 45cm;
 - (iii) the drinking and feeding facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide equal access for all hens; and
 - (iv) the levels must be so arranged as to prevent droppings falling on the levels below; and
- (b) if laying hens have access to open runs—
 - (i) there must be several popholes giving direct access to the outer area, at least 35cm high and 40cm wide and extending along the entire length of the building; in any case, a total opening of 2m must be available per group of 1,000 hens; and
 - (ii) such runs must be of an area appropriate to the stocking density and to the nature of the ground, in order to prevent any contamination, and equipped with shelter from inclement weather and predators and, if necessary, appropriate drinking troughs.

20. Subject to paragraph 21, the stocking density must not exceed 9 laying hens per square metre of usable area.

21. Where on 3rd July 2002 the establishment applied a system where the usable area corresponded to the available ground surface a stocking density of 12 hens per square metre is authorised until 31st December 2011.