

5.3 Broiler chickens Toolkit

Introduction

Chickens were first domesticated at least 8,000 years ago from several species of jungle fowl in southeast Asia, moving north into China and across central Asia, then into Europe. Today, the chicken is ubiquitous, being farmed in huge numbers on every continent. The FAO suggests some 60 billion meat (broiler) chickens are reared globally each year. Chickens have been increasingly bred for either laying eggs or producing meat, resulting in distinctly different-looking birds. Broiler chickens tend to be quite 'heavy' in their body shape (when compared to laying hens). Chickens can live for up to ten years, but most commercial broilers are killed at between 30 and 80 days of age (most at 30 to 40 days). The genetics of broilers is now globally dominated by a small number of breeder companies (such as Aviagen, Cobb and Hubbard) which control the genetics of the bulk of world broiler birds. Commercial broiler chicks are created by breeding cycles known as the 'breeder pyramid' (Figure 1), and the broiler farm cycle can be seen in Figure 2.

Rural birds, of various breeds, are slaughtered at any age (but usually, as soon as they are of suitable size to eat). Wild or feral chickens will form into small social groups of up to 15 individuals, with a dominant male and several hens and subordinate males. Chickens are highly motivated to forage, spending large proportions of their day scratching about and foraging, even in the presence of abundant food. Chickens will spend time preening (cleaning and grooming their feathers), and this is augmented where possible by bouts of dustbathing, on average once every two days.

Key welfare issues of broiler chickens include: high stocking density in some farming systems; skeletal and infectious conditions leading to lameness; selection for rapid growth rate (which can lead to low activity levels); poor litter or bedding conditions in some intensive and free-range housing; feet and hock skin conditions; handling, catching and transport to slaughter; effective and humane stunning, and non-stun slaughter.

Figure 1: Progressive generations of breeder birds create the final broiler breeder bird. At each step, there is a multiplication in the number of birds (with permission, A Butterworth, WelfareMax).

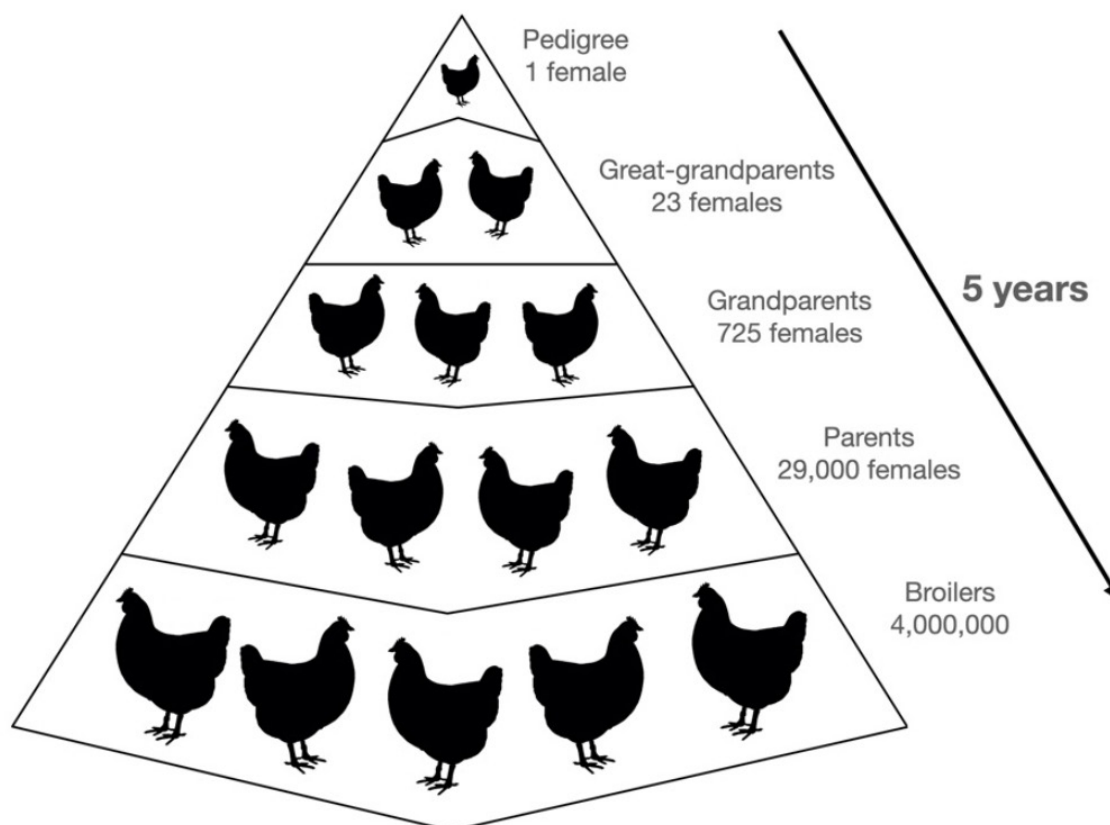
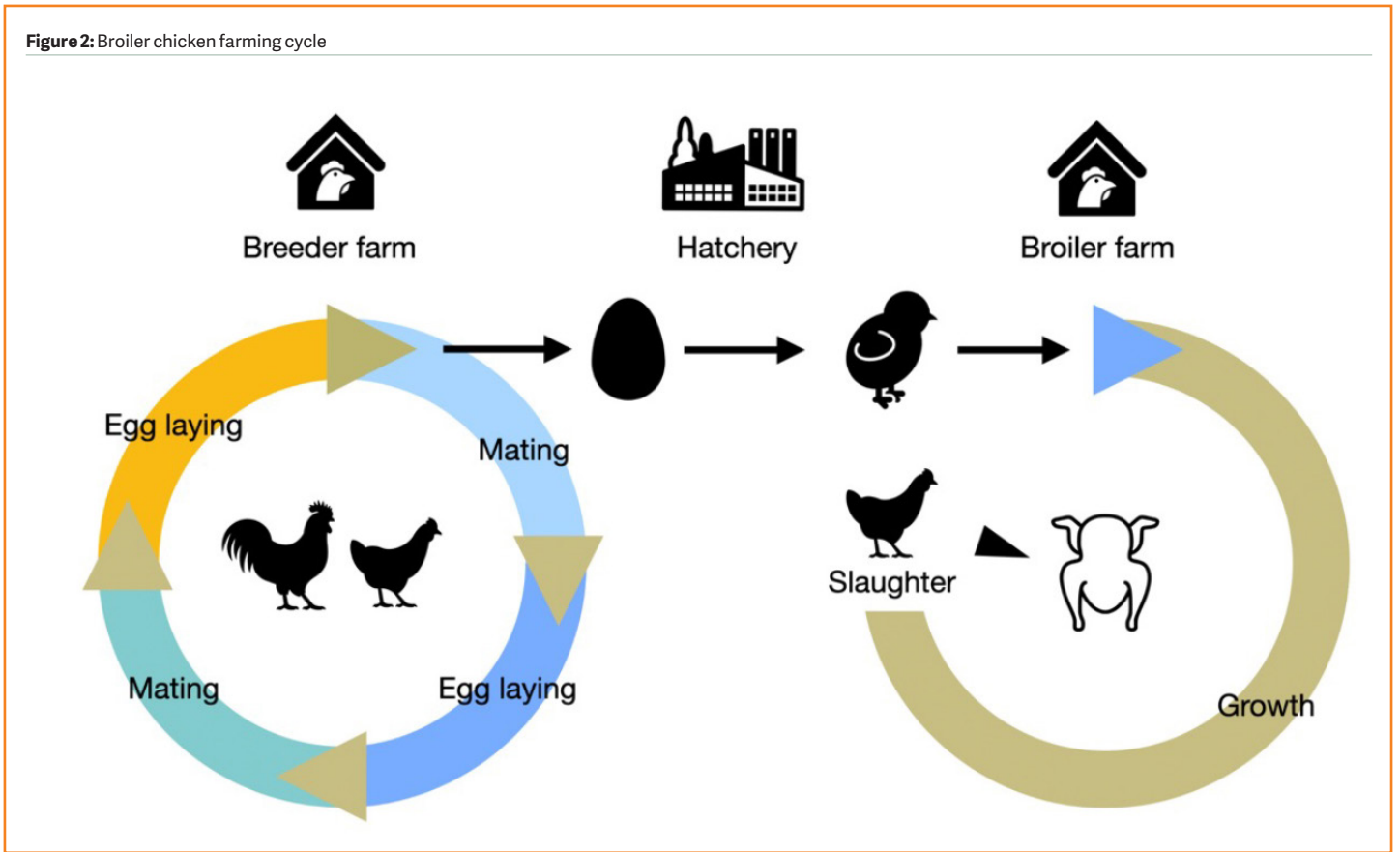
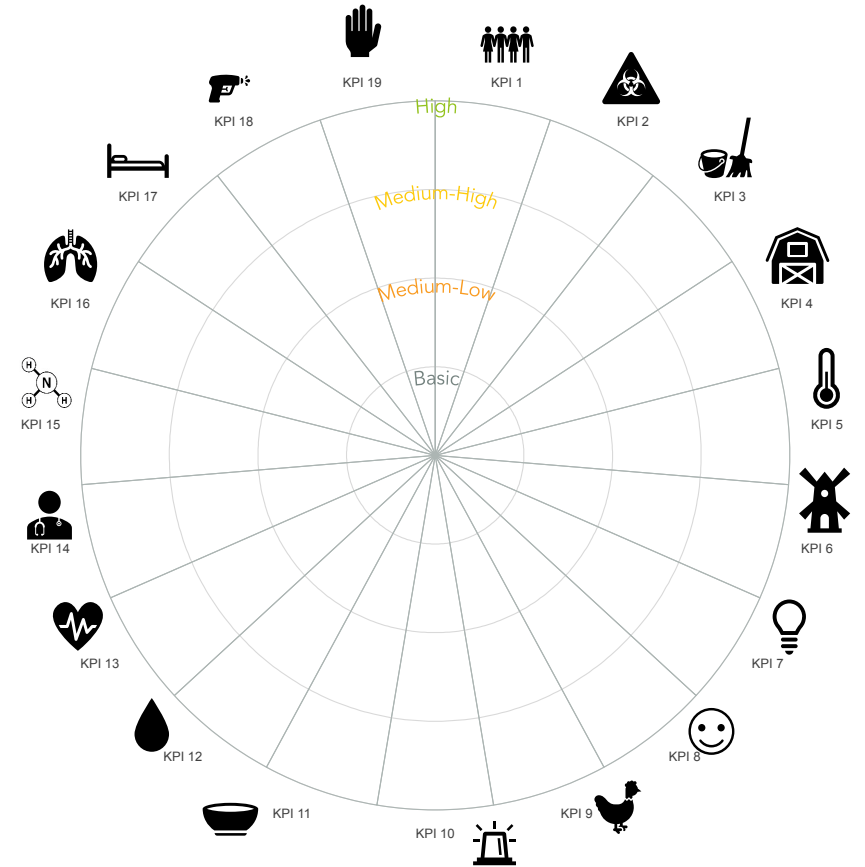


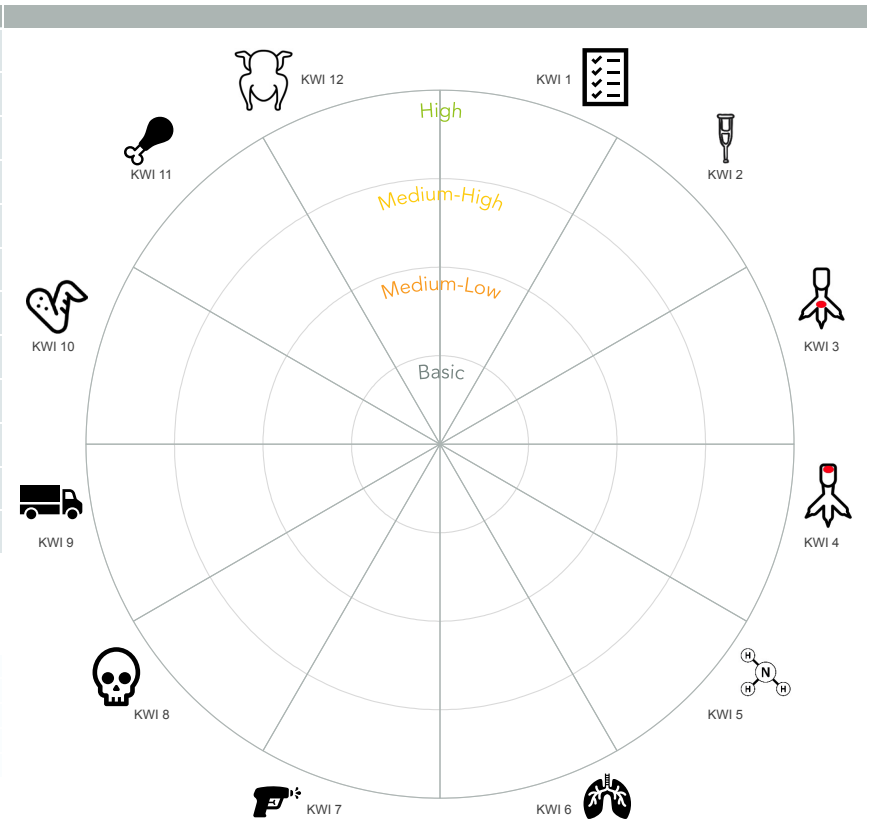
Figure 2: Broiler chicken farming cycle



KPI	Achievement
KPI 1: People, training - Links to P1, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 2: Biosecurity - Links to P5, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 3: Cleaning and disinfection - Links to P5, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 4: Farm environment: physical - Links to P4, P5, P6, P9	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 5: Farm environment: temperature - Links to P4, P9	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 6: Farm environment: ventilation - Links to P4, P9	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 7: Farm environment: light - Links to P6	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 8: Farm environment: enrichments - Links to P6	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 9: Farm environment: stocking density - Links to P4, P6	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 10: Farm environment: emergency - Links to P7, P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 11: Feed - Links to P3	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 12: Water - Links to P3	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 13: Health, and health planning - Links to P5	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 14: Medicines - Links to P5, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 15: Ammonia (NH ₃), dust, humidity - Links to P4	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 16: Carbon dioxide (CO ₂), Carbon monoxide (CO) - Links to P4	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 17: Litter, bedding - Links to P4	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 18: Euthanasia - Links to P5, P7	<input type="radio"/>
KPI 19: Catching - Links to P11	<input type="radio"/>
Basic level not achieved	
Basic (B)	
Medium-Low (ML)	
Medium-High (MH)	
High (H)	
Overall KPI achievement	



KWI	Achievement
KWI 1: Animal records - Links to P10	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 2: Lameness - Links to P2, P4, P5, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 3: Foot pad lesions (pododermatitis) - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 4: Hock lesions (hock burn, hock marks) - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 5: Breast blisters, ammonia burns - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 6: Ascites - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 7: On-farm culls - Links to P4, P5, P7, P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 8: On-farm mortality - Links to P2, P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 9: Transport - Links to P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 10: Slaughter: wing damage - Links to P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 11: Slaughter: leg damage/bruising - Links to P10, P11	<input type="radio"/>
KWI 12: Slaughter - Links to P11	<input type="radio"/>



Basic level not achieved
 Basic (B)
 Medium-Low (ML)
 Medium-High (MH)
 High (H)

Overall KWI achievement



Overall achievement

Overall achievement





KPI Broiler 1

People, training - Links to P1, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	All people responsible for the care of animals should have received appropriate training by others with appropriate experience, who can demonstrate sufficient knowledge of animal behaviour, general signs of diseases, and indicators of poor animal welfare.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	People handling animals are trained in handling techniques, emergency killing procedures and biosecurity.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Routine procedures should not cause injury, panic, lasting fear or avoidable pain or distress, and where painful procedures cannot be avoided, they should be carried out by competent and trained people.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	An animal welfare contact person or co-ordinator, responsible for animal welfare aspects within the farm or company, is identified.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The animal welfare contact person has received training in animal welfare aspects.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	People in the company are supported to have higher-level training, or achieve professional qualifications (locally applicable professional qualifications) in animal care and animal welfare.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 2

Biosecurity - Links to P5, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Chicken houses have surfaces that allow for effective cleaning.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The farm operates a clear period at the end of each flock to allow for effective cleaning.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	A biosecurity programme/plan (see World Vet, Resource 10) is in place.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Access to houses is limited to essential farm employees only.	<input type="radio"/>				
	All farm visitors adhere to strict biosecurity requirements specific to the farm being visited.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Facilities (including feed and litter storage areas) are constructed to limit the entry of pathogens, pests and animals that could transmit diseases to birds.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If vehicles are brought on-site, they are sprayed (wheels as a minimum) at the gateway.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The biosecurity programme includes a risk assessment (which may be based on hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) training) of the primary pathogens and parasites that are likely to pose a risk to the flock.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	Hand washing and sanitisation is available on entry to each house.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	All on-site staff and visitors shower and are provided with a full complement of protective clothing.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Feed silos are located at the perimeter of the site so that feed vehicles do not need to enter the site.	<input type="radio"/>				



KPI Broiler 3

Cleaning and disinfection - Links to P5, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The houses effectively protect the chickens from contact with other animals, insects, rodents, invasive wildlife or wild bird species.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Vermin are controlled through the use of bait stations, traps and other appropriate and effective measures, and only approved pest control substances or chemicals permitted by law are used.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The accommodation, pens and equipment are constructed to ensure they can be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Written cleaning and disinfection protocols are implemented.	<input type="radio"/>				
	A list of permitted disinfectants and detergents used on the farm, and their safety data sheets, is available.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Internal house equipment, water tanks and silos are cleaned during house cleaning.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The areas around the buildings are kept clear of debris and non-essential equipment.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Cleanable concrete or stone areas for loading are present around the poultry house (note: in hot climates it may not be ideal to concrete all surrounding areas as this can reflect heat).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Vegetation is kept short and is well managed so as not to offer shelter to wild birds or rodents.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	A microbiological testing programme for house hygiene is in place for a targeted sample of company farms each year, and there is a policy for feeding results back to the farm and the cleaning teams.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The most humane effective baiting method is adopted, and pest control baits are only accessible to the targeted species.	<input type="radio"/>				



KPI Broiler 4

Farm environment: physical - Links to P4, P5, P6, P9		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Floors, surfaces, fittings, equipment and other facilities in and around the shed are designed, constructed, operated and maintained to minimise the risk of smothering, injury, trapping, or disease, and are free from rough edges and sharp protrusions.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Housing is constructed to minimise fire risk, and firefighting equipment is available.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Broiler chickens are not kept in cage systems.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Birds are protected from predators, vermin, and excessive noise.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Birds are protected from adverse weather.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	The house environment provides improved opportunity for behaviours.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Where automatic systems are in place, they do not replace human care and observation, unless their safe and reliable use in maintaining animal welfare has been demonstrated.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Outdoor range is provided.	<input type="radio"/>				



KPI Broiler 5

Farm environment: temperature - Links to P4, P9		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Where present, heating and cooling systems are capable of producing enough heat or cooling to ensure birds do not get too hot or too cold.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Where present, automatic equipment for temperature control is fitted with alarms that warn immediately of equipment failure.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Heating or cooling systems essential for bird health and welfare are checked daily for proper operation.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Records of daily maximum and minimum shed temperatures (at bird height) are kept on file and available for review.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	House temperatures are controlled to maintain the temperature range recommended by the breeder or veterinarian.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	Houses are equipped with means of controlling relative humidity.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 6

Farm environment: ventilation - Links to P4, P9		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Where present, equipment for ventilation supports the birds in both extreme hot and cold weather, manages air exchange, air quality and dust, and bird comfort.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Where present, automatic equipment for ventilation is fitted with alarms that warn immediately of equipment failure.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Automatic equipment for ventilation has a back-up power supply that is tested weekly. Ventilation systems essential for bird health and welfare are checked daily for proper operation.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	As previous requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	As previous requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 7

Farm environment: light - Links to P6		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Light levels are at the legal base requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If no legal requirement exists, then adequate levels of light are provided for carers to observe animals, and for the animals to carry out daytime behaviours.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Dark rest periods are provided.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Natural or artificial light (of an intensity of at least 20 lux) is available in all buildings, illuminating at least 80% of the useable area, for a minimum of 8 hours daily.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Lighting follows a 24-hour rhythm and includes periods of darkness lasting at least 6 hours in total, with an uninterrupted period of darkness of at least 4 hours.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Dawn/dusk is either provided naturally, or the light level at dawn/dusk is gradually raised and lowered (typically over a 10-minute period) via an automatic system.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Natural light is provided.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	Lighting meets the requirements of the Better Chicken Commitment (50 lux minimum, including natural light) in Resource 10.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 8

Farm environment: enrichments - Links to P6		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The producer is aware that birds can use enrichments when they are provided, and this can affect animal welfare.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	At least one pecking object is provided as environmental enrichment for every 1,000 birds based on shed placement number.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Enrichment is provided to all birds ≥7 days of age. Environmental enrichment must be maintained, replaced or changed as necessary to ensure birds have continuous access.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Perches or platforms are provided at a minimum length of 2.7m per 1,000 birds based on shed placement number.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Perches or platforms are evenly distributed throughout the shed, and provide a flat surface positioned at a height that allows birds at all ages to perch.	<input type="radio"/>				
	If multiple height perches are used, the ramps are at a shallow angle (<15% or less) to allow good access.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	An enriched, complex environment is provided to encourage foraging, dustbathing, perching and other natural behaviours.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 9

Farm environment: stocking density - Links to P4, P6		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Where stocking density is legislated, the legal specification is followed.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	All birds have sufficient space to walk, turn around, preen, sit undisturbed, flap, stretch wings, dust bathe and access feed and water without undue competition.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Stocking density is not above 38kg/m2 (see Red Tractor Broiler and Poussin Standards in Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	Stocking density is not above 33kg/m2 (EU permitted lower tier 2007/43 EC).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Stocking density meets the requirements of the Better Chicken Commitment or Red Tractor Chicken Standards: Indoor Enhanced Welfare Version 1 (2020) of 30kg/m2 or less (see Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 10

Farm environment: emergency - Links to P7, P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Written plans are in place to deal with emergencies such as fire, power failure, flooding, accidental injuries, freezing, failure of water and feed supply, or chemical or effluent spillage. The plan is periodically tested, and implementable in the event of an emergency.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Contacts and emergency phone numbers, and contact numbers in cases where the emergency can affect human health, are available at each site.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	If generators are used for back-up power, they are tested under conditions of load at least once per flock.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The emergency plan includes approved methods of humane killing and mass depopulation, with each method having an SOP containing: instructions for implementation; equipment requirements; training; safety; biosecurity; and environmental aspects.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	The methods proposed are consistent with national law.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Plans are developed in consultation with a poultry veterinarian and are updated annually, to cover circumstances such as animals infected with a potentially zoonotic or notifiable disease.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)		<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 11

Feed - Links to P3		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The feed is of a quantity and quality to maintain normal health and productivity, to prevent prolonged hunger or malnutrition, and is suited to the animals' age and needs.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Feeders meet manufacturers' recommendations, good poultry husbandry practices and local regulatory requirements, and provide adequate access for all birds.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Feed and watering systems are height-adjustable, making them easily accessible by all birds as they grow.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	All feeding and drinking systems are checked daily for proper operation.	<input type="radio"/>				
	In the event of a supply failure, the farms can provide feed within 24 hours.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	As previous requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Food is presented in a way that provides interest and occupation for animals (for example, scattered, or from a foraging device).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 12

Water - Links to P3		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Water is of a quantity and quality to maintain normal health, and to prevent dehydration.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Drinkers meets both manufacturers' recommendations and local regulatory requirements, and provide adequate access for all birds.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Drinking systems essential for bird health and welfare are checked for proper operation daily.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	A water meter is fitted in every house to monitor daily water consumption.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	In the event of a power failure, the farm can provide water within 12 hours.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Water should be tested annually to ensure potability to FAO standards (see FAO 2016 in Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The emergency supply of water has sufficient capacity to supply the site for 24 hours at maximum demand (such as in the last few days of the crop).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 13

Health, and health planning - Links to P5		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	A procedure is in place to deal with an outbreak of notifiable disease, such as Avian Influenza or Newcastle Disease.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Infectious, parasitic and metabolic diseases, injury, and conditions causing distress, are prevented and controlled through good management, good animal care, biosecurity, vaccination and genetic selection.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The farming system does not depend on prolonged or routine use of pharmaceuticals.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	A H&W plan is in place (Resource 6).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The H&W plan is reviewed annually and authorised by the company veterinarian.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 14

Medicines - Links to P5, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Any drugs or other agents used to treat animals must be compliant with all local guidelines and applicable local legislation.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Hormones and antibiotics are not used as growth promoters.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Preventive (prophylactic) use of antimicrobials is not permitted.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	An antimicrobial reduction programme is in place (see World Vet, Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Antimicrobials and other medicines are used responsibly to protect both human and animal health.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Vaccines and medicines are stored securely and in the recommended conditions (label instructions).	<input type="radio"/>				
	Medicine use is recorded (Resource 5).	<input type="radio"/>				
	The company has access to a veterinarian experienced in poultry care.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Any antimicrobial classified as being of 'high' or 'medium' importance for human medicine, defined as Highest Priority Critically Important Antimicrobials (HPCIA), is not permitted for use in broiler chickens, unless under veterinary advice.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Persons using medicines have relevant experience and training.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	An antimicrobial stewardship plan is in place, and is complied with (see OIE example in Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The plan is reviewed on an annual basis, and is linked to existing regional or national antimicrobial stewardship schemes.	<input type="radio"/>				



KPI Broiler 15

Ammonia (NH ₃), dust, humidity - Links to P4		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware that high ammonia levels can be harmful to the birds and to humans working in the farm.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Ammonia is tested at the end of the flock cycle, or if levels appear to be rising. Ammonia is below <25ppm when measured at bird head height.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The cause of high ammonia is rectified.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	If dust levels are recognised to be causing negative impacts on bird health and welfare, steps are taken to reduce dust (from feed, litter and ventilation).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	House humidity at bird level is measured and recorded.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	The target for NH ₃ levels is <10ppm.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 16

Carbon dioxide (CO ₂), Carbon monoxide (CO) - Links to P4		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of the animal, and human, health and safety concerns regarding carbon monoxide (highly toxic to humans and animals).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	The farmer is aware of the concerns regarding high levels of carbon dioxide (which is an indicator of poor ventilation).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	A periodic CO ₂ testing programme is in place throughout the flock cycle.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The target for CO ₂ levels is <3,000ppm	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	A testing programme is in place for carbon monoxide produced by heating equipment, if used.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	CO <50ppm in the first 3 days of the flock (when heating is usually at a maximum).	<input type="radio"/>				

 KPI Broiler 17

Litter, bedding - Links to P4		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Litter provision is at the legal base requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Where no legal definition exists, some new litter material is provided for each flock cycle.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	The floor of poultry houses is completely covered in litter to a minimum average depth of 50mm/2 inches.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Litter is maintained to be dry and friable (crumbly or easily broken up) across the majority of the poultry house.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Birds have continuous access to litter (unless, for chicks ≤7 days old in sheds where chick paper is used).	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Litter is maintained and poor litter is replaced when required.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Where litter beetles are present, they are controlled.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	Litter is of quality sufficient to encourage dust bathing and foraging.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Litter quality is measured and recorded using a recognised litter scoring scale.	<input type="radio"/>				
	When litter score falls below targets set by the company, steps are taken to improve the litter quality during the flock cycle.	<input type="radio"/>				

 KPI Broiler 18

Euthanasia - Links to P5, P7		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Animals are euthanased by adopting local-legally approved methods.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Sick or distressed animals are isolated and treated promptly, or euthanased humanely without delay, if treatment is not feasible or recovery is unlikely.	<input type="radio"/>				
	People responsible for euthanasia have received appropriate training.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Any equipment used for euthanasia is maintained in good working order, and records documenting maintenance are kept.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	A written policy for euthanasia is produced by working with a veterinarian, and is based on recognised best international practice.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Gas killing used in emergency or disease control situations has approval from the appropriate local government agency.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KPI Broiler 19

Catching - Links to P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Catching is carried out by trained people.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Animals which are sick, weak, injured, or known to be diseased, are not transported. They are humanely euthanased on-site.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Picking up, suspending or carrying birds by a leg, wing or tail is prohibited.	<input type="radio"/>				
	No more than 3 birds are held in each hand during catching.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Catching is scheduled to minimise the time to slaughter, as well as to minimise climatic stress during catching, transport and holding.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Water withdrawal does not exceed 1 hour prior to the start of catch for that house.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Maximum feed withdrawal time is 12 hours (feeders are empty/raised, to the scheduled time of slaughter).	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Lairages protect the birds from adverse weather and high temperatures.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Animals are handled using low-stress methods, equipment, and facilities that calm animal movement.	<input type="radio"/>				
	If mechanical catchers are used, they are designed, operated and maintained to minimise injury, stress and fear to the birds.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Birds are slaughtered as close as possible to the farm of origin, and as soon as possible after arrival.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Birds are handled singly, in an upright position, held by both legs and with the torso supported.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 1

Animal records - Links to P10		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Records are kept of:	<input type="radio"/>				
	Number of birds placed, and date placed	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Live weight (if birds are weighed)	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Records are kept of:	<input type="radio"/>				
	Daily mortality	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	House temperature (max/min, measured at bird height)	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Records are kept of daily culls (with reason, if known)	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Records are kept of staff observation/checking times within the poultry house.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 2

Lameness - Links to P2, P4, P5, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of lameness as a welfare issue.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Procedures are in place to ensure broilers with leg issues (as scored using methods in Resource 1) are humanely culled to prevent suffering.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	All culls due to leg problems are recorded on the daily mortality and cull record.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Scoring scales (gait scoring) for walking ability are used to assess the leg health of the flock (see Resource 1).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The incidence of lameness is reduced by use of breeds with high robustness and leg health (such as slower-growing strains or breeds), and by providing appropriate nutrition.	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	To monitor bird leg health and the birds' ability to access feed and water, gait scoring is performed once per flock, no earlier than seven days before slaughter.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Lameness in any category above score >3 is <1% of flock.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on lameness outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>				



KWI Broiler 3

Foot pad lesions (pododermatitis) - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of foot pad marks/pododermatitis as a welfare issue.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	The incidence of pododermatitis is evaluated at the slaughter plant using pictures and descriptions such as in Resource 1.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If pododermatitis is detected at the slaughter plant, the farmer is informed.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	If the incidence of pododermatitis is higher than established targets, measures are taken to improve litter quality on-farm, and to reduce incidence in subsequent flocks.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Foot pad lesions in any category above 0 is <10% of flock.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on foot pad lesion outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 4

Hock lesions (hock burn, hock marks) - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of hock burn and hock marks as a welfare issue.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	The incidence of hock lesions is evaluated at the slaughter plant using pictures and descriptions such as in Resource 1.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If hock marks are detected at the slaughter plant, the farmer is informed.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	If the incidence of hock lesions is higher than established targets, measures are taken to improve litter quality on-farm, and to reduce incidence in subsequent flocks.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Hock lesions in any category is <10% of flock.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on hock lesion outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 5

Breast blisters, ammonia burns - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of breast blisters as a welfare issue (breast blisters are much less common than feet or hock lesions, but 'outbreaks' can occur).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Breast blisters are assessed at the processing plant.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If breast blisters are detected at the slaughter plant, the farmer is informed.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	If the incidence of breast blisters is higher than established targets, measures are taken to improve litter quality and to reduce incidence in subsequent flocks.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	Breast blister is <0.5% of flock.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 6

Ascites - Links to P2, P4, P5, P7, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The farmer is aware of ascites as a welfare issue.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Ascites and respiratory disease are assessed as a percentage at the processing plant.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	If the incidence of ascites / respiratory disease is higher than established targets, measures are taken to improve house conditions and disease status, and to reduce the incidence in subsequent flocks.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	The incidence of ascites is reduced by genetic selection and by providing appropriate nutrition.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on ascites and respiratory disease outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 7

On-farm culls - Links to P4, P5, P7, P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Only mortality (not cull) data collected. Mortality is defined as 'found dead', whereas cull is defined as 'actively, humanely killed for health or welfare reason'.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Daily cull number is collected and recorded.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	Cull data is analysed, and the cause of adverse trends is investigated and acted upon. Suggested thresholds for investigation are total cull > 1.5%.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The company has a written plan in place to respond to sudden increases in culling.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The plan includes veterinary consultation and actions to address the problem where necessary.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 8

On-farm mortality - Links to P2, P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Daily mortality data is recorded.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	As previous requirement.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	Mortality data is analysed, and the cause of adverse trends is investigated, and acted upon. The suggested threshold for investigation is total mortality >5%.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	A procedure is in place to investigate unexplained mortality of >2 birds/1,000/day. If morbidity and mortality levels increase, and other signs indicate the flock has been affected by disease, a diagnostic investigation is conducted to identify the causative agent.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 9

Transport - Links to P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	Dead on arrival (DOA) at slaughterhouse is calculated and recorded.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	To protect from high temperatures during transport, birds are loaded and transported in the cooler parts of the day, or during the night, and are provided with shade and good ventilation in the lairage.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	DOA at slaughterhouse < 0.5%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	All birds are slaughtered within 8 hours of loading the first bird into a module. The time from when birds leave the farm to arriving at the processing plant is no longer than 4 hours.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	DOA at slaughterhouse < 0.25%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Journey times are kept to a minimum.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The company has a written plan in place to respond to negative changes in DOA over any 24hr period.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 10

Slaughter: wing damage - Links to P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The slaughterhouse is aware of wing damage as a welfare issue, and communicates wing damage to the farmer when it occurs.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Wing damage < 0.5%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	Wing damage < 0.25%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The company has a written plan in place to respond to negative changes in wing damage over any 24hr period.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		



KWI Broiler 11

Slaughter: leg damage/bruising - Links to P10, P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	The slaughterhouse is aware of leg damage, broken or dislocated legs as a welfare issue, and communicates leg damage to the farmer when it occurs (where the slaughter house and the farm are in communication).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-Low (ML)	Leg damage/broken/dislocated legs <0.5%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
Medium-High (MH)	Leg damage/broken/dislocated legs <0.25%	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
High (H)	The company has a written plan in place to respond to negative changes in leg damage over any 24hr period.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	The company sets high targets, measures performance and reports on outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>				



KWI Broiler 12

Slaughter - Links to P11		Observed?	Comment on observation	Achieved level?	Progress	Evidence/comment
Basic (B)	A recognised method to induce immediate insensibility is adopted at slaughter (see Introduction Section 3.5 regarding stunning).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Animals are slaughtered adopting local legally-approved methods.	<input type="radio"/>				
	The slaughterhouse is aware of stunning as a welfare issue.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Stunning and killing is conducted by an appropriately trained and competent person.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Any equipment used for euthanasia is maintained in good working order, and is appropriate for the designated use, and records documenting maintenance are kept.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Electro-immobilisation is not used.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-Low (ML)	Staff are trained in, and able to explain: how to check an animal has been properly stunned; check for signs of consciousness and unconsciousness; and know what to do if an animal hasn't been properly stunned.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	At least 1 welfare contact person or co-ordinator, sometimes known as an Animal Welfare Officer) is appointed to have specific knowledge, training and responsibility for welfare during slaughter.	<input type="radio"/>				
	Maximum stun-to-start of bleed intervals of 15 seconds are adopted.	<input type="radio"/>				
Medium-High (MH)	Percentage of birds not effectively rendered immediately insensible is recorded and actions taken to reduce the number to a minimum.	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Company is moving away from use of electrical waterbath stunning, and towards gas or LAPS systems (beneficial for both welfare and quality reasons).	<input type="radio"/>				
High (H)	Internationally-recognised best practice methods for slaughter are adopted (Better Chicken Commitment, Resource 10).	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>		
	Non-electrical stunning systems are used.	<input type="radio"/>				

Notes: Broiler chickens

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Better Chicken Commitment:

[Welfare Commitments: European Chicken Commitment](#)

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Farmers Weekly: [What the better chicken commitment means for farmers](#)

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COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2007/43/EC of 28 June 2007 laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production

[COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes](#)

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FAO: [Water Quality for Livestock and Poultry](#)

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[FAWC opinion on contingency planning for farm animal welfare in disasters and emergencies \(15 March 2012\)](#)

[FAWC advice on sustainable intensification of livestock agriculture \(3 February 2012\)](#)

[FAWC report on education about farm animal welfare \(15 December 2011\)](#)

[FAWC report on economics and farm animal welfare \(7 December 2011\)](#)

[FAWC opinion on the welfare of animals killed on-farm \(29 March 2018\)](#)

[FAWC opinion on CCTV in slaughterhouses \(3 February 2015\)](#)

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Gov UK: [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#)

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Kestin, S.C.; Knowles, T.G.; Tinch, A.E., and Gregory, N.G. (1992): [Prevalence of leg weakness in broiler chickens and its relationship with genotype](#)

OIE: [Terrestrial Animal Health Code \(2019\)](#)

OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2019): [Chapter 7.5, Slaughter of Animals](#)

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[Red Tractor Chicken Standards: Indoor Enhanced Welfare Version 1 \(2020\)](#)

[Red Tractor Chicken Standards: Hatchery Version 4.1 \(updated 2019\)](#)

[Red Tractor Chicken Standards: Free Range Standards Version 4.2 \(Updated 2019\)](#)

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