

Welfare Potential by Production System for Broiler Chickens



Level	Example System	Stocking density	Genetics	Enrichment
1 = bad	Cage Production	50 kg/m ²	Fast growth rate breeds – Cobb, or Ross	No enrichment
2= bad	Standard Production (on floor) Thailand, Brazil, Europe	29 ¹ – 42 kg/m ²	Fast growth rate breeds – (primarily Cobb, Ross or Hendrix crosses)	Deep litter, which is friable enough to allow dust-bathing, and scratching
	Standard Production (on floor) (EU)	33 ² - 42 kg/m ²	Fast growth rate breeds – (primarily Cobb, Ross or Hendrix crosses)	As standard production, and may be with or without natural light, straw bales and perches
3 = better³	Higher Welfare Indoor ⁴	30 kg/m ² or less in house	Intermediate growth rate breeds	Natural light, perching, pecking substrates, straw bales
4 = best³	Free Range	27.5 kg/m ² in housing and 1 m ² /bird outdoor	Intermediate or slower growth rate breeds	Outdoor access for ½ of life, natural cover/woodland and indoors: perching, straw bales
	Organic ⁵	30 kg/m ² inside house plus access to 4 m ² /bird outdoor area	Slow growing breed – Slaughter age 70 days or above	1/3 lifetime with outdoor access and limits on flock size, natural cover/woodland and indoors: perching, straw bales

¹ This is largely dependent on regional climate and ventilation capacity of shed

² As per EU Broiler Directive 33kg/m², Derogation (i) 39kg/m² (ii) 42kg/m². Standard UK (Red Tractor standard) 38kg/m²

³ Multi-phase controlled atmospheric killing (CAK)² or effective electrical stunning without live inversion are the slaughter methods to be adopted in these systems

⁴ See

<http://www.rspca.org.uk/servlet/Satellite?blobcol=urlblob&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=RSPCABlob&blobwhere=1158755026986&ssbinary=true> for details; See <http://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/> (in Dutch only); See <http://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/> (in Dutch only); See

<http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/files/122130.pdf> for a description of the system requirements

⁵ Requirements vary between organic certification schemes