

Welfare Potential by Production System for Meat Rabbits

Level of Welfare	Example System	Space allowance (per rabbit)	Confinement	Enrichment and flooring
1 = Bad	Standard barren cages (inside or outside in hotter climates)	Typical cage 450 – 600cm ²	Barren cages with height <35cm	No enrichment
2	Enriched cages/ 'Welfare' cages	< 5 animals - ≥ 700cm ² > 5 animals - ≥ 600cm ²	Cage with height at least 40cm for a quarter of the cage	Platform, gnawing block, plastic cover over 25cm ² of wire floor
	Park system	< 800cm ²	Indoor cage-free system with no height restriction but operating at high stocking density	Limited enrichment
3 = Better	Outdoor mobile runs ¹	≥ 2000 cm ² (Italy) ² to 4000 cm ² (France) ³	Mobile outdoor cage on grass with a covered area, moved daily to provide fresh grass. Height ≥ 50 cm according to organic standards ⁴ .	Grazing opportunity Preferably with other enrichment provided (e.g. hay)
	Park system / Barn system	≥ 800 to 1500 cm ² ⁵ and above	Cage-free indoor pen with no height restriction	Platforms, gnawing blocks, hiding tubes, hay rack/compressed straw tube, non-wire flooring, natural light ⁶
4 = Best	Free Range ⁷	≥ 1 m ² (Italy) to 5 m ² (France) ⁸	Large outdoor enclosure with covered shelters and good fencing against predators	Outdoor access to pasture, gnawing items, tubes (preferably), shelter with solid flooring, hay rack, bedding material (preferably)

¹ Such as systems used in organic production; only when management conditions minimise mortality.

² Italian organic standards for rabbit production:

http://www.ambienteterritorio.coldiretti.it/tematiche/Ogm/Documents/2102_disciplinare-coniglio_def.pdf

³ French organic standards for rabbit production:

[http://www.capbio-bretagne.com/ca1/PJ.nsf/TECHPJPARCLEF/13286/\\$File/CDC-production%20biologique%20des%20lapins.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.capbio-bretagne.com/ca1/PJ.nsf/TECHPJPARCLEF/13286/$File/CDC-production%20biologique%20des%20lapins.pdf?OpenElement)

⁴ See Italian and French organic standards above.

⁵ Belgium : 800cm² (Belgian legislation):

http://www.health.belgium.be/filestore/19082320_EN/Eng%20Advies%20WG%20Konijnen.pdf; Germany: 750 to 1500cm²; Beter Leven one star : 600 cm² (≥5 per group), 700 cm² (<5

per group): <http://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/fileupload/20111219-konijnevlees-1-ster.pdf>; Four Paws : 1500cm².

⁶ Compassion Good Rabbit Award: natural light is stipulated for new builds, dawn/dusk lighting transition periods are required in all systems.

⁷ Such as systems used in organic production; only when management conditions minimise mortality.

⁸ See Italian and French organic standards above.

Welfare Potential by Production System for Does

Level of welfare	Example System	Space allowance (per doe)	Enrichment and flooring	Access to does' litter
1 = Poor	Standard barren cages (inside or outside in hotter climates)	Single housing $\leq 2000\text{cm}^2$	Nesting material only	Restricted to 2 minutes per day in nest box
2 = Insufficient	Enriched cages/ 'Welfare' cages	Single housing $\leq 4900\text{cm}^2$	Nesting material, platform, plastic cover over 25cm^2 wire flooring, gnawing block	Unrestricted with nest box
3 = Better	Outdoor mobile runs ⁹	Single housing $\geq 5000\text{cm}^2$ (Italy) ¹⁰ to 2m^2 (France) ¹¹ Height $\geq 50\text{cm}$ according to organic standards ¹²	Nesting material, bedding in winter, shelter, grass access, wooden unit for gnawing	Unrestricted access to doe made nest
	Park system (cage-free; not widely practiced)	Non-lactation group housing Beter Leven one star ¹³ : 4500cm^2 per rabbit for individual phase & 1.5m^2 for group phase	In development, likely to include the components: nesting material, platform, non-wire flooring, gnawing block, tubes	Access to individual nest box
4 = Best	Free Range ¹⁴	In development	In development	In development

⁹ Such as systems used in organic production; only when management conditions minimise mortality.

¹⁰ Italian organic standards for rabbit production:

http://www.ambienteterritorio.coldiretti.it/tematiche/Ogm/Documents/2102_disciplinare-coniglio_def.pdf

¹¹ French organic standards for rabbit production:

[http://www.capbio-bretagne.com/ca1/PJ.nsf/TECHPJPARCLEF/13286/\\$File/CDC-production%20biologique%20des%20lapins.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.capbio-bretagne.com/ca1/PJ.nsf/TECHPJPARCLEF/13286/$File/CDC-production%20biologique%20des%20lapins.pdf?OpenElement)

¹² See Italian and French organic standards above.

¹³ Beter Leven standards for rabbit production: <http://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/fileupload/20111219-konijnenvlees-1-ster.pdf>

¹⁴ Such as systems used in organic production; only when management conditions minimise mortality.