

Guideline

Agriculture Cattle Farming



Version: 01.01.2026



Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|----------|
| 1 | Fundamentals 🔍 | 4 |
| 1.1 | Scope of application | 4 |
| 1.2 | Responsibilities | 4 |
| 2 | General requirements | 5 |
| 2.1 | General system requirements | 5 |
| 2.1.1 | General company data 🔍 | 5 |
| 3 | Cattle farming requirements | 6 |
| 3.1 | Traceability and labelling | 6 |
| 3.1.1 | Purchasing, incoming goods and services 🔍 | 6 |
| 3.1.2 | [K.O.] Marking and identification of livestock 🔍 | 6 |
| 3.1.3 | [K.O.] Origin and marketing 🔍 | 6 |
| 3.1.4 | [K.O.] Stock records | 7 |
| 3.1.5 | Livestock transport 🔍 | 7 |
| 3.2 | Husbandry, care and handling | 7 |
| 3.2.1 | [K.O.] Monitoring and care of livestock 🔍 | 8 |
| 3.2.2 | [K.O.] General farming requirements 🔍 | 8 |
| 3.2.3 | [K.O.] Handling sick and injured animals 🔍 | 8 |
| 3.2.4 | Shed floor 🔍 | 9 |
| 3.2.5 | Shed climate and noise 🔍 | 9 |
| 3.2.6 | Lighting | 9 |
| 3.2.7 | [K.O.] Space allowances 🔍 | 9 |
| 3.2.8 | [K.O.] Alarm system 🔍 | 10 |
| 3.2.9 | Emergency power supply 🔍 | 10 |
| 3.2.10 | Requirements for loading and unloading equipment for livestock transport | 10 |
| 3.2.11 | Dehorning of calves 🔍 | 10 |
| 3.3 | Feed and feeding 🔍 | 10 |
| 3.3.1 | [K.O.] Feed supply 🔍 | 10 |
| 3.3.2 | Hygiene of feeding facilities | 11 |
| 3.3.3 | Handling and storage of feed 🔍 | 11 |
| 3.3.4 | [K.O.] Feed procurement 🔍 | 11 |
| 3.3.5 | Assignment of compound feed deliveries (bulk feed) to location numbers 🔍 | 12 |
| 3.3.6 | Feed production (on-farm mixer) 🔍 | 12 |
| 3.3.7 | Feed production in cooperation 🔍 | 13 |
| 3.3.8 | [K.O.] Use of service providers for feed production 🔍 | 13 |
| 3.4 | Drinking water | 13 |
| 3.4.1 | [K.O.] Water supply 🔍 | 13 |
| 3.4.2 | Hygiene of drinking facilities | 13 |
| 3.5 | Animal health/medication | 14 |
| 3.5.1 | Care contract with farm veterinarian 🔍 | 14 |
| 3.5.2 | [K.O.] Implementation of the stock care | 14 |
| 3.5.3 | [K.O.] Procurement and application of medicines and vaccines 🔍 | 14 |
| 3.5.4 | [K.O.] Storage of medicines and vaccines 🔍 | 15 |
| 3.5.5 | [K.O.] Identification of treated livestock | 15 |
| 3.6 | Hygiene | 15 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 3.6.1 | Buildings and equipment | 15 |
| 3.6.2 | Hygiene on the farm | 15 |
| 3.6.3 | Handling litter | 16 |
| 3.6.4 | Carcass storage and pick up | 16 |
| 3.6.5 | Pest monitoring and control | 16 |
| 3.6.6 | Risk assessment for biosafety | 16 |
| 3.7 | Monitoring programmes | 16 |
| 3.7.1 | Fattening calves: residue control program | 16 |
| 3.8 | Transport of own livestock | 17 |
| 3.8.1 | Requirements for the means of transportation | 17 |
| 3.8.2 | [K.O.] Available space during livestock transport | 18 |
| 3.8.3 | Cleaning and disinfection of means of transportation | 18 |
| 3.8.4 | Delivery documents | 19 |
| 3.8.5 | [K.O.] Time intervals for feeding and watering as well as duration of transportation times and resting times (for livestock transport over 50 km) | 19 |
| 3.8.6 | Transport papers (for livestock transport over 50 km) | 19 |
| 3.8.7 | [K.O.] Proof of qualification for drivers/carers (for livestock transport over 65 km) | 20 |
| II. | VLOG-Additional Module "Ohne Gentechnik" | 20 |
| 4 | Definitions | 20 |
| 4.1 | Explanation of symbols | 20 |
| 4.2 | Abbreviations | 20 |
| 4.3 | Terms and definitions | 20 |
| 5 | Annexes | 21 |
| 5.1 | Residue Control Programme for Fattening Calves | 21 |
| 5.1.1 | Receipt reports to the coordinator | 21 |
| 5.1.2 | Slaughter registration | 21 |
| 5.1.3 | Sampling | 22 |
| 5.1.4 | Examination of samples and sample plan | 22 |
| 5.1.5 | Suspension and resumption of slaughter registration | 22 |
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Note: The Guideline Agriculture Cattle Farming is written in German and translated into English. In case of discrepancies between the translation and the German version, the German original is valid.

1 Fundamentals

All details on the organisation, participation in the QS scheme and the audits can be found in the **Guideline General Regulations** and in the **Guideline Certification**, which are published on the QS website (www.q-s.de). The following document contains the basic requirements for participation in the QS scheme in the respective criteria. The accompanying explanations serve as an aid to interpretation and are to be understood as applicable requirements together with the guidelines. These are therefore subject to verification during the audit, if necessary.

1.1 Scope of application

Production branch cattle farming:

- Cattle production
- Calf production
- Calf breeding
- Dairy farming
- Suckling cow production (and foster cow farming)

Registration and participation in the QS scheme

Every livestock owner signs a contract (declaration of participation and power of attorney) with a coordinator for their location (= location number and production scope) to participate in the QS scheme and from the moment of signing, the livestock owner participates.

The list of approved coordinators is published under www-q-s.de/en.

The coordinator is the contact person in all questions about the QS scheme. He is among others responsible for

- The registration of the livestock owner in the QS database
- The administration of the master data in the QS database
- The organisation of the audits and
- The participation in monitoring programmes

Control on the site

Each company is controlled regularly. The controls (audits) are implemented by an auditor, who works for an independent certification body.

After registration in the QS scheme an initial audit is implemented. If the audit was successful, the location is mostly eligible to deliver after a couple of days and is able to market its animals in the QS scheme. The eligibility of delivery can be checked under www.q-s.de/softwareplattform/en.

Depending on the result of the audit (QS status I, II or III) every location will be audited on a risk-based schedule (audit interval):

Table 1:

| Scope \ QS-Status | I | II | III |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| Agriculture cattle farming | 3 years | 2 years | 1 year |

These regular audits take place unannounced. In addition, 10% of the locations will receive an unannounced spot audit in the period between two regular audits.


Furthermore, each location can be controlled additionally, e.g. in a random sample audit.

1.2 Responsibilities

The livestock owner is responsible for ensuring

- Compliance with requirements in this guideline and the explanatory notes,
- The complete and correct documentation,
- The qualified performance of an annual self-assessment

The adequate and timely implementation of corrective actions. The QS criteria are based on good working practice requirements. The livestock owner must comply at all times with the requirements of the QS scheme and always be in a position to demonstrate their compliance. The livestock owner must ensure that in addition to the requirements of this guideline and the other applicable QS requirements (e.g. Explanatory notes, Guideline General Regulations, Guideline Certification, Monitoring programs), the legal requirements (outside Germany comparable foreign legal rules) are met.

Note: The separate document "**Explanations on the Guideline Agriculture Cattle Farming**" summarises interpretation aids and other applicable requirements, which are for criteria marked with the symbol .

2 General requirements

2.1 General system requirements

All documents and records must be kept for at least the period since the last regular audit (usually approx. three years) - unless longer storage times are stipulated by law in individual cases - in line with the duty of care and proof to third parties. Evidence may be provided in paper form (analogue) or digitally.

Incident and crisis management

The scheme participants must inform QS and their coordinator immediately via a paper of incident (recommendation: QS paper of incident) and - where a legal obligation exists - also the competent authorities about critical incidents as long as these are of relevance for the QS scheme.

In particular, the scheme participants must report in cases where

- Nonconformities occur in the procurement of goods, in animal production or marketing that might pose a risk to food or feed safety,
- Preliminary proceedings are initiated due to violation of regulations regarding animal welfare or of regulations to secure feed or food safety or
- Media investigations, critical reports in the media or public protests are held on issues related to feed or food safety or animal welfare.


2.1.1 General company data

An company overview containing the following contact/company master data must be compiled:

- Address of the company and its locations (if the address is missing, geodata or route directions if applicable) with official location numbers (e.g. registration number according to the Livestock Transport Regulation (in Germany VVVO number))
- Telephone number, e-mail address
- Legal representative, contact person
- Person responsible for incident and crisis management
- Number of animals per unit
- On-farm mixers (relevant for feed monitoring): the type of feed used (e.g. grains, maize silage, rape-seed meal but also stale bread and bakery products, number of animal places or the feed quantity and change of feed

This data must be provided to the coordinator when registering for the QS scheme and must be up-to-date and complete. The coordinator must be informed without delay about any changes. Furthermore, a sketch or a plan of the company with clear naming of all areas of the company and a location plan for equipment must be provided; for externally stored equipment, a description is sufficient in the relevant document.

All documents relating to the general master data must be available or accessible at the location. An up-to-date declaration of participation must be available.

 Overview with contact/company master data, company sketch or plan, location plan, Declaration of Participation and Power of Attorney, documentation of external (equipment) storage facilities

Incident/crisis reporting

It must be demonstrated how QS can be informed quickly and comprehensively in the event of an incident or crisis (recommendation: QS paper of incident or online reporting).

Emergency plan

Every location must have an emergency plan. It must contain at least the following contact details:

- Contact person who is familiar with the situation at the location (e.g. family member, advisor)
- Attending veterinarian (farm veterinarian)
- Technical emergency service (e.g. electrician) for heating, ventilation and feeding systems

 Emergency plan (Recommendation: QS sample form: Emergency Plan)

3 Cattle farming requirements

3.1 Traceability and labelling

Livestock owners are obliged to purchase certain feed and feed additives, animals, or services exclusively from companies that are eligible to deliver for QS. For this purpose, the QS eligibility of delivery of the respective suppliers/service providers must be verified. At the time of delivery/service, the suppliers/service providers must be eligible to deliver for the respective production scope in the QS database.

3.1.1 Purchasing, incoming goods and services

The purchase of goods and services for cattle production, as well as the purchase of livestock, must be documented (date, type, quantity, supplier and company of origin). The documentation (e.g. on basis of accompanying documents such as delivery notes or invoices) makes it possible to retrace purchased livestock, goods and services at any time.

This applies to:

- Livestock
- Feed (proof of the charging number)
- Animal medication
- Cleaning agents and disinfectants
- Services (e.g. the use of service providers for feed production, animal transporters)

 Accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes, invoices), sack tags of feed

3.1.2 **[K.O.]** Marking and identification of livestock

All livestock must be marked and thus identifiable.

Livestock owners must permanently mark every animal with two official ear tags (calves within seven days after birth). If an animal loses an ear tag, the livestock owner must apply for an official replacement without delay and mark the animal immediately again.

Cattle may only be transported if it is properly marked.

 Accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes)

3.1.3 **[K.O.]** Origin and marketing

All cattle (including purchased cattle) must be kept continuously at a QS-approved location for at least the last six months prior to slaughter. From January 1, 2027, all cattle (including purchased cattle) must be kept continuously at a QS-approved location for at least the last eight months prior to slaughter. Fattening calves must be kept at a QS-approved location from the time they are weaned from their mother or, in the case of milk fattening, from the time they are removed from the farm where they were born, and in the case of rosé fattening, from the time they are removed from the rearing farm, until they are slaughtered (maximum age of eight months).


In individual cases (except for fattening calves), if marketing is necessary before the end of the six-month period (from January 1, 2027: eight-month period), these cattle may not be marketed as QS animals. If individual fattening calves (maximum 1% per marketing unit) are older than eight months, they may be marketed as QS fattening cattle (in accordance with production type 1001 cattle fattening), but not as fattening calves.

When animals are sold, both the sender of the animals (= livestock owner) and the recipient/customer must have a copy of the accompanying document (e.g. delivery document). The company of origin of the animals must be indicated. Digital proof is also possible. Proof of marketing can additionally be provided electronically in the HIT database (database for livestock origin and information) or via a corresponding HIT receipt.

Existing waiting times must be indicated on accompanying documents accompanying the goods (e.g. delivery notes) when they are handed over to third parties.

If an injection needle breaks and remains in the animal, the animal must be permanently labeled (e.g. ear tag,) to ensure that the foreign body does not enter the food chain. The abattoir must be informed accordingly via the food chain information.

Only animals from QS-certified companies that are authorised to deliver may be marketed as QS animals.

 Stock book, accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes), extract from QS/HIT database, if necessary food chain information


3.1.4 [K.O.] Stock records

Each livestock owner must keep and store stock records (stock book or similar). A specific form of records (e.g. handwritten/digital) is not specified.

The following information must be recorded in a cattle farm stock record as soon as possible:

- Date of receipt or birth (if born in own company)
- Date of leaving, death
- Ear tag number, race, gender, ear tag number of mother
- Supplier: either the registration number or the name and address of the previous owner
- Buyer/Recipient: either the registration number or the name and address of the follow-on business (abattoir, live-stock owners, disposal firm, post-mortem examination, or other if necessary)


Evidence of this information can also be given per electronic HIT database.

 Stock register, HIT-data, loss records, accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes), invoices, certificates from the animal carcass disposal company, inspection findings etc.

3.1.5 Livestock transport

Animals may only be transported within the QS scheme by QS-eligible livestock transport companies. The eligibility of delivery by (commercial) animal transport companies is checked in the QS database (**QS softwareplatform**) under the scheme participant search. There, eligibility of delivery can be checked, for example, by entering the location number of the company of origin.

The livestock owner entitled to transport his own animals within the QS scheme. If a livestock owner transports his own animals (with his own or borrowed vehicles), the requirements of ⇒ Chapter 3.8 *Transport of own livestock* must be complied with.

 Accompanying Documents (e.g. delivery notes), transport documents

3.2 Husbandry, care and handling

Transportability

Animals may only be loaded and transported if they are fit for transportation and are spared unnecessary suffering and pain. Animals that are to be transported may not be given tranquilizers unless this is necessary for the well-being of the animals and is done under veterinary inspection. The animals' fitness for transportation must be checked before each loading. If there is any doubt about the animal's fitness for transportation, a veterinarian must be consulted who will certify the animal's fitness for transportation in writing.

Handling the animals during loading

Persons loading or discharging animals must be trained or qualified. They must not use force during loading and must not unnecessarily frighten the animals or cause them injury or suffering. Care must be taken to ensure that the welfare of the animals is impaired as little as possible during loading.

Drifting aids may only be used to protect the animals.

The use of electric driving aids must be avoided. They may only be used on adult pigs that refuse to move despite being fit for transport and only on condition that the animals have sufficient space to move forward. Electric shocks may only be administered for a maximum of one second at appropriate intervals and only to the muscle areas of the hindquarters. They must not be repeated if the animal does not react.

The following animals must be transported separately:

- Animals of different species¹
- Animals with a considerable difference in size or age¹

- sexually mature males and females¹
- Horned animals separated from dehorned animals
- rival animals
- Tethered animals separated from non-tethered animals

3.2.1 [K.O.] Monitoring and care of livestock 🔍

All animals must be well looked after and cared for in accordance with the good agricultural working practices by persons with the necessary skills, knowledge and qualifications.

The persons caring for the animals must attend to the animals' well-being at least once a day through direct inspection. Dead animals must be removed immediately from the livestock area.

Even with pasture grazing, daily checks on animal health and feed and water supplies are necessary.

The claws of the livestock must be maintained appropriately.

3.2.2 [K.O.] General farming requirements 🔍

Each shed and each other form of husbandry must be structured in such a way with regard to construction, material, technical fittings, conditions and management that no avoidable physical health and behavioral damage can be inflicted. All facilities (in particular shed floors) must be such that the animals do not come more than unavoidable into contact with faeces and urine.

Equipment for the illumination, ventilation and supply systems must be at least checked daily. Defects at facilities and equipment must be corrected immediately. If that is not possible, measures to protect the health and welfare of the animals must be implemented until the defects are corrected.

The animals must have sufficient protection from adverse weather conditions.

Calves

According to the Animal Welfare Livestock Farming Ordinance, calves must not be tethered or otherwise restrained. This does not apply if the calves are kept in groups. In this case, they may be tethered for a maximum of one hour at a time for the purpose of feeding them milk or milk replacer. The devices used for tethering or other restraint must not cause the calves any pain or avoidable harm.

Single held calves must have visual and tactile contact to other calves (except when separating sick calves).

Calves that are less than 28 days old may not be transported within Germany. An exception to this are transports by farmers who transport their own animals in their own means of transport from their company over a maximum distance of 50 km. For transports that do not take place within Germany, calves that are less than 10 days old may not be transported unless the transport distance is less than 100 km.

3.2.3 [K.O.] Handling sick and injured animals 🔍

If necessary, rejected, aggressive, weak, sick or injured animals must be separated as soon as possible, and treated or professionally culled in accordance with animal welfare regulations. If necessary, the livestock owner must notify the veterinarian immediately. Accommodation for the recovery of the sick and injured animals must be available or can be set up immediately. These accommodations for sick and injured animals must be equipped with dry and soft litter or pad.

In particular, a veterinarian must be consulted if there are especially if indications of an infection of the entire stock are detected.

Culling

Any non-treatable animal must immediately be stunned and culled on the company

The following five steps must be followed by the livestock owner or caretaker during emergency killing to spare the animals from avoidable pain, stress or suffering:

- Determination if culling is necessary
- Proper anaesthesia with appropriate methods
- Control of anaesthesia (success of anaesthesia)

¹ These provisions do not apply if the animals have been reared in compatible groups and are used to each other. They also do not apply if separation would cause stress to the animals or in cases where females are carrying unweaned young animals.

- Immediate killing of the anaesthetised animal (with appropriate methods)
- Control of death entry (culling success)

3.2.4 Shed floor

The shed floors in the areas where the animals move about must be stable and non-slip. All animals must have access to are provided with a dry lying area.

Calves

The shed floor in bays for calves must be provided with elastic layer in lying areas.

Calves aged up to two weeks may only be kept in sheds if a lying surface covered with straw or a similar material is provided. Calves aged up to six months may only be kept on littered area or slatted floors with a maximum slat width of 2.5 cm, or 3 cm in the case of elastic-coated beams or beams with elastic covers. Manufacturing inaccuracies of 0.3 cm may be tolerated for individual slats. The tread width of the slats must be at least 8 cm.

3.2.5 Shed climate and noise

Sheds must be heat-insulated where necessary and equipped so that air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and concentration of gas are not harmful to the animals. The noise level of technical annexes must be kept to a minimum in the area where the animals are kept. Continuous and sudden noises must be avoided.

A back-up device that ensures adequate air exchange in the event of system failure must be present in sheds in which ventilation is ensured via an electrical system.

3.2.6 Lighting

The intensity and duration of light must be appropriate for the animals kept in sheds. If the shed has too little natural lighting, it must be lit artificially.

Calves

A light intensity of at least 80 lux must be ensured for at least ten hours per day in areas where calves are kept. The lightning must be adapted to the daily rhythm and it must be distributed as evenly as possible.

3.2.7 [K.O.] Space allowances

Sufficient lying surfaces must be available in pens, all cattle must be able to lie at the same time. In free stall sheds with lying boxes every animal must have one lying box.

Calves in groups of more than three animals and older cattle must have at least one unrestricted floor area per animal in accordance with their live weight as specified in Table 1.

Calves

Calves may be kept separately until the age of two weeks. The stalls must be at least 120 cm long, 80 cm wide and 80 cm high.

Calves aged between two and eight weeks may only be kept in separate boxes if:

- The box is at least
 - 180 cm long with an internally mounted trough
 - 160 cm long with an externally mounted trough and
- The freely available box width is at least 100 cm in boxes whose lateral boundaries extend to the floor and over more than half of the box length and at least 90 cm in other boxes.

Calves aged over eight weeks may only be kept in groups. Calves may only be kept in a box in groups of up to three animals if the box has a minimum floor area of

- 4.5 m² for calves aged up from two to eight weeks
- 6 m² for calves aged over eight weeks.

Table 1: Minimum floor area [m²]/animal [kg live weight] (applied to group housing)

| Weight Range | Minimum Area |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| up to 150 kg | 1.5 m ² |
| over 150 kg to 220 kg | 1.7 m ² |
| over 220 kg to 400 kg | 1.8 m ² |
| over 400 kg | 2.2 m ² |

3.2.8 [K.O.] Alarm system

In sheds where ventilation is provided by an electrically operated system, there must be a functional alarm system set up which operates independently of the power grid and provides a warning when the main system or rather the ventilation system breaks down.

3.2.9 Emergency power supply

A functioning emergency power supply must be present in facilities for keeping livestock in which adequate provision of feed and water for the animals is not assured in the event of a power failure. This applies in particular to facilities with own well water.

If an emergency power generator is needed, the technical facilities must be in place to allow the connection of this generator able to connect.

If the emergency generator, in case of need, is borrowed from third parties, a contractual agreement of the provision of the emergency generator and its guaranteed functionality must be concluded.

 Contractual agreement on the provision of the emergency power generator

3.2.10 Requirements for loading and unloading equipment for livestock transport

Loading and unloading equipment and their floor must be constructed, maintained, and used in a way that injuries, suffer and stress during the loading is avoided or kept as low as possible and the safety of the animals is guaranteed. The tread surface must be non-slip.

Suitable equipment should be used for loading and unloading animals which allows them to walk up and down the ramps without slipping and without effort. With platform installations, protective screens must be in place so that the animals cannot flee from the side.

If the loading height is more than 50 cm or the animals are not led on and off individually, the loading ramp must have suitable side protection which the animals cannot climb or jump over, stick their limbs through or injure themselves on.

3.2.11 Dehorning of calves

Dehorning of calves without anesthesia is only allowed for cattle under six weeks of age. Appropriate painkiller for alleviation of postoperative pains **after dehorning** of calves must be used.

 Proof of medication, combination sheet, stock book

3.3 Feed and feeding

Note: The term feed covers either compound feeds or premixes, raw materials (e.g. feed materials and agricultural primary products) and additives.

3.3.1 [K.O.] Feed supply

All cattle must be provided with feed in sufficient quantity and quality daily. All feeds must be checked for quality before use (e.g. for moisture, stocking, mold infestation, pest infestation, metal and plastic party, packaging

material, etc.). If quality defects are found or if the feed does not meet the legal requirements, the feed must not be fed.

Equipment must be constructed and set up in such a way that the feed contaminations and conflicts between the animals are kept to a minimum.

Calves

Calves must be provided with colostrum within the first four hours of life. Every calf must be fed at least twice a day. If calves are kept in groups and feed is rationed, it must be ensured that all calves are able to take up feed at the same time. This does not apply to feed-on-demand or comparable feeding systems. Roughage or other high fibred, structured feed must be freely available for calves at latest from the age of eight days onwards.

3.3.2 Hygiene of feeding facilities

All plants, equipment, containers and feeding lines, feed transport boxes, equipment (e.g. shovels) and vehicles used for feeding the animals and therefore coming into contact with feed must be kept clean and, where necessary, disinfected after cleaning.

After the use of veterinary drugs, all equipment, pipes, feeding lines, shovels, etc. that have come into contact with medications must be cleaned to prevent carry-over.

3.3.3 Handling and storage of feed 🔍

All feeds must be protected against contamination and impurities. They must be stored clean, dry, with the use of building materials and coatings which will not pose a health risk and protected from the weather. Furthermore, feed Protective measures must be taken to protected against pests, rodents, birds, wild boar and other wild animals and pets.

Feed must be stored and transported separately from waste, liquid and solid manure, hazardous substances, seeds, medication and chemicals.

Storage facilities and stored animal feed must be checked at regular intervals (e.g. for cleanliness, germ or fungal infestation, pest infestation, temperature, sensory properties of the feed). Finished feed must be stored separately from unprocessed raw materials. Undesired mixing, for example of feed for different species, or of grower-, fattening- and finisher diets, must be avoided, e.g. by using separate silos. The silo cells must be clearly marked.

For substances which may not be used as or in feed, see ⇒ *Annex 9.4 Exclusion list (Guideline Feed Sector)*

Note: Dust bags used to fill silos, big packs and other containers/packaging used for feed delivery should remain on site for biosafety reasons and must be disposed of if necessary.


3.3.4 [K.O.] Feed procurement 🔍

Eligibility of delivery

Livestock owners may only purchase and utilise feed that are certified according to QS or another recognized standard and that come from feed producers or traders with QS eligibility of delivery. Eligibility of delivery is checked in the QS database (**QS Softwareplattform**) under the scheme participant search.

- If feed (in bulk or packed) is procured directly from producers, they must be eligible to deliver into the QS scheme.
- If feed is procured unpacked (in bulk) via traders, they must be eligible to deliver into the QS scheme.
- If packaged feed is purchased via traders, the trader/producer must be eligible to deliver into the QS scheme; If the trader is listed in the QS database as eligible to deliver, there is no need for verification of the producer. If the trader is not QS-eligible to deliver, the producer of the packaged feed must be eligible to deliver into the QS scheme.
- If a livestock owner commissions a transport company to transport unpacked feeds, the livestock owner must ensure that the transport company is eligible to deliver. There are no requirements regarding the eligibility of delivery of transporters/freight forwarders for the transport of packaged animal feed.

Note: Procurement of feed from a cooperation, see criterion ⇒ 3.3.7 Feed production in cooperation is checked at the producer of the feed.

 Delivery notes or invoices, sack tags, contractual agreement on feed production


Procurement of agricultural primary products

When purchasing and transporting agricultural primary products, there are no requirements on a QS approval for suppliers at the stage agriculture; These primary products can be obtained freely from the agricultural producer, agricultural trade, etc.. Locations that use those products are considered as on-farm mixers and must participate in feed monitoring.

⇒ Chapter 3.7 Monitoring programmes

3.3.5 Assignment of compound feed deliveries (bulk feed) to location numbers

When ordering loose compound feed (bulk), the livestock owner must state the location number (e.g. registration number) of the location to be supplied. This number must be indicated by the supplier on an accompanying document (e.g. delivery note). In the event of incorrect information, the supplier must be notified of any corrections.

 Accompanying documents of compound Feed with location number (e.g. delivery notes); correction note

3.3.6 Feed production (on-farm mixer)

If feed is produced in own facilities for the own location or in cooperation with other livestock owners for several locations, the following requirements must be met. This applies both to the production of feed materials or compound feed (e.g. crushing of primary agricultural products, mixing or pelleting of feed) and to the supply of basic feed via feed mixers.

If feed is produced in cooperation with other livestock owners, ⇒ 3.3.7 *Feed production in cooperation* also applies.

If service providers are used for feed production, ⇒ 3.3.8 [K.O.] *Use of service providers* also applies.

Feed produced in own production may not be marked with the QS certification mark or as QS products.

Feed materials in line with the QS-list

Only feed materials listed in the “**QS-list of feed materials**” may be used. Products subject to a statutory feeding ban or named in the QS exclusion list may not be used for feeding in the QS scheme.

If feeding stuffs are labelled as "non-QS goods" or "not for feed use", they may not be fed to QS animals.

⇒ Annex 9.4 *Exclusion list (Guideline Feed Sector)*

⇒ Annex 9.5 *QS list of feed materials (Guideline Feed Sector)*

Quality control of feed

If quality defects are found, the raw materials must not be used for feed production. If no maximum content of undesirable substances is exceeded, feed may be blended/diluted (see requirements of the **Feed Hygiene Regulation**). Water used in production must be suitable for animals (clean, clear and without extraneous odour).

Production and plant hygiene

In the entire feed production must be designed to minimize hazards that may affect feed safety. Therefore, feeds must be protected against contamination and impurities, which may be caused, for example, by machine lubricants, fertilizers, pesticides, biocides, veterinary medicines and waste. The plants must be checked regularly for contamination and dust accumulation and cleaned if necessary. The penetration of pests must be avoided.

All plants and equipment facilities used in feed production must be checked regularly for contamination and dust accumulation; they must be kept clean and cleaned as necessary. Furthermore, they must be inspected annually and maintained or repaired as necessary. The inspection must be documented.


 Documentation for the inspection of plant and equipment (e.g. within the scope of self-assessment)

Use and documentation of feed additives

If feed additives (e.g. urea, vitamins, minerals, amino acids, trace elements and preservatives, such as propionic acid for the storage of moist cereals etc.) are used they must be precisely measured and mixed in. All scales and measuring instruments must be suitable for weights or volumes to be determined and must be checked regularly for accuracy. If there are indications of insufficient or incorrect dosage, measures to rectify the error must be taken (e.g. after-treatment or mixing in of an un-treated feed).

The producer's recommendations for the use and dosage of feed additives must be followed.

The use of feed additives must be documented according to HACCP principles.


 Documentation for the use of feed additives, mixing protocols

3.3.7 Feed production in cooperation

If multiple livestock owners or multiple locations of a livestock owner join to produce their own feed or establish a purchasing cooperation, this cooperation must be contractually fixed; it must be specified in the contract which partner produces the feed and who the recipients are. Within the QS scheme, no feed may be produced for or marketed to third parties within the QS scheme for third parties who do not belong to this cooperation. A cooperation between livestock owners or between several locations of a single livestock owner for the production of feed or purely for purchasing purposes is only allowed if all livestock farmers involved are QS scheme participants. In this case, certification for feed production and road transport by the cooperative is not necessary.

The delivery routes and the procurement of feed must always be traceable for each cooperation partner. The name and address of the locations supplied, as well as the type and quantity (and, if applicable, batch) delivered, must be documented at the manufacturing site. The locations supplied must receive accompanying documents (e.g., delivery notes, collective delivery notes/documentation) so that the procurement of feed can be traced there. Documentation of the delivery routes is not necessary if there are several locations (VVVO no.) of a livestock farmer within the cooperation and/or the cooperation consists of several location numbers (VVVO no.) on the same premises.


A cooperation between livestock owners is also possible for pure purchasing groups. The cooperation must be contractually fixed. A certification for the feed trade is not necessary in this case.

 Contractual agreement on feed production, accompanying documents (e. g. delivery notes), invoices, documentation for traceability in case of cooperation

3.3.8 [K.O.] Use of service providers for feed production

If service providers (e.g. mobile soy toasters, oil presses or mobile feed milling and mixing plants) are used for feed production, they must be authorized to deliver QS products. The only service providers excluded from this rule are those who do no more than simple external processing of feed – for example, mincing feed but not mixing or otherwise processing it. Eligibility of delivery is checked in the software platform ([QS Software-Platform](#)) under the scheme partner search.

This also applies to the use of external service providers in a cooperation of livestock owners for feed production.

 Accompanying documents (e. g. delivery notes), invoices, extract from the QS database

3.4 Drinking water

3.4.1 [K.O.] Water supply

All cattle must always have access to a sufficient amount of water (ad libitum) of sufficient quality (Exception: calves under the age of two weeks).

The watering facilities must be constructed and set up in such a way the water contaminations and conflicts between the animals are kept to a minimum and that they are accessible

The drinking water must be clean, clear and without extraneous odour.

In tethered housing, a self-drinker must be available at every place. In group housing, a maximum 15:1 animal/drinker place ratio is required for individual-animal drinkers (recommended 10:1); if trough drinkers are used, the troughs per animal must be at least 6 cm wide. If the troughs are large enough for several animals to drink from at the same time, a maximum of 15 animals (recommended 10 animals) can be counted per drinking place (= animal width).

The flow amount of watering must be sufficiently high for animal friendly drinking.

3.4.2 Hygiene of drinking facilities


Drinking troughs must be controlled daily and kept as clean as possible; they must be cleaned when necessary.

After the use of medicines, all facilities, pipes, drinkers, drinking bowls etc. that have come into contact with medicinal products must be cleaned sufficiently in order to avoid residues contamination or carry-over.

3.5 Animal health/medication

3.5.1 Care contract with farm veterinarian

Every livestock owner must have his stock attended by a veterinarian. The relationship must be agreed upon in a written agreement (for minimum requirements, see explanatory notes or sample contract, cf. www.g-s.de/en/).


 Veterinary care contract

3.5.2 [K.O.] Implementation of the stock care

The livestock owner must ensure compliance with the agreements set out laid down in the veterinary care contract are complied with. The veterinarian must (regardless of acute cases of illness) visit the company location before the initial audit and then regularly at least once per fattening cycle or at least once a year. During these visits, the entire livestock at the location must be inspected.

The stock visits and their results must be documented by the vet, and the evidence must be kept at the location. As far as no abnormalities are found, a simplified documentation of findings (e.g. on the invoice) is sufficient.

If action is required, a plan with preventive and treatment measures must be drawn up for the location.

 Veterinary visit records or similar documents, action plan, vaccination plan

3.5.3 [K.O.] Procurement and application of medicines and vaccines

Procurement of medicines and vaccines

The medicines and vaccines used by the livestock owners must be correctly labelled clear designation (product name), type of application, ingredients, expiry date, waiting period. The livestock owner must be able to present the completely filled-out proof of purchase for the acquisition of animal medicines at all times. This could be:

- Veterinary medicine documentation
- Receipts from the pharmacy
- Copies of prescriptions or preparation orders in the case of in-feed medicines.

Application of medicines and vaccines

The use of antibiotics as performance enhancers or for prophylaxis is prohibited.

A veterinary prescription must be provided for each use of prescription medicines.

The livestock owner must chronologically document every use of medicines and vaccines which is administered by himself (or the veterinarian), see **German Livestock owner veterinary drug detection regulation and German Drug Law (TAMG)** (the documents can also be kept in electronic form, if data cannot be altered).

The following information must be recorded in writing immediately after each application:

- Number, type and identity of the animals treated and their location (if the location is required to identify the animals)
- Name of medicine/vaccine, assignment of the veterinary drug record (e.g. by numbering), date of application
- Amount administered, waiting time, name of person who administered the treatment


If the livestock owner administers the medication themselves, they must follow the instructions given by the veterinarian. Prescribed medicines must be taken as prescribed. The waiting periods set must be compiled.

Serums, vaccines and antigens may only be administered by veterinarians.

If the veterinarian transfers the application of vaccines to the livestock owner, a valid vaccination schedule (application plan according to the German **Animal Vaccine Regulation**) must be present.

All medical supplies must be clean and fit for the purpose. Only flawless injection needles may be used; bent, blunt, broken and otherwise unfit needles must be replaced and disposed of immediately.

Care must be taken to ensure that no injection needles are lost.

 Receipts on purchase and usage of medicines and vaccines (Veterinary medical documentation), combined receipts, invoices, prescriptions, vaccination pass and plan (usage schedule in accordance with animal vaccine regulations), vaccination control book, livestock book).

3.5.4 [K.O.] Storage of medicines and vaccines 🔍

Medicines and vaccines must be stored in accordance with the instructions of the producer (if necessary refrigerated). They must be stored inaccessible for unauthorised persons (e.g. external persons and children) in a clean, locked container or cabinet or inaccessible room.

Once the expiry date has been reached, medicines and vaccines must not be used anymore and must be properly disposed of once their expiry date has been reached. Empty containers must also be disposed of without delay.

Feed medicines must be stored in such a way that feeding to animals for which they are not intended is impossible.

3.5.5 [K.O.] Identification of treated livestock

Treated animals (individuals or groups/pens) must be clearly identifiable for at least the duration of the waiting period.

3.6 Hygiene

3.6.1 Buildings and equipment 🔍

Sheds and adjoining rooms, outdoor facilities including loading facilities, all shed equipment and feeding systems including containers and troughs, feed transport boxes, equipment (e.g. shovels) and vehicles used for feeding animals, must enable effective cleaning and pest control. All buildings and equipment must be clean and must be kept in a proper condition. In addition, pests must be effectively controlled.

Livestock loading areas, loading ramps, rooms for the temporary housing or marketer of animals (e.g. for the marketing of animals), access and exit routes, places for loading and unloading and the equipment used there must be cleaned, and cleaned and disinfected after each continuous use.

3.6.2 Hygiene on the farm 🔍

All shed entrances must be marked with a sign stating "Livestock – Access prohibited for unauthorised persons" or a similar text. The entrances (doors/gates) to the animal area must effectively prevent unauthorized persons from entering and animals from escaping.

Sheds and other housing facilities may only be entered by external persons (also for visitor traffic, e.g., tourists or camping) in consultation with the livestock owner and only with protective clothing (disposable clothing or the location's own protective clothing and disposable footwear or the location's own footwear). These must be provided by the livestock owner (e.g. for drivers of livestock transport vehicles, who leave the vehicle for loading and unloading). The protective clothing must then remain on the location.

The following requirements must also be fulfilled for effective on-farm hygiene:

- Work clothes are clean
- Functioning hand wash basin, hand cleaning agent, disposable wipes or clean towels are available
- If hygiene sluices are present, they must be clean
- Waste is disposed of properly
- Vacant stalls or spatially separated parts of a stall, including facilities and equipment, shall be cleaned and disinfected between emptying and reoccupancy, provided that the housing system allows this.

Animals must not be able to access landfills and household waste.

Specialized Fattening Calves

Livestock companies which also operate facilities for tourists or campers must keep these facilities separate from the livestock so that no direct or indirect contact between visitors and animals can occur. A supervised entrance may be admitted in exceptional cases if protective clothing or own company clothing is used and direct contact with the animals is avoided.

3.6.3 Handling litter

Litter and organic manipulable material must be suitable for animals, hygienic, clean and visually free of fungal infestation. Litter materials must be stored dry and protected (e.g. from weather, pest rodents). For storage, field storages are also suitable.

3.6.4 Carcass storage and pick up

Carcass storage

Carcasses must be stored on paved areas and where possible outside the shed area. The carcass storage must be of adequate size.

Cattle carcasses must be kept covered until they are picked up by the postmortem examination company.

Pick-up of carcasses

If possible, the carcass storage areas/containers for the pick-up of the carcasses must be positioned in such a way that vehicles from the carcass disposal companies do not come near the livestock sheds.

3.6.5 Pest monitoring and control

On the entire company including the storage facilities, a pest monitoring must be carried out.

Traps and baits must be placed in a way that other animals do not have access to them. In case of infestation, the pests must be effectively and properly combated. These control measures must be documented.

 Control protocols

3.6.6 Risk assessment for biosafety

Risk traffic light

From 1 July 2026, every livestock owner must prove that they have analysed their location in terms of ASF risk using the ASF risk traffic light or the ASP-Offenstall (open shed) risk traffic light ([Start page - Risikoampel Universität Vechta](#)).

Biosecurity concept

Alternatively, risk assessment can be demonstrated using an officially recognised concept (see list in the **explanatory notes to the guideline agriculture**).

3.7 Monitoring programmes

Feed monitoring in on-farm mixing locations

Each location using primary products for feed, mix their own feed or purchases already mixed feed from a co-operation must participate in the feed monitoring (definition agricultural on-farm mixers ⇒ Explanatory Notes). In agricultural on-farm mixing locations, samples must be drawn and examined every year in accordance with the control plans for agriculture (**Guideline Feed Monitoring**).

The organisation of feed monitoring, including the establishment of the inspection plan to control the feed, as well as the selection of the locations where the feed samples shall be drawn, is the responsibility of the coordinator and is also checked there.

Documentation of diagnostic data from slaughter

The transfer of the results of the diagnostic data collection to the QS diagnostic database is the responsibility of the abattoir. The requirements are laid down in the **Guideline Diagnostic Data in Cattle Slaughtering**. The reporting of diagnostic data is carried out for cattle delivered from agricultural locations participating in the QS scheme.

Antibiotics monitoring

All calves and cattle for fattening must take part in the antibiotics monitoring programme. The requirements are defined in the **Guideline Antibiotics Monitoring Cattle**.

Antibiotics may only be prescribed by veterinarians who are registered in the antibiotics database.

Each livestock owner receives information about the therapy index via his coordinator: either by sending the information letter on a regular basis or via direct access to the antibiotics database to view his own data.


3.7.1 Fattening calves: residue control program

Fattening calves are subject to residue controls.

The livestock owner must report the receipt (birth, if applicable) of the animals and the registration for slaughter to the coordinator in a timely manner. The coordinator then organizes the drawing of a sample, which is taken by a neutral institute in accordance with the residue control plan for fattening calves.

The livestock owner must submit the slaughter registration before slaughter and document it on the company.

⇒ Annex 5.1 Residue Control Plan for Fattening Calves.

 Results of Residue Controls, Certificate

3.8 Transport of own livestock

Livestock owners must comply with the following requirements when transporting their own livestock with own (or borrowed) vehicles, regardless of whether they transport within the company, to other locations or e.g. to abattoirs.

Requirements for transporting own livestock with own vehicles

It must be ensured that the well-being of the animals is impaired as little as possible during the entire loading and transport process (up to unloading of the last animal). When transporting livestock, the driver must drive in a suitable and anticipatory manner which minimizes the risk of injury. The animals should be transported to their destination without delay.

If the animals get injured or ill during the transport, they must be separated from the rest of the animals and, if required, be checked and treated by the veterinarian as soon as possible. Unnecessary suffering must be avoided and if, required, the animals must be emergency slaughtered or culled.

3.8.1 Requirements for the means of transportation

Vehicles must also carry adequate loading and unloading equipment. The vehicles and dividers must be in perfect technical condition and be clean and hygienic.

They must be constructed, used and maintained in such a way that injury and suffering of the animals are avoided and their safety is guaranteed. They must also be able to withstand the forces exerted by the animals. Vehicles and partitions must allow effective and light cleaning and disinfection.

If the animals are loaded one on top of the other (with intermediate decks), all necessary measures must be taken in order to:

- Avoid contamination of the animals on the lower level with excretions from the animals loaded on the upper level and
- Ensure that ventilation is not disabled

Restraining equipment may only be used if it does not inflict any pain, suffering or injury on the animals. Ropes, belts and similar equipment must be strong enough to withstand the expected loads and attached in such a way that the animals cannot strangle or injure themselves and can be released quickly.

Walls and roof

The animals must be protected against bad weather (e.g. hail, heavy rain, snow) at all times.

The vehicles must be set up in such a way that the animals cannot escape or fall out. They must also be capable of withstanding the forces of motion that occur during transport.

There must be a sufficient number of partition walls and these must be strong enough to withstand the weight of the animals. They must be set up in such a way that they can be moved quickly and easily and cannot be climbed or jumped over.

Ventilation

Cattle must have an appropriate and sufficient supply of fresh air.

Inside the loading area and on every intermediate deck, there must be enough space to ensure appropriate air circulation above the standing animals whose natural freedom of movement may not be restricted in any way.

Floor and litter

The floor must be non-slip.

All cattle must have a sufficient amount of litter or similar material in order to absorb their excrement.

Livestock control

Vehicles must be accessible in order to monitor the animals. Sufficient light (portable as well as permanently installed) must be available during transport for monitoring purposes.

3.8.2 [K.O.] Available space during livestock transport

Animals must be given sufficient floor and standing space corresponding to their size.

During transport, each animal must be provided with enough unrestricted space so that they can stand in their natural position and can all lie down at the same time. The space available must comply at least with the values in the following table.

Table 22: Space requirements for cattle during (road) transport

| Category | Approximate Weight [kg] | Area [m ² /Animal] |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bred calves | 50-55 | 0.30-0.40 |
| Medium-weight calves | 110 | 0.40-0.70 |
| Heavy calves | 200 | 0.70-0.95 |
| Medium-size cattle | 325 | 0.95-1.30 |
| Fully grown cattle | 550 | 1.30-1.60 |
| Very large cattle | >700 | >1.60 |

Up to 25 calves or up to six fully grown cattle if loaded crosswise or up to eight fully grown cattle transported in a group must each be separated by a partition device when transporting them by road.

Within Germany, sexually mature male cattle may only be transported in groups if the clearance height of the transport area is restricted to a maximum of 50 cm above the withers of the tallest animal during road transport.

The group size of cattle with a live weight of over 70 kg each can be exceeded by up to 20 % during transport if the animals being transported together were kept together as a group at the place of shipment for at least seven days prior to transport.

Documentation

Compliance with the space requirements (loading density) must be documented.

 Accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes), documentation of loading density

3.8.3 Cleaning and disinfection of means of transportation


Vehicles used to transport animals to livestock loading points, assembly points or abattoirs must be cleaned and disinfected before leaving any location of this kind.

Before each loading, the driver must check if the vehicle has been properly cleaned and disinfected. Only then may the transport vehicle be loaded again.

Disinfection control book (for livestock transport to abattoir)

Any driver of vehicles transporting livestock must carry a separate disinfection control book for each vehicle (that means one of the traction engine and on for the trailer) when transporting cattle to the abattoir; these books must contain the following information:

- Date of transport
- Species of animals transported
- Place and date of cleaning and disinfection of the vehicle
- Trade name of the disinfectant used


 Disinfection control book

3.8.4 Delivery documents

When delivering livestock to the customer (rearing/fattening company, abattoir etc.), the accompanying documents (e.g. delivery notes) must contain the following information concerning the identification of the animals and of the carrier (= delivering livestock owner):

- Quantity
- Type of animal
- Animal markings (ear tags)
- location number of the sender (in German VVVO) (i.e. of the livestock owning company, e.g. VVVO number)

Both the sender and the customer must have a copy or carbon copy of the delivery document.

 Delivery documents

3.8.5 **[K.O.] Time intervals for feeding and watering as well as duration of transportation times and resting times (for livestock transport over 50 km)**

Cattle must not be transported for longer than eight hours.

But cattle can be transported for longer than eight hours as long as additional requirements concerning long transportations (⇒ Chapter 4.3 Terms and definitions) are met (see Animal Transport Regulation: **Regulation (EC) No 1/2005**).

In these cases, the intervals for feeding and watering, as well as for travelling time and rest periods are as follows:

- Calves not yet weaned and still fed with milk must be given a sufficient rest period, lasting at least one hour, when they are transported for nine hours. It is particularly important that they are able to eat and drink in this period. Following this rest period, they are then able to be transported for another nine hours.
- All other cattle must be given a sufficient rest period, lasting at least one hour, when they are transported for 14 hours. It is particularly important that they are able to eat and drink in this period. Following this rest period, they are then able to be transported for another 14 hours.
- Once the maximum length of transport has expired, the animals must be unloaded, fed and watered and given a rest period of at least 24 hours.

In addition, the following requirements must be met for long transportation:


- Calves that are less than 28 days old must not be transported within Germany.
- For transports that do not take place within Germany, calves that are less than 10 days old must not be transported unless the transport distance is less than 100 km. In addition, calves must be older than 14 days for long transportation if they are not accompanied by their mothers.

The feed and water must be of good quality.

In the case of transport within Germany, however, the maximum duration of transport to the abattoir must not exceed four and a half hours if it is not possible to guarantee that the outside temperature will not exceed 30 degrees at any time during the transport. Neither of these restrictions shall apply if the duration of transport is exceeded due to unforeseeable circumstances.

Documentation

The duration of transport and rest times, as well as the care of animals, must be documented.


 Records on the duration of transport and rest times, driver's log, documentation on livestock supply, delivery documents

3.8.6 Transport papers (for livestock transport over 50 km)

The driver is required to carry documents (transport control book) in the transport vehicle that contain the following information:

- day and time when the transport started
- likely duration of the planned transport
- origin and owner of the livestock
- point of dispatch
- scheduled destination
- description of animals (e.g. species, type)

The data must be entered before the transport starts.

 Transport papers, declaration of transport

3.8.7 **[K.O.] Proof of qualification for drivers/carers (for livestock transport over 65 km)**

Drivers and attendants who are directly responsible for the welfare of the animals during loading and unloading and during the actual transport must be appropriately trained or qualified and hold a qualification certificate. This does not apply to persons who assist in driving the animals at the point of departure or destination.

The proof of qualification must be carried on board. The company must also be in possession of a copy (cf. **Livestock transport Reg.REG (EC) No. 1/2005**).

 Proof of qualification for drivers/carers

II. VLOG-Additional Module “Ohne Gentechnik”


The VLOG-Additional Module is published as a separate document (only available in German language).


4 Definitions

4.1 Explanation of symbols

K.O. criteria are marked **[K.O.]**.

References to related documents are highlighted by the use of **bold text**.

 This symbol means: A written confirmation must be provided. Next to this symbol also documents are listed that can be used as evidence. All (also digital) control - and documentation systems which proof that the requirements are fulfilled can be used.

 This symbol means: For criteria with this symbol, the separate document **Explanations to the Guideline Agriculture Cattle Farming** contains interpretation aids.

References to other sections of the Guideline are indicated by \Rightarrow .

Notes (regarding legal requirements), **suggestions** (regarding process assurance or as support for management) and **explanations** (about QS-framework, for transparency) are identified by *text in italics*. Notes, suggestions and explanations are no QS requirements, they are not controlled and they are not included in the evaluation.

4.2 Abbreviations

| | |
|------|---|
| HIT | Origin assurance and information system for animals |
| K.O. | Knock out criterion |
| VO | Regulation in the sense of a binding legal form |
| VVVO | Livestock Transport Regulation |

4.3 Terms and definitions

- HACCP (Hazard analysis and critical control point)
A system which identifies, evaluates and controls risks that are significant to food safety. All individual steps of a production technique are considered and assessed in a risk-based analysis, to determine causes of potential quality deviations.
- Transportation
The entire transport process, from shipment to arrival at the destination, including unloading and housing and loading at the stopover stations.

- Long transportation
Transportation which exceeds eight hours from the movement of the first animals in the consignment.
- Silage additives
– approved in acc. with Regulation EC 1831/2003 – are used in the production of primary products; they are added to feed to improve silage production (e.g. lactic acid bacteria). Documentation based on HACCP principles is not required.
- Animal/livestock transport
Every movement of animals/livestock in one or more transport vehicles and all related procedures, including loading, unloading, reloading and resting until the unloading of the animals at their final destination.
- QS Animals
QS-animals are animals, that are produced and marketed in a QS company with eligibility to deliver according to the QS scheme.

You can find a list of general terms and definitions in the **Guideline "General Requirements"**.

5 Annexes

5.1 Residue Control Programme for Fattening Calves

Implementation of the control programme

Calves and cattle slaughtered up to a maximum age of 8 months are considered as fattening calves.

The implementation of the residue control programme for fattening calves is organised by the coordinator. He arranges the control of the calf fattening companies and the conduction and analysis of residue samples.

If positive results have been measured or limits have been cut, QS and the livestock owner must be informed immediately by the coordinator.

5.1.1 Receipt reports to the coordinator

The calf fattening owner is obliged to report the following data to the coordinator:

- Receipt (birth, if applicable) within 7 days
- locations number
- ear tag number
- date of birth
- date of housing

5.1.2 Slaughter registration

The slaughter registration serves as proof for the livestock owner and the abattoir that the animals to be slaughtered have been properly reported to the coordinator and are thus subject to the residue control programme. The slaughter registration is given by the coordinator if there is no cause for complaint. Calves may only be marketed as QS animals with a valid slaughter registration.

The animals must be registered for slaughter no later than three weeks before the end of the fattening period.

The livestock owner must report the following data to the coordinator:

- Intended slaughter date
- Ear tag number
- Losses for calf fattening, e.g. animals for beef production, dead calves

The livestock owner must submit the slaughter registration to the abattoir before slaughter and keep a copy on the company as proof.

The slaughter registration must contain the following information:

- Name of the scheme participant (veal calf producer)
- Location number (e.g. registration number according to the Livestock Traffic Ordinance)
- Name of the coordinator
- Number of calves
- Ear tag numbers of the calves

5.1.3 Sampling

The residue control programme is dynamically structured and provides for up to three samplings per site (location number).

Samples are taken by the certification body. Sampling must take place unannounced. The sample is sent by the sampler. The livestock owner must assist the inspector in taking the samples.

Each location is sampled once per calendar year. For 20 % of the locations, sampling is carried out a second time, for 5 % a third time.

The certification body organises the sampling according to the following scheme:

At each location (VVVO number), one urine sample is taken per 100 animals. 10% of the total number of samples is taken as hair samples. For the examination of natural hormones, 2.5 % of the urine samples are replaced by blood samples in the course of a year.

5.1.4 Examination of samples and sample plan

The samples must be tested in a test laboratory accredited according to **DIN EN ISO 17025**. All samples are analysed by LC-MS/MS method or ECLIA (only for blood samples).

Independently of this, in the case of positive results, a confirmatory examination by LC-MS/MS procedure or ECLIA (only for blood samples) in another approved laboratory must be carried out to verify the result.

The samples shall be analysed as follows:

Table 3:

| Sample | Parameter |
|---------------------|---|
| Hair sample | (A) beta agonists |
| Urine sample | (A) beta agonists (B) artificial hormones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trenbolone • 19-nortestosteron • corticosteroid • stilbenes • ceranol • ethinyl estradiol (D) other critical substances ¹ , e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chloramphenicol • antibiotics |
| Blood sample | (C) natural hormones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • testosterone • 17-β-oestradiol |

¹Specification of parameters at the estimation of the coordinator

5.1.5 Suspension and resumption of slaughter registration

If positive results are found within the residue control programme, the coordinator must immediately arrange for further sampling on the company; the type and scope of sampling depends on the findings and is determined between the coordinator, the certification body and the laboratory.

If there is a current slaughter registration, it is suspended until the facts of the case are clarified. The coordinator must inform all parties involved in the process (fatteners, abattoir). The coordinator's own database can be used at any time to check whether animals are due for marketing and to initiate further communication.

The suspension can only be lifted again when a new examination proves that there has been no transgression. In this case, a slaughter registration is given or re-released and the fattener and abattoir are informed. Otherwise, the slaughter batch cannot be marketed in the QS scheme.

Revision information version 01.01.2026

| Criterion | Changes | Date of change |
|---|---|----------------|
| 1 Fundamentals | Clarification: The following document contains the basic requirements for participation in the QS scheme in the respective criteria. The accompanying explanatory notes serve as an aid to interpretation and are to be understood as requirements that apply in addition to the guideline. | 01.01.2026 |
| 2.1 General system requirements | Restructuring: Incident and crisis management previously separate checkpoint (<i>2.1.2 Incident and crisis management</i>) – content retained, moved to <i>2.1 General system requirements</i> . | 01.01.2026 |
| 2.1.1 General company data | Restructuring: Requirements for incident reporting and the emergency plan moved to <i>2.1.1 General company data</i> (previously <i>2.1.2 Incident and crisis management</i> , deleted as a separate criterion). | 01.01.2026 |
| 2.1.2 Incident and crisis management | Deletion: Deleted as a separate criterion – content moved to <i>2.1 General system requirements</i> and <i>2.1.1 General company data</i> . | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.1 Traceability and labelling | Restructuring: "Livestock owners are obliged to purchase certain feed and feed additives, animals, or services exclusively from companies that are eligible to deliver for QS. For this purpose, the QS eligibility of delivery of the respective suppliers/service providers must be verified. At the time of delivery/service, the suppliers/service providers must be eligible to deliver for the respective production scope in the QS database." moved to <i>3.1 Traceability and labelling</i> (previously <i>3.1.2 Verification of eligibility of delivery</i>). | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.1.1 Purchasing, incoming goods and services | Renaming: previously ' <i>3.1.1 Purchases and incoming goods</i> '. | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.1.2 Verification of eligibility of delivery | Deletion: Deleted as a separate requirement, as it is already checked as a requirement in individual criteria. | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.1.4 [K.O.] Origin and marketing | Extension: From January 1, 2027, all cattle must be kept under QS conditions for at least the last eight months prior to slaughter. | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2 Husbandry, care and handling | Renaming: previously " <i>3.2 Animal welfare-farming</i> ". | 01.01.2026 |

| Criterion | Changes | Date of change |
|--|--|----------------|
| 3.2.2 [K.O.] General farming requirements | <p>Restructuring: 'All facilities (in particular shed floors) must be such that the animals do not come more than unavoidable into contact with faeces and urine' (previously under 3.2.4 <i>Shed floors</i>).</p> <p>Extension: 'Each shed and each other form of husbandry must be structured in such a way regarding construction, material, technical fittings, conditions <u>and management</u> [...]'. <u>management</u> [...]'.</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2.3 [K.O.] Handling sick and injured animals | <p>Clarification/extension: Accommodation for the recovery of sick and injured animals must be available <u>or can be set up immediately</u>.</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2.4 Shed floor | <p>Restructuring: "All facilities (in particular shed floors) must be such that the animals do not come more than unavoidable into contact with faeces and urine' moved to 3.2.2 <i>General farming requirements</i>.</p> <p>Clarification: The tolerance for manufacturing inaccuracies applies to all slats/beams, not just those with elastic coating.</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2.5 Shed climate and noise | <p>Restructuring: 'A back-up device that ensures adequate air exchange in the event of system failure must be present in sheds in which ventilation is via an electrical system.' moved to 3.2.5 <i>Shed climate and noise</i> (previously 3.2.9 <i>Emergency power supply</i>).</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2.7 [K.O.] Space allowances | <p>Addition: "<u>Calves in groups of more than three animals</u> and older cattle must have at least one square foot of unrestricted floor space per animal, corresponding to their live weight."</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.2.9 Emergency power supply | <p>Restructuring of the requirements for replacement devices to criterion 3.2.5 <i>Shed climate and noise</i>.</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.3.3 Handling and storage of feed | <p>Renaming: previously 3.3.3 Usage and storage of feed.</p> <p>Deletion: „The storage facility must be cleaned and disinfected where necessary.“</p> <p>Extension: "Note: <i>Dust bags used to fill silos, big packs and other containers/packaging used for feed delivery should remain on site for biosafety reasons and must be disposed of if necessary.</i>"</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.3.4 [K.O.] Feed procurement | <p>Deletion: „If feed is procured from a cooperation of several livestock owners, the collaboration must be contractually established, and within the QS scheme no feed may be marketed to third parties who do not</p> | 01.01.2026 |

| Criterion | Changes | Date of change |
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| | <p>belong to this group. The purchase of feed from the co-operation must be traceable and verifiable by each co-operation partner by means of product-related documents (e.g. delivery notes, collective delivery notes/documentation possible) ⇒ 3.3.7 Feed production in cooperation is checked at the producer of the feed".</p> <p>Extension: There are no requirements regarding the eligibility of delivery of transporters/freight forwarders for the transport of packaged animal feed.</p> | |
| 3.3.6 Feed production (on-farm mixer) | Extension: Mixing protocols have been added as document references for the use and documentation of feed additives. | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.3.7 Feed production in cooperation | Clarification: Certification for feed production and road transport by the cooperation is not necessary. | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.4.1 [K.O.] Water supply | Extension: "The watering facilities must be constructed and set up in such a way that water contamination and conflicts between the animals are kept to a minimum <u>and that they are accessible.</u> " | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.5.3 [K.O.] Procurement and application of medicines and vaccines | <p>Clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear designation (product name) is required. • A veterinary prescription must be provided for each use of prescription drugs. <p>Deletion: The manufacturer and batch number are no longer mandatory information, and the indication is also no longer required.</p> | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.6.2 Hygiene on the farm | <p>Addition/clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage in the sheds • Persons not employed by the company – 'including visitors, e.g. tourists or campers' • Addition of 'disposable footwear or the location's own footwear' • 'The protective clothing must then remain on the location.' | 01.01.2026 |
| 3.6.6 Risk assessment for biosafety | Extension: Requirements for an individual risk assessment based on the risk traffic light system or an officially recognised biosafety concept (six months' preparation time, checks from 1 July 2026) are newly included. | 01.01.2026 |

| Criterion | Changes | Date of change |
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| 3.8.7 [K.O.] Proof of qualification for drivers/carers (for livestock transport over 65 km) | Clarification: Drivers and attendants who are directly responsible for the welfare of the animals during loading, unloading, and transport must be adequately trained or qualified and hold a certificate of competence. This does not apply to persons who assist in herding the animals at the point of departure or destination. | 01.01.2026 |

Guideline
Agriculture Cattle Farming

QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH

Managing Director: Dr. A. Hinrichs

Schwertberger Straße 14, 53177 Bonn

T +49 228 35068 -0

F +49 228 35068 -10

E info@q-s.de

Photos: QS

q-s.de