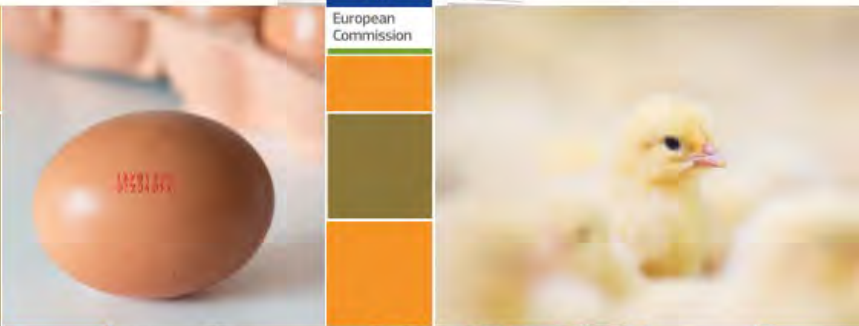




Overview Report

Protection of the welfare of laying hens at all stages of production

2022-7609



DG Health and Food Safety

OVERVIEW REPORT Protection of the welfare of laying hens at all stages of production



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2022-7609

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|------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Report number | 2022-7609 | | | |
| Title | Overview report - to evaluate the protection of the welfare of laying hens at all stages of production | | | |
| Countries | EU Member States | | | |
| Subject Area(s) | Animal Welfare | | | |
| Report | EN (771 kb) | FR (222 kb) | DE (226 kb) | BG (270 kb) |
| | HR (291 kb) | CS (293 kb) | DA (229 kb) | NL (201 kb) |
| | ET (218 kb) | FI (219 kb) | HU (316 kb) | EL (248 kb) |
| | IT (218 kb) | LV (295 kb) | LT (303 kb) | MT (307 kb) |
| | PL (316 kb) | PT (222 kb) | RO (284 kb) | SK (279 kb) |
| | SL (287 kb) | ES (221 kb) | SV (222 kb) | |



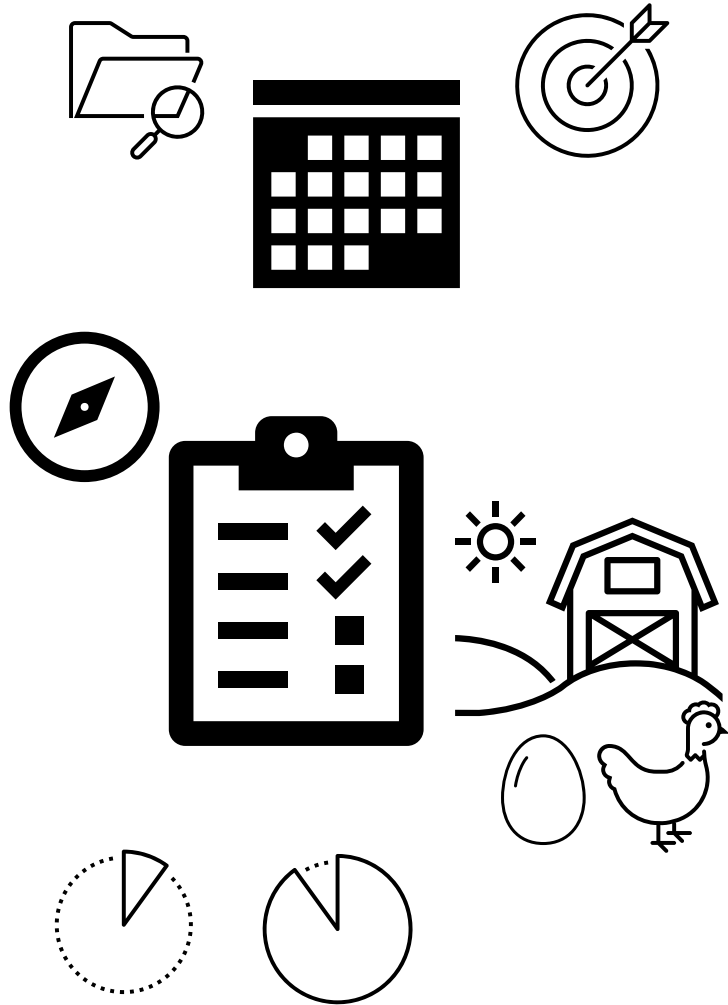
Audits and questionnaires

| Member State | Dates of Audit/activity | SANTE reference |
|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| Netherlands | 1 – 5 February 2021 (remote) | 2021-7245 |
| Italy | 12 – 23 April 2021 (remote) | 2021-7250 |
| Austria | 26 – 30 April 2021 (remote) | 2021-7242 |
| Poland | 24 May – 2 June 2021 (remote) | 2021-7323 |
| Cyprus | 14 – 18 June 2021 (remote) | 2021-7247 |
| Germany | 21 September – 1 October 2021 (remote) | 2021-7243 |
| Spain | 20 September – 1 October 2021 (hybrid) | 2021-7248 |
| Greece | 1-15 November 2021 (remote) | 2021-7244 |
| Sweden | 23 November – 2 December 2021 (remote) | 2021-7246 |

The main objective of the audits was to assess the effectiveness of official controls to ensure the protection of the welfare of laying hens at all the stages of production.

| Member State | Dates of survey response | SANTE reference |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Luxemburg | 27 July 2021 | 2021-7602 |
| Bulgaria | 5 August 2021 | 2021-7601 |
| Lithuania | 6 August 2021 | 2021-7599 |
| Latvia | 13 August 2021 | 2021-7598 |
| Hungary | 16 August 2021 | 2021-7588 |
| Estonia | 19 August 2021 | 2021-7597 |
| Denmark | 19 August 2021 | 2021-7596 |
| Czechia | 20 August 2021 | 2021-7595 |
| Finland | 20 August 2021 | 2021-7593 |
| Romania | 20 August 2021 | 2021-7594 |
| Slovakia | 20 August 2021 | 2021-7592 |
| Belgium | 23 August 2021 | 2021-7603 |
| Portugal | 6 September 2021 | 2021-7591 |
| Ireland | 10 September 2021 | 2021-7590 |
| Slovenia | 11 September 2021 | 2021-7589 |
| France | 3 November 2021 | 2021-7587 |

Official controls



- **Control plan:**

- Risk factors identification / justification (data)
- Stratification: size, stage (hatcheries, pullets), farming system
- Quality Assurance Schemes not used yet
- Liaison between authorities/bodies (egg marketing, organics)

- **Instructions and training for officials**

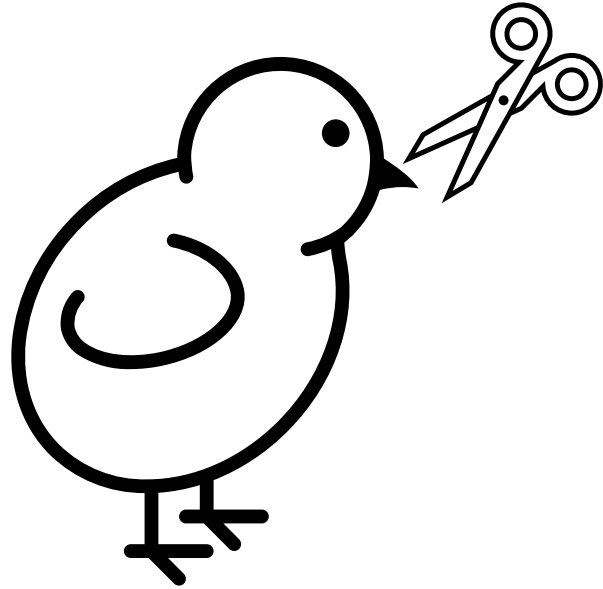
- **Implementation of controls:**

- Proportion of farms per year. Very variable.
- Frequency of inspection per farm. Usually not pre-established.
- Overstocking

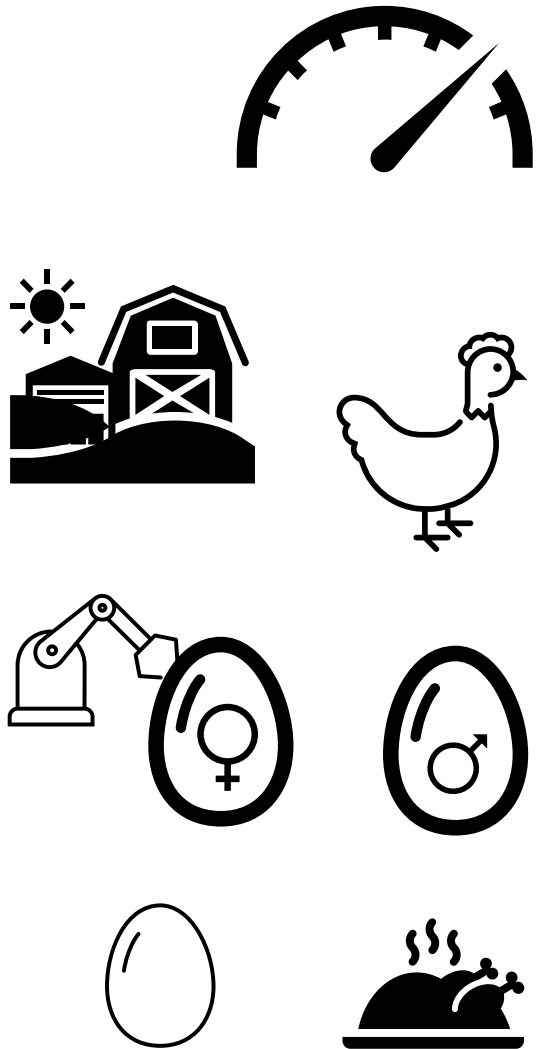
- **Randomly selected farms for validation of the control plan:**

- As a proportion of the planned controls
- As regular projects

Beak trimming



- Variety of national rules
 - From total ban...
 - ... to generic and uncontrolled authorisation.
- Authorities' verification weaknesses
 - Trimming procedure
 - Use for preventing feather pecking
- Authorities' knowledge gaps
 - Records (at hatcheries, at farm, commercial documents)
 - Prevalence of feather pecking
- Potential of use for risk-based controls.
 - Farms with higher risk of feather pecking



- *Limiting factor*
- Verandas
- Temporal confinement
- End-of-lay hens
 - Forced moulting
 - Transport & slaughter
- Alternatives to culling male day-old-chicks
 - In-ovo sexing
 - Dual-purpose

11 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY MEMBER STATES

The following points summarize opportunities for improvement identified by the Commission. They are presented here for consideration by the Member States.

1. To better coordinate the controls between different authorities visiting hen establishments, in order to gain efficiency and to keep other relevant authorities informed about data, risk rating, frequency and result of the checks.
2. To plan their controls using risks factors for which they have objective evidence of their impact on the welfare of the animal, and to take into consideration for that planning the results of previous controls including those performed by other reliable entities, such as quality assurance schemes.
3. To consider the specific risks in farms keeping pullets and hatcheries, and to include them in their animal welfare checks.
4. To train officials on how to establish the maximum stocking density in farms keeping laying hens by identifying the limiting factor, thus ensuring that these farms are not overstocked.
5. As part of the verification of overall effectiveness of official controls, to use representative non-risk-based official controls at farm to be able to verify that the targeting is correct.
6. To use IT systems to assess the results of the official controls and to use them to continuously improve the effectiveness of the official control system.

Thank you

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