

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|---|-----------|
| No rights may be derived from these criteria. Subject to inaccuracies and amendments. For the definitions of the terms used (e.g. new construction/renovation), please refer to the glossary on the website of the Better Life label Foundation. | | | | | |
| Exclusion criteria | | | | | |
| UIT01 | Other activities | No other activities are performed at the company (UBN) that do not conform with the policy of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals. | Activities that do not conform with the policy of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals include, but are not limited to: - Keeping fur animals for production purposes; - Keeping laying hens in enriched cages (permitted in the Netherlands until 01-01-2021) and colony housing (successor to the enriched cage and the only permitted form of 'battery cage' in the Netherlands from 2021). The identification code stamped on the egg starts with the number 3, - Keeping wild animals for production purposes, - Keeping geese or ducks for the production of goose or duck liver; - Keeping endangered species, such as eel, - Keeping double-muscle breeds of beef cattle, with a high incidence of caesarean sections, such as Belgian Blues and Dutch Improved Red Pied. This does not include cattle produced by beef on dairy crosses, - Other activities that (may) conflict with the policy of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals. | Verify and record whether the farm performs any other activities that do not conform with the policy of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals. | Exclusion |
| UIT03 | Genetically modified animals | There are no genetically modified animals on the farm. | A genetically modified animal has been adapted using gene technology. Genetic or gene technology is a form of biotechnology by which the DNA of an organism is directly adapted by introducing additional genes with the desired traits into an animal. Conventional methods by which the DNA of an organism is indirectly adapted, such as crossing, selecting and breeding of certain breeds are permitted. | Verify and record whether there are any genetically modified animals on the farm. | Exclusion |
| UIT05 | Standard for mega-housing | The cows are not kept in a mega-barn. A mega-house is considered to be one UBN (or EU registration number) with more than 330 NGE (Dutch size units). | To determine the number of NGE on the farm, the number of dairy cows based on the Better Life operating capacity (see A00) must be multiplied by the following numbers of NGE per animal category: Within the Better Life Label scheme, a site is classified as a mega-barn and excluded from participation if it houses more than 274 dairy cows ($275 \times 1.204 = 331.10$ Dutch size units). The term 'mega-barn' should not be confused with the concept of an industrial-scale 'factory farm'. A mega-barn concerns a single location, a factory farm refers to a livestock farm with animal houses in multiple locations. The farm as a whole has a very high number of animals. However, the number of animals kept at the various locations is comparable to the numbers kept on regular farms. | Verify and record whether the farm does not exceed the limit for the maximum working size. Record the number of NGE present on the farm based on the number of BLL animal places as defined in criteria A00 and subsequently. | Exclusion |
| UIT07 | Chain manager | The livestock farm is registered with a chain manager that is approved by the Better Life label foundation. | A chain manager is, for example, a dairy processor or intermediary that links various components of the supply chain, from the primary producer to the processor/seller as well as all existing interim links, and manages the farms affiliated to this supply chain. | Verify and record whether the livestock farm is registered with at least one chain manager that is approved by the Better Life label foundation. Record the name of the chain manager(s). | Exclusion |

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| UIT08 | Cooperation | The participant is obliged to provide full cooperation and grant access to the farm to BLL inspectors who perform inspections on behalf of the Certification Body or the Better Life foundation. | If the inspectors are denied access to the company or no cooperation is given, the company will be excluded from participation, unless it can invoke force majeure. Examples of force majeure are outbreaks of an infectious animal disease for which the government has imposed a ban on visitors to the farm, or a death in the family. This is not an exhaustive list. In practice, the inspectors will determine whether a situation of force majeure applies. | Record whether the participant provided full cooperation. | Exclusion |
| UIT09 | All cattle present are BLL-eligible | All cattle on the farm (UBN) comply with the Better Life label criteria | All dairy cows (including dry cows and young stock) present at the UBN must satisfy the Better Life label criteria for 3-star dairy cows. The other cattle e.g. beef cattle/veal calves registered at the UBN, must also comply with the Better Life label criteria. | Verify and record whether there are no cattle (dairy cows, dry cows, young stock, beef cattle, veal calves, etc.) on the farm (UBN) that do not comply with the relevant BLL criteria. | Exclusion |
| General | | | | | |
| A01 | Reporting obligation | Better Life label participant is required to report without delay any amendment that affects or may affect participation in BLL or the BLL certificate in writing to the Certification Body and the chain manager. | <p>Amendments include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cessation (temporary or otherwise) of the farm, regardless of the reason. b. Transfer of the farm to a new legal entity/owner c. Amendment of UBN d. Loss of an accreditation or a certificate meaning the applicable BLL criteria can no longer be met f. Etc. <p>The chain manager informs the Certification Body and the Better Life label Foundation of the amendments.</p> | Verify and record whether amendments that affect participation in the Better Life Label scheme from the previous year have been reported to the Certification Body and the chain manager. | AR |
| A02A | Knowledge & skills | The farmer and their own personnel must have at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 year of working experience in dairy farming, or - have completed secondary vocational education in livestock farming or - work under the responsibility of a person with the above qualifications. | The farmer can demonstrate that they and their personnel have the necessary knowledge and skills regarding animal health, animal welfare, animal behaviour and various livestock farming systems. Professional diplomas and certificates are present at the farm. These qualifications are registered in an overview. | Verify and record whether the knowledge and qualifications of the farmer and the personnel satisfy the conditions. Record which education/training/experience applies. | Warning |
| A02C | Human-animal interaction workshop | The manager/farm manager of each dairy farm site that participates in BLL must have followed a human-animal interaction workshop approved by the Society for the Protection of Animals. | <p>Conditions human-animal interaction workshop:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The course must be given by an experienced expert in the field of bovine well-being and health from the beef cattle sector who has experience in keeping cattle, 2. At least three hours of training are dedicated to practical examples (in the barn and/or using videos and photos) during which the participant learns to translate signals given by the behaviour or appearance of the animal into concrete, positive or negative causes for this behaviour or appearance, 3. Attention is paid to the positive consequences of good human-animal interaction on financial and production results, 4. Attention to the positive consequences of a good human-animal interaction on financial and production results. <p>See the Better Life Label Foundation website for a list of human-animal interaction workshops approved by the Society for the Protection of Animals.</p> | Verify and record whether the manager/farm manager has obtained proof of participation in a workshop approved by the Society for the Protection of Animals. | 1st year certification: Warning; Subsequent years: AR |

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| A03a | Refresher courses dairy farming | The farm manager and/or the appointed employee on the farm must attend a refresher course on dairy farming at least 1x a year. The theme of the course may be hoof health, pregnancy and calving in dairy farming, rearing calves, disbudding calves and measuring animal welfare. | The refresher course may be attended at e.g. a place of agricultural education, meetings of study groups at research institutes, veterinary practices, etc. Conditions refresher course: 1. the course must be given by an experienced expert in the field of bovine well-being and health; 2. the course is not a digital workshop. Confirmation of attendance must be available for inspection on the farm. See the Better Life Label Foundation website for a list of refresher courses that fulfil the requirements for themes. | Verify and record whether the manager/farm manager has obtained proof of participation in a refresher course approved by the Society for the Protection of Animals. | 1st year certification: Warning: Subsequent years: AR |
| A04 | Pest control | Pest control and prevention on the farm is performed in accordance with the European standard CEN-EN 16636. | This means that: - firstly, as many preventive measures as possible are taken to prevent the presence of undesirable animals (refer to the " <i>Beschuit zonder muisjes</i> " report of the Society for the Protection of Animals), - if a pest control and prevention company is used, that company must be demonstrably compliant with CEN-EN 16636. In the Netherlands, companies can obtain the Keurmerk Plaagdiermanagement (Pest management label) from the KPMB - if the dairy farmer uses rodenticides outside the buildings, they or their personnel must have valid proof of professional competence for "Knaagdierbeheersing op het agrarisch bedrijf" (KBA - Rodent control on agricultural farms). KBA certification is issued by certification body Bureau Erkenningen. | Verify and record whether undesirable animals are prevented from entering and, if necessary, controlled in accordance with the European standard CEN-EN 16636. If a pest control and prevention company is used, verify and record that this company is demonstrably compliant with CEN-EN 16636. For example, it is certified for the KPBM <i>Keurmerk Plaagdiermanagement</i> (pest control quality mark). If the dairy farmer uses rodenticides outside the barn, verify that they and/or their employees have valid proof of professional competence for <i>Knaagdierbeheersing op het agrarisch bedrijf</i> (Rodent control on agricultural farms). (KBA). | AR |
| A05 | Recycling waste and packaging materials | Packaging materials and other waste flows (paper, plastic, etc.) are disposed of separately as far as possible. | At least the following are disposed of separately: - Veterinary medicines and needles: Residues of veterinary medicines and syringes are disposed of as chemical waste. This waste flow must be collected in a hard plastic container with a sealed lid and labelled as 'Chemical Waste' container and disposed of separately as chemical waste, possibly by the veterinary practitioner, in legally approved sharps bins or a labelled waste container. Plastic: this waste flow must be collected separately. Municipalities where plastic is separated after collection are exempt, see the website of the relevant. - Cleaning and disinfecting agents: this waste flow must be collected in a separate container and disposed of separately as chemical waste. - Paper - Glass - Residual waste | Verify and record whether different waste containers/bins for the waste flows are present and are disposed of separately. Verify and record whether delivery notes are present for veterinary medicines and needles. | RI |

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| A06 | Milk testing | Dairy farms must take part in a milk testing system. | In the Netherlands, for example, this is done via Milk Recording (MPR), or by registration in the milking robot. | Verify and record whether the dairy farm participates in milk recording. | AR |
| Feed | | | | | |
| V01 | Concentrate | The share of concentrate in the feed is max. 30% dry matter. | <p>Concentrate: feed with a structure value of less than or equal to 1.10/kg DM. Forage: feed with a structure value higher than 1.10/kg DM.</p> <p>The structure value is assessed based on the structure value as listed in the CVB feed tables, see www.cvbdiervoeding.nl for the current CVB feed tables. The following feeds are considered to be concentrates: Corn cob mix (CCM), corn cob silage / corn cob scrap, pressed sugar beet pulp brewer's spent grain, potato fibres, grass and lucerne pellets.</p> <p>The following feeds are considered to be forage: fresh grass, silage grass, maize, hay, straw, lucerne.</p> <p>In order for 30% concentrate to be sufficient, a large part of the forage share in the ration should consist of energy-rich forage, namely: fresh grass, silage grass, maize or other comparable, energy-rich forms of roughage/forage. Other comparable, energy-rich forms of animal feed must contain at least the same quantity of VEM (forage units for milk production) per kg as maize. This is assessed based on the CVB feed tables shown on the website of CVB.</p> | Verify and record the composition of the ration fed by the farmer based on the registrations in the KringloopWijzer (a program that visualises the mineral cycles and greenhouse gas emissions on a dairy farm (Appendix 2A) or a comparable system and compare this with the feed found in the barn. Record the percentage of concentrate. | RI |
| V01b | Concentrate without GMOs | The concentrate is VLOG, GMP+ MI 105 or SKAL certified. No later than 01-07-2022 | This can be demonstrated either by a VLOG, GMP+ MI 105 or SKAL certificate or by feed delivery notes/ receipts. | Verify and record this based on a valid LOG, GMP+ MI 105 of SKAL certificate. If a valid certificate is not available, verify using the feed delivery notes/ receipts whether the concentrate complies with the standard. | AR |
| V02 | Origin of forage | Any forage purchased by the farmer was grown in a radius of no more than 100 km from the farm. This roughage must be SKAL certified. | <p>Forage: feed with a structure value higher than 1.10/kg DM. The 100 km limit applies to the location where the forage was grown.</p> <p>From 01-01-2022, the origin of the forage must be stated on the purchase orders.</p> <p>Until 01-01-2024 an exception applies to grass seed hay and lucerne, provided these crops were grown in the Netherlands.</p> | Verify and record using the KringloopWijzer or comparable system which forage has been purchased from elsewhere. Verify using the purchase orders whether the forage complies with the standard. | AR |

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| V03 | Sustainable soy | All soy in the feed originates from a certified, sustainable production system. | <p>The Sustainable Dairy Chain (Duurzame Zuivelketen) established in its goals that dairy farmers in the Netherlands are only permitted to purchase feed from feed suppliers who use responsibly certified soy. All suppliers on the whitelist of the Dutch Dairy Association NZO have agreed.</p> <p>Sustainable soy is also part of the Quality Milk Chain (Keten Kwaliteit Melk (KKM) quality assurance scheme. If the farm has KKM accreditation, this criterion is met.</p> <p>Other approved supplier certificates are: RTRS, RTRS-gmo vrij, EKO, Biologisch, Donau/Europe soja, ProTerra, EcoSocial</p> <p>Diervoederfabrikanten kunnen duurzame soja op drie manieren verwerken in de voeders:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physically present in the feed 2. Via mass balance (the purchased sustainable soy is mixed with non-certified soy streams) 3. Via book & claim (cattle feed supplier does not physically purchase sustainable soy, but in the form of sustainability credits. The certified soy is mixed with the non-certified soy that is supplied to the market. | <p>Verify based and record on KKM certification (or equivalent certification) whether feed delivery notes (whitelist feed suppliers NZO) or certified, sustainable soy has been used.</p> <p>Verify and record whether the company has KKM accreditation. If not, verify and record whether the suppliers are listed on the NZO whitelist of feed suppliers. If not, verify, based on the relevant register and/or a copy of a valid certificate, and record whether the suppliers have one of the other approved certifications for sustainable soy.</p> | AR |
| V03a | Sustainable soy | From 01-01-2030 the feed does not contain soy from outside Europe. | | Verify after 01-01-2030, based on the feed delivery notes, and record whether the ration no longer contains soy. | RI |
| V04 | Sustainable palm products | All palm products (e.g. palm oil, palm kernels) in the feed originate from a responsible production system | <p>Nevedi monitors the use of sustainable palm products among its members. A full list of Nevedi members can be found on the Nevedi website.</p> <p>Other approved supplier certificates are: EKO, Organic, RSPO.</p> <p>Feed manufacturers can process sustainable palm products in the feed in three ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physically present in the feed 2. Via mass balance (the purchased sustainable palm product is mixed with non-certified palm streams) 3. Via book & claim (cattle feed supplier does not physically purchase sustainable palm products, but in the form of sustainability credits). The certified palm products are mixed with the non-certified palm products that are supplied to the market. | <p>Verify and record whether the feed supplier is a member of Nevedi. Subsequent or exclusively sales abroad: Or verify, based on a copy of one of the other approved certifications of the supplier, whether sustainable palm products have been used. Organic: Verify and record whether organic is stated on the purchase order for the feed and listing of the supplier's certification on the Skal register RSPO: Verify and record listing of the supplier's certification on the RSPO register</p> | AR |
| V04a | Ban on palm products | No palm products are used in the animal feed. From 01-01-2030. | | Verify and record, after 01-01-2030, via the feed delivery notes that no palm products are being used. | RI |

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| Drinking water | | | | | |
| D01 | Drinking water is permanently available | Water is permanently available for all animals, including for young stock. | For calves aged 28 days or over, the drinking water points must be permanently connected to the water supply. For calves younger than 28 days of age, a permanently filled drinking bucket with water is sufficient. With, e.g. outdoor access or grazing this may also be surface water (river, stream, ditch, seepage water, etc.). | Verify and record whether a permanent supply of drinking water is available. Verify and record whether young stock (aged 28 days or older) also have a permanent supply of drinking water and verify that young calves (younger than 28 days of age) have a permanently full drinking bucket. | RI |
| D03 | Precautions for frost | Precautions are taken to prevent non-functioning of drinking points in the event of frost. | This applies to all groups of animals (dry cows, lactating cows and young stock). Examples of precautions include: - A system that continuously maintains a flow of water through the pipes; - A system that heats the pipes; - A system where the pipes run below the manure pit so they are warmed; - Insulation around the pipes. A continuous flow of water through the pipes also prevents places in the pipes with standing water where bacteria can develop and deposits can form. After new construction and renovation, a system should be installed that maintains a continuous flow of water through the pipes. | Verify and record which precautions have been taken in the event of frost. | RI |
| D04 | Drinking water in the pasture | One or more drinking points are available in the meadow. The distance between the cow and this supply of drinking water never exceeds 500 metres. | A ditch does not qualify as a drinking water point. | Measure and record the maximum distance from the perimeter of the meadow to the supply of drinking water. If cattle are present in the pasture and the distance cannot be measured/cannot be measured safely, estimating the distance is sufficient. | RI |
| D05 | Daily inspection | The drinking points must be inspected daily for cleanliness and correct functioning and, if necessary, cleaned or repaired. | This applies to all groups of animals (dry cows, lactating cows and young stock). | Verify and record the cleanliness and functioning of the drinking points. Ask the farmer how often drinking water supplies are inspected. | AR |
| D06 | Water quality analysis | The drinking water quality is analysed least 1x per year. | The laboratory that performs the analysis is NEN-ISO/IEC 17025 accredited. There is at least 4 months between the two analyses. | Verify and record whether the annual analysis has been performed. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR |
| D06a | Water quality analysis | The samples must be taken at animal level (drinker or trough), not at source level. | Water samples must be taken from the drinking points for lactating cows, dry cows and young stock. This means three water samples each time. Clearly state on the accompanying forms where and for which animal group a sample was taken. | Verify and record whether the samples were taken at animal level (drinker or trough). Ask the farmer how the samples were taken. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR |
| D06b | Water quality analysis | Drinking water samples are taken by an independent sampler. | An independent sampler is, for example, the inspector of the Certification Body, the farm's own contracted veterinary practitioner or a specialised drinking water sampler (e.g. a person who professionally advises livestock farms on drinking water quality and regularly samples drinking water). N/A with surface water (river, stream, ditch, seepage water, etc.) | Ask and record who took the samples and which drinking points were sampled. Verify this based on invoices and test reports. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR |

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| D06c | Water quality analysis | A drinking water sample must analysed for chemical and bacterial composition. | If the farm uses drinking water supplied by a water company, no chemical analysis is necessary, as the water company must regularly perform statutory chemical analysis. | Verify this based on invoices and test reports. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D06d | Water quality analysis | <p>The analysis must demonstrate that the drinking water is of sufficient quality for the animals.</p> <p>If the analysis results differ from the standard, measures must be taken to improve the water quality and the analysis must be repeated until the standard is complied with.</p> | <p>The limits below apply to suitability as drinking water for cattle. The values in the 'good' column are considered safe for the species concerned. The values in the 'abnormal' column are considered to be a (serious) risk for the species concerned and do not meet this criterion.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Parameter:</th> <th>Good</th> <th>Abnormal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>pH:</td> <td>5 to 8</td> <td>< 4 & > 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ammonium (mg/L):</td> <td>< 2</td> <td>> 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nitrite (mg/L):</td> <td>< 0.1</td> <td>> 1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nitrate (mg/L):</td> <td>< 100</td> <td>> 200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chloride (mg/L):</td> <td>< 250</td> <td>> 2000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sodium (mg/L):</td> <td>< 800</td> <td>> 1500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Iron (mg/L):</td> <td>< 0.5</td> <td>> 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Manganese (mg/L):</td> <td>< 1</td> <td>> 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sulphate (mg/L):</td> <td>< 100</td> <td>> 250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hardness (oD):</td> <td>> 4 & < 15</td> <td>> 25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yeasts and moulds:</td> <td></td> <td>> 10,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E. coli (cfu/ml):</td> <td>< 10</td> <td>> 100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total aerobic plate count (cfu/ml):</td> <td>< 10,000</td> <td>> 100,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: Dutch Animal Health Service</p> <p>Deviating from this standard is only permitted if the cause can be traced to an additive prescribed by the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner.</p> | Parameter: | Good | Abnormal | pH: | 5 to 8 | < 4 & > 9 | Ammonium (mg/L): | < 2 | > 10 | Nitrite (mg/L): | < 0.1 | > 1.0 | Nitrate (mg/L): | < 100 | > 200 | Chloride (mg/L): | < 250 | > 2000 | Sodium (mg/L): | < 800 | > 1500 | Iron (mg/L): | < 0.5 | > 10 | Manganese (mg/L): | < 1 | > 2 | Sulphate (mg/L): | < 100 | > 250 | Hardness (oD): | > 4 & < 15 | > 25 | Yeasts and moulds: | | > 10,000 | E. coli (cfu/ml): | < 10 | > 100 | Total aerobic plate count (cfu/ml): | < 10,000 | > 100,000 | <p>Assess and record the test results and, if applicable, verify whether recovery measures have been taken and samples have been analysed again.</p> | <p>1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR</p> |
| Parameter: | Good | Abnormal | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| pH: | 5 to 8 | < 4 & > 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ammonium (mg/L): | < 2 | > 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nitrite (mg/L): | < 0.1 | > 1.0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nitrate (mg/L): | < 100 | > 200 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chloride (mg/L): | < 250 | > 2000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sodium (mg/L): | < 800 | > 1500 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Iron (mg/L): | < 0.5 | > 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Manganese (mg/L): | < 1 | > 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sulphate (mg/L): | < 100 | > 250 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hardness (oD): | > 4 & < 15 | > 25 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yeasts and moulds: | | > 10,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E. coli (cfu/ml): | < 10 | > 100 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total aerobic plate count (cfu/ml): | < 10,000 | > 100,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| Grazing | | | | | |
| W01 | Grazing registration | <p>The periods of grazing are registered for all cows (lactating cows, dry cows and young stock).</p> <p>If grazing is impossible, the farmer must record the days on which grazing did not take place stating the reason.</p> | <p>Grazing is, for example, impossible outside the grazing season or in the case of extreme weather conditions.</p> <p>The method of registering lactating cows is based on the method used by the Grazing Foundation (<i>Stichting Weidegang</i>). This can be found at: www.weidemelk.nl.</p> <p>The farmer must maintain a grazing calendar for young stock and dry cows. This is also communicated digitally to the chain manager.</p> <p>Dry cows may also have access to an outdoor area with a soft surface.</p> | <p>Verify and record whether the farmer registers the grazing times and the non-grazing times, stating the reason.</p> | <p>Lactating cows: RI</p> <p>Other animal groups: 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: RI</p> |
| W02 | Grazing period | <p>Dairy cows have access to grazing for a minimum of at least 180 days a year and for at least six hours a day.</p> | <p>Fresh dairy cows exempt from this (max. 14 days after calving) and sick dairy cows.</p> <p>Instead of a minimum of at least 180 days a year and for at least six hours a day, grazing may also take place for a minimum of 1440 hours and a minimum of 180 days a year in a pasture with sufficient grass so that the animals are free to exercise their natural grazing habits on a continual basis.</p> <p>The pasture must have sufficient grass so that the animals are free to exercise their natural grazing habits on a continual basis.</p> <p>An exception applies when weather conditions do not permit grazing.</p> | <p>Verify on Z-net whether the farmer participates in the Grazing Foundation (<i>Stichting Weidegang</i>) scheme.</p> <p>The grazing criteria W01 to W06 must be verified every year during the BLL inspection for dairy cows.</p> <p>Verify and record, based on the farmer's grazing registration, the number of hours/days the dairy cows had access to the pasture to graze.</p> | RI |
| W03 | Outdoor access dry cows | <p>Dry cows have suitable outdoor access all year round.</p> <p>In the case of a total renovation or new construction of the farm after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040.</p> | <p>This outdoor access provides at least 20 m² per cow. The animals must always be able to walk in and out freely.</p> <p>A suitable outdoor access area is not paved but covered with grass or scattered with litter. This layer of litter must consist of sand or a similar natural material and is at least 10 cm deep.</p> <p>The outdoor access must be prevented from becoming waterlogged.</p> | <p>Record, with renovation or new construction after 16-05-2022, whether dry cows have permanent outdoor access.</p> | RI |
| W04 | Grazing young stock | <p>All young stock must have at 100 days of grazing in their first two years of life.</p> | <p>This applies per animal and is not the average calculated for all the young stock. The pasture must be prevented from becoming waterlogged.</p> | <p>Consult the farmer's grazing registration and record the number of hours/days the young stock had access to the pasture to graze.</p> | <p>1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR</p> |

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| W05 | Cattle density grazing | The density is max. 6.5 dairy cows per hectare of grassland available for active grazing. | | Calculate and record the average number of cows per hectare of grassland available for active grazing. Determine the average number of cows (over the period of the combined submitted registration) based on the registration from milk production registration (MPR) or the automatic milking system / milking robot. Determine the number of hectares of grassland available for active grazing based on the last combined registration submitted to the RVO. | AR |
| W06 | Protection against the weather | Protection against the weather (especially the sun) is provided in the pasture. This can be used by all cows at the same time. From 01-01-2023. | The protection is installed at the side of the pasture that is most exposed to sunlight. This criterion is also complied with if the animals always have the option to return to the barn freely. Young stock may be housed indoors during summer to avoid heat stress if the minimum number of days as stated in criterion W04 is complied with. | Verify and record (from 01-01-2023) whether protection against the weather (sunlight) has been installed in the pasture. | RI |
| Housing - General (for all animal groups: lactating cows, dry cows, breeding bulls and young stock) | | | | | |
| H01 | Type of housing | A tethered barn is not permitted. | Loose housing system and free stall cubicle systems are permitted. A free stall cubicle system comprises passageways made of concrete, possibly coated with rubber, and separate cubicles where the animals can lie and rest. There are no cubicles in a loose housing system and the lying areas and passageways are (partly) combined. The housing has a soft, deformable floor or a floor covered with e.g. compost, sand or straw. A deep litter barn is also considered to be a loose housing system. | Verify and record that the housing is not a tethered barn. | Exclusion |
| H01a | Replacing cubicle systems | All cattle are kept in a loose housing system. No later than 01-01-2040. | The Society for the Protection of Animals is currently finalising the details of the litter used on the floor in a loose housing system. This scope will include animal welfare, the environment and the farmer's herd management practice. Once the details have been finalised, this criterion will also apply in the case of new construction and complete renovation. | Verify and record whether there is a deep litter or loose housing system. | Suspension |
| H02 | Access to facilities | All facilities (drinking places, brushes, eating places and lying and resting areas) must be evenly distributed throughout the barn and accessible from 2 sides by all animals. | For example, a drinking trough installed against the rear wall can be approached from a maximum of 3 sides, depending on the actual situation in practice. A trough installed in a corner can be approached from a maximum of 2 sides. | Verify and record whether drinking points, eating places, brushes and lying and resting areas are evenly distributed throughout the barn and can be approached by all animals from 2 sides. | RI |

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| H03 | Tethering for short periods | Tethering animals for long periods is not permitted. Animals may be tethered temporarily for periods of max. 3 hours, provided that visual and audible contact with the herd is possible during the tethering period. | Temporary tethering is only permitted for the purpose of veterinary treatment or hoof trimming. | Verify and record that animals are not tethered for more than 3 hours and that visual and audible contact with the rest of the herd is possible during the tethering period. | RI |
| H04 | Ventilation | The barn is naturally ventilated. | If necessary, fresh air is also provided by mechanical ventilation. | Verify and record whether the barn is naturally ventilated. | RI |
| H04a | Ventilation | At least 60% of the side walls are open, partially closable using curtains or a windbreak barrier. With new construction or renovation after 01-01-2019, but no later than from 01-01-2040. | | Verify and record with new construction or renovation after 01-01-2019, whether 60% of the side walls is either open or partially closable using curtains or a windbreak barrier. | RI |
| H05 | Humidity measurement | The humidity is measured at animal level. | A hygrometer at animal level is present in every area where cows are housed. | Verify and record whether hygrometers are present at animal level. | RI |
| H06 | Daylight | The barn has a daylight-permeable area that covers at least 10% of the surface area accessible to the animals (walking area, lying and resting area, etc.). | The criteria for daylight apply to all groups of animals (dry cows, lactating cows and young stock). The Society for the Protection of Animals is currently developing a criterion for the daylight permeating area for calves younger than 28 days of age. A specific requirement will be added in due course. | Measure and record the interior dimensions of the daylight-permeable area. Calculate and record the % of daylight permeable area and whether the surfaces (light panels, windows) actually allow daylight to permeate (e.g. the surfaces are clean). Verification applies per barn, average percentage must be at least 10% over the entire barn. | RI |
| H06a | Increasing daylight-permeable area | The barn has a daylight-permeable area that covers at least 50% of the surface area accessible to the animals (walking area, lying and resting area, etc.). With new construction or renovation after 01-01-2019, but no later than from 01-01-2040. | | Verify, and record with new construction or renovation after 01-01-2019, whether the light area is at least 50%. | RI |
| H06c | Cleanliness daylight permeable area | The daylight permeable area is clean/not soiled. | The daylight permeable area is not clean/is soiled if daylight is obstructed, for example due to algae growth or other types of dirt or soiling. | Verify and record whether the daylight permeable area is clean/not soiled. | RI |
| H06d | (Artificial) light intensity | The (artificial) light intensity in the barn is at least 100 lux during the daytime and between 20 and 50 lux at night. | The artificial light does not need to be switched on if there is enough natural light. | Measure and record the lux of the artificial light in the barn. Measure the light intensity at eye level of the animals at 3 different places in the barn using a lux meter that is calibrated annually. Record the average lux reading. Verify and record whether there is a dimmer function/setting for the night. | AR |

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| H07 | Day-night rhythm | There must be a clear day-night rhythm in the barn with a period of dusk between sunrise and sunset. | During the night, there is a continuous period of at least 6 hours with a low light level (between 20 and 50 lux) to allow the cattle to rest. | Record the lighting schedule used. | AR |
| H08 | Bedding material in cubicles | The cubicles have soft, deformable and heat-insulating bedding. | <p>This bedding must consist of a cow mattress or waterbed completely covered with litter or a deep litter cubicle (e.g. sawdust, straw or sand bedding) bordered at the front and back of the cubicle by a raised partition for the litter of at least 15 cm high (measured perpendicular to the base).</p> <p>If the cubicles are positioned in a double row and face head to head, this partition is not required.</p> <p>The bedding in the cubicle must not consist of only e.g. a cow mattress or waterbed without a layer of litter.</p> <p>This applies to all areas with cubicles.</p> | Verify and record which bedding is present, the thickness of the bedding layer, whether there is a partition for the litter and the height of this partition. | RI |
| H09 | Cubicle hygiene | The cubicles must be kept clean and dry. They should be cleaned daily and new litter added. | A cubicle is dirty if >10% of the surface is covered by manure and/or the base /mat is loose which means the surface is soiled. | Verify and record whether the cubicles are clean or dirty. | RI |
| H10 | Floor hygiene | The floors in the barn must always be clean and provide a good grip so the cows cannot slip. No pooling of liquids must occur. | The floor is not clean/is dirty when puddles of liquid have formed, when the floor is slippery due to manure/soiling and when a layer of manure of more than 2 centimetres covers >10% of the floor. | Verify and record whether the floor is clean and provides a good grip. | RI |
| H11 | Floor in cubicle housing systems | The floors in the passageway between the cubicles must be rough enough to provide a good grip for the animals. | The floor must be rough, preferably covered with rubber with an anti-slip profile, but the floor may also be made of concrete with an anti-slip profile. With a rubber floor, a different material (e.g. concrete) is permitted between the rubber to provide a good grip and for the removal of manure. | Verify and record whether the floors are rough. | RI |
| H11a | Floor in cubicle housing systems | <p>The floors are soft and deformable.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2030.</p> | <p>The floors are covered by a rubber surface, or at least 10 cm of straw or sand.</p> <p>This should be the case on high-traffic areas of the floor such as the holding area, the milking parlour and the spaces between the cubicles.</p> <p>To enable the milking parlour to be cleaned properly, in compliance with milk quality assurance systems, only rubber is permitted in the milking parlour.</p> | Verify, and record with new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, whether the floors are covered with rubber or straw/sand. | RI |
| H11b | Floor in loose housing system | The floor is solid and is covered with a dry, loose layer of at least 10 cm straw, sand or other suitable material. | <p>The material must be such that the animals always have a soft, deformable and dry place to lie and rest.</p> <p>A solid concrete floor, or an area of slatted floor, is only permitted behind the feed fence.</p> | Verify and record whether the material on the floor is soft, deformable and dry. | RI |

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| H12 | No dead ends | To avoid stress, there must be no dead ends in corridors or passageways. After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040. | With young stock, a dead end can be avoided by ensuring the width of the passageways behind the feed fence is wide enough to allow the animals to avoid each other easily. This means the passageway behind the feed fence must be at least 3.5 metres wide. | Verify and record with new construction or renovation after 16- 05-2022, whether there are any dead ends. | RI |
| H13 | Safe environment | The barn is constructed and equipped to avoid the animals injuring themselves. | There are no protrusions that can injure the animals. The floors, walls and partitions are stable, flat and firm. | Verify and record during the inspection whether there are any protrusions that could injure the animals. | RI |
| H14 | Rubbing devices, rotating cow brush | All the animals must have a rubbing device, e.g. a brush. These must be cleaned properly and replaced if necessary. For lactating cows, these rubbing devices are automatically rotating cow brushes. | There must be at least 1 brush per 60 cows. Young stock kept in groups and dry cows must also have a rubbing device, this may be a fixed brush. | Verify and record, with young stock and dry cows, whether there is at least 1 brush per 60 cows. Verify, with lactating cows, whether there is an automatically rotating cow brush. | AR |
| H15 | Manure removal in areas not covered with litter | Manure must be removed from areas not covered with litter at least twice a day. Manually, using an automatic scraper, or a robotic scraper. | If an automatic manure scraper, or a robotic scraper, is used it must be deactivated during the peak eating times. It may operate regularly during the day and operate less frequently at night. This does not apply in deep letter barns and loose housing systems. | Verify and record whether manure is removed from areas not covered with litter at least twice a day. | AR |
| H17 | Forage | Fresh forage is permanently available at all eating places. | This applies for all cows. The definition of forage is stated in V01. | Verify and record whether forage is permanently available at all eating places. | RI |
| H19 | Drinking space | Single drinkers are available for at least 1/15 cows or troughs that offer at least 7 cm per cow. | This applies to lactating cows, dry cows and young stock. | Calculate and record the number of single drinkers per cow and/or how many cm of trough per cow. To calculate the trough size, measure the inner dimensions in centimetres and divide this figure by 7 cm. | RI |
| H19a | Minimum number of drinking points | There must be at least 2 drinking points per group of animals | This applies to lactating cows, dry cows and young stock A drinking point is a place where water is available. This can be one or more individual drinkers or a trough. A drinking point may be shared with one other cubicle. In this case, the drinking point is installed in the partition between the two cubicles so animals from both cubicles have access to drink. | Verify and record whether there are sufficient drinking points per group of cows. | RI |

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| H19b | Distance between drinking points inside | There is a distance of no more than 32 metres between the drinking points. | Drinking points are evenly distributed in the barn/pen, i.e. the drinking points are not all adjacent, but are spread throughout the space. A drinking point is a place where water is available. This can be one or more individual drinkers or a trough. | Measure and record the distance between the drinking points in the barn that are the furthest from each other. Verify whether there is approximately the same distance between working drinking points, but no more than 32 metres. | RI |
| H20 | Stature of smaller breeds | Different dimensions apply when the breeds on the farm are smaller in stature than Holstein Friesians. | A farm is eligible to apply dimensions for smaller breeds when the height of the withers of all cows present is an average of 135 centimetres with a maximum height of 140 cm. This applies to different dimensions for cubicles and the passageway behind the feed fence. | Measure and record the wither height of the tallest cow, and consult the farmer's records to verify the average wither height. Record the findings. | RI |
| Housing - Additional criteria for: lactating and dry cows | | | | | |
| H21 | Space to move in loose housing system | The total space to move per dairy cow in a deep litter barn or loose housing system is at least 11 m ² . | The lying area may be included in the calculation of this space | Measure and record the total space permanently available for the dairy cows. Determine whether this space complies with the standard. | RI |
| H21a | Lying space in loose housing system | The lying space is at least 8.5 m ² per dairy cow present. | The spaces stated per dairy cow only concern the areas in the barn accessible to the animals. The animals must be able to reach the spaces accessible to the animals regularly and independently (passageways, cubicles, feed fence). The holding area (if not permanently accessible to the animals) and the milking parlour are not included in the spaces stated per animal. If there is no separate calving shed, the area of the calving shed is added to the total lying space in this criterion. See criterion Gz10b for the dimensions. | Measure and record the specific lying space covered with litter. Spaces accessible to animals only. Holding area and barn must not be included. Divide the total available lying space by the number of dairy cows present in the space during the inspection. Determine and record whether this lying space per cow complies with the standard. | RI |
| H21b | Space to move in cubicle systems | The space to move is at least 10 m ² per dairy cow present. With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040. | The space to move in cubicle systems is calculated excluding the cubicles. A holding area in front of a milking parlour is not included as space to move. | Measure and record the total space to move that is permanently available for each dairy cow present. Spaces accessible to animals only. Holding area and cubicles must not be included. Divide the total available space by the number of cows present in the space during the inspection. Determine and record whether this space complies with the standard. | RI |
| H22 | Barn dimensions cubic metres | The dimensions of the barn allow at least 40 m ³ per dairy cow. | | Verify and record whether the dimensions of the barn allow at least 40 m ³ per dairy cow. | RI |

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| H23 | Number of cubicles | There is at least 1.05 cubicle for each dairy cow | The cubicles included in this count must be permanently accessible to the cows. | Count and record the number cubicles and calculate whether there is at least 1.05 cubicle per dairy cow. | RI |
| H23a | Increase in number of cubicles | After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2030, there must be at least 1.10 cubicle for each lactating or dry cow. | The cubicles included in this count must be permanently accessible to the cows. | Record, after new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, whether there is at least 1.10 cubicle for each lactating or dry cow. | RI |
| H24 | Dimensions of cubicles | The dairy cows must be able to assume different positions (e.g. resting on their front, on their side, lying with stretched forelegs). In addition, they must be able to demonstrate their natural lying behaviour without being hindered. | <p>The minimum conditions for cubicles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total length is at least 260 cm; - Length of lying area in all cubicles is at least 180 cm (incl. space occupied by cow mattress, excluding litter partition); - There must be at least 80 cm of unobstructed space between the opposite cubicle or between the cubicles and the wall for the cow to lunge its head (no obstacles higher than 15 cm) measured from the brisket barrier forward, with cubicles positioned opposite to each other this may also be the space of the opposite cubicle; - The neck rail is at least 115 cm above the lying area; - The width of the cubicles is at least 110 cm. <p>See the Better Life website for measurement instructions.</p> | Measure and record one of two opposite cubicles, and one cubicle adjacent to a wall. If there are cubicles that differ visually, measure the cubicles that look different. | RI |
| H24a | Increase in dimensions of cubicles | <p>The size of cubicles will be increased.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than from 01-01-2030</p> | <p>After new construction or renovation, but no later than 01-01-2030, cubicles must comply with at least the following dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width of lying area is at least 120 cm. - Length of lying area is at least 190 cm (incl. space occupied by cow mattress, excluding litter partition) - Length of wall cubicles is at least 280 cm - Length of opposite cubicles is at least 250 cm. - Neck rail is at least 115 cm above the lying area - Position of the neck rail = at least 200 cm diagonally, at least 163 cm horizontally - There must be at least 90 cm of unobstructed space between the opposite cubicle for the cow to lunge its head (no obstacles higher than 15 cm) measured forward <p>See the Better Life website for measurement instructions.</p> | Measure and record one of two opposite cubicles, and one cubicle adjacent to a wall. If there are cubicles that differ visually, measure the cubicles that look different. | RI |

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| H24b | Dimensions of cubicles for smaller breeds | Different cubicle dimensions may be used for smaller breeds of dairy cows. | <p>These dimensions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width of the lying area is at least 105 cm - Length of lying area is at least 165 cm (incl. space occupied by cow mattress, excluding litter partition) - Length of wall cubicles is at least 245 cm - Length of opposite cubicles is at least 220 cm. - Neck rail is at least 100 cm above the lying area - Position of the neck rail = at least 175 cm diagonally, at least 142 cm horizontally - There must be at least 80 cm of unobstructed space between the opposite cubicle for the cow to lunge its head (no obstacles higher than 15 cm) measured forward | Measure and record one of two opposite cubicles, and one cubicle adjacent to a wall. If there are cubicles that differ visually, measure the cubicles that look different. Record non-conformities. | RI |
| H25 | Access to feed fence | <p>There is at least 1 crossing for the cow to move from the lying area to the feed fence per 16.5 m.</p> <p>After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040.</p> | This open space has a width equal to at least 2 cubicles (2 x 120 cm = 240 cm). | Verify and record after new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, how many open passages there are per 16.5 m of lying area and how wide these passages are. | RI |
| H26 | Number of effective forage eating places | <p>An effective eating place is freely accessible to the cows, contains feed and is at least 65 cm wide.</p> <p>After new construction or renovation, but no later than 01-01-2040, the width of the eating place must be at least 75 cm.</p> | | Determine and record the number of effective eating places by measuring the length of the feed fence (only the part that is freely accessible to the cows and that actually has feed in front of it). Divide this figure by 65 cm. | RI |
| H26a | Number of eating places lactating cows, young stock | <p>There are at least 0.8 effective eating places for each BLL animal place for lactating cows and young stock.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation, but no later than 01-01-2030, there is at least 1.1 effective eating place for each lactating cow and head of young stock.</p> | <p>In barns that use a milking robot, the maximum number of animals allowed access to the feed fences at the same time must equal the number of effective eating places.</p> <p>This applies to lactating cows and young stock.</p> | <p>Compare and record the number of eating places to the number of BLL animal places in the barn and the number of cows present in the barn.</p> <p>Verify and record whether there is at least 1 effective eating place for each BLL animal place and cow present.</p> <p>Verify and record with new construction or renovation, or from 01-01-2030, whether there is at least 1.1 eating place for each BLL animal place and cow present.</p> | RI |

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| H27 | Height of feed fence | <p>Cows must not be able to rub their necks against the top of the feed fence while eating.</p> <p>The height of the feed fence for dairy cows must be at least 150 cm.</p> <p>With new construction and renovation but no later than from 01-01-2030 160 cm.</p> | <p>This is measured from the floor on the side of the cows to the top of the feed fence (lower side of the horizontal rail). See the Better Life website for measurement instructions.</p> <p>As an alternative, the feed fence can be tilted so that the animals do not rub their necks against the horizontal rail while eating. The method of determining the height is described in the BLL measuring instructions: cubicle, eating place, feed fence, trough. From 16-05-2022, a feed fence (including the supporting wall) lower than 150 cm is tilted by at least 30 cm. 30 centimetres is the horizontal distance from the upper pipe measured up to the attachment point/upright.</p> <p>This criterion is complied with if the animals cannot rub their necks against the horizontal rail. For example, if the rail has been moved forward with a feed fence made of rails.</p> | Assess and record whether the height of the feed fence complies. | RI |
| H27b | Dimensions of feed fences for smaller breeds | <p>Different feed fence dimensions may be used for smaller breeds of dairy cows.</p> <p>Cows must not be able to rub their necks against the top of the feed fence while eating.</p> <p>The height of the feed fence for smaller breeds of dairy cows must be at least 145 cm.</p> | <p>This is measured from the floor on the side of the cows to the top of the feed fence (lower side of the horizontal rail). See the Better Life website for measurement instructions.</p> <p>This criterion is complied with if the animals cannot rub their necks against the horizontal rail. For example, if the rail has been moved forward with a feed fence made of rails.</p> | Assess and record whether the height of the feed fence complies. | RI |
| H28 | Concentrate | Dairy cows can eat their concentrate ration undisturbed. | Undisturbed means a gate closes behind the cow in the concentrate feeder so that other cows cannot push the cow in the feeder and or head butt the cow. | Record whether the cow can eat concentrate undisturbed. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: RI |
| Housing - additional criteria for lactating cows | | | | | |
| H29 | Passageway feed fence | <p>The width of the passageway behind the feed fence is at least 3 m.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 1-1-2040, the width behind the feed fence is at least 4.0 m.</p> | <p>The passageways for lactating cows must be wide enough to allow the cows to pass each other easily without any conflict.</p> <p>No obstacles must be placed in the full width of the passageway behind the eating places in the feed fence. If an obstacle is placed, at least 0.70 m of additional space must be included in addition to the stated amount of space behind the feed fence. Objects positioned at the end of a passageway that do not hinder the unobstructed passage of animals are not considered to be an obstacle.</p> <p>For smaller breeds the passageway behind the feed fence must be at least 2.5 metres. This applies to new construction or renovation from 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040. After this date the width of the passageway behind the feed fence must also be at least 3.75 m for smaller breeds.</p> | Measure and record the width of the passageway behind the feed fence at the narrowest point. | RI |

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| H29a | Passageway cubicles | <p>The width of the passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall is at least 2.5 m.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040, the width of the passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall must be at 3.0 m.</p> | <p>The passageways for lactating cows must be wide enough to allow the cows to pass each other easily without any conflict.</p> <p>If there is an open space of at least 2 m between every 20 cubicles, a passageway of 2.2 m is sufficient.</p> <p>No obstacles must be placed across the full width of passageway. If there is an obstacle, at least 0.70 m of additional space must be included as extra width in the passageway. Objects positioned at the end of a passageway that do not hinder the unobstructed passage of animals are not considered to be an obstacle.</p> | Measure and record the width of the passageway between cubicles and between cubicles and the wall. | RI |
| H30a | Floor in holding area milking parlour | <p>If a holding area is present, the floor must be soft and deformable.</p> <p>After new or renovated after 16-05-2022, but at the latest from 01-01-2030</p> <p>In the case of low-emission floors on which no rubber can be laid, a transitional period applies until new or renovated, after the criteria come into force on 16-05-2022, but at the latest from 01-01-2040.</p> | The floor may be covered by rubber, sand, straw or other similar natural material. | Verify and record whether the floor in the holding area is soft and deformable. | RI |
| H30b | Number of standing spaces in holding area milking parlour | <p>The number of standing spaces in the holding area of the milking parlour must equal at least the number of lactating cows minus the number of cows that can be milked at the same time.</p> <p>After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040.</p> | One standing space is 1.5 m ² per cow. | Verify and record the number of standing spaces in the holding area. | RI |
| H30c | Duration of time spent in holding area of the milking parlour | The duration of the time spent in the holding area must not exceed 1 hour, based on the animal that spends the longest time in the holding area. | <p>The duration of the stay in the holding area must be kept to a minimum.</p> <p>This only applies to holding areas that do not permit the cows to walk in and out freely.</p> <p>To achieve this, groups of cows may be formed instead of placing all the cows in the holding area.</p> <p>This also applies to existing holding areas.</p> | Verify and record the duration of the stay in the holding area by interviewing the farmer and based on the number of hours spent milking each day and the groups of dairy cattle. | AR |

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| H30d | Gates in holding area milking parlour | A gate to encourage movement of the cows in the holding area of the milking parlour should be used in a way that causes as little stress as possible to the animals. | <p>The gate must meet the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no electrical current on the gate (i.e. no electric shocks are given to the animals) - The gate moves at a maximum speed of 10 metres/ minute - An audible signal (but not a loud noise like a horn or siren) is given as soon as the gate starts to move - The person milking must be able to see the gate from the pit of the parlour (for example in a mirror) - There is a dead man's switch in the pit of the parlour so the person milking can stop the movement of the gate | Verify and record whether a gate is used and if it complies with the conditions. | RI |
| H30e | Ventilation in holding area of the milking parlour | Mechanical ventilation is present in the holding area of the milking parlour. | <p>Explanation: there must be a sufficient supply of fresh air as the animals are often kept standing close together for a longer period of time.</p> <p>The ventilation system functions demonstrably.</p> | Verify and record whether there is functioning mechanical ventilation in the holding area. | RI |
| Housing - additional criteria for dry cows | | | | | |
| H31 | Number of eating places dry cows | There are at least 1.2 effective eating places for each dry cow. | An effective eating place is freely accessible to the cows and contains feed. | Determine and record the number of effective eating places by measuring the length of the feed fence in the housing used for dry cows (only the part that actually has feed in front of it). Divide this by 65cm. Divide this figure by 65 cm. Compare the result to the average number of dry cows present in the barn. Verify and record whether there is at least 1.2 effective eating place for each dry cow. | RI |
| H31a | Passageway cubicles | <p>The width of the passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall is at least 2.2 m for dry cows.</p> <p>With new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 10-01-2030, the width of the passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall must be at 2.5 m.</p> | The passageway for dry cows must be wide enough to allow the cows to pass each other easily without any conflict. | Measure and record the width of the passageway between cubicles and between cubicles and the wall. | RI |
| Housing - breeding bulls | | | | | |
| H32 | Housing breeding bulls | Breeding bulls must have at least 16 m ² of space to lie and rest, and a total space, including space for exercise and mating, of 20 m ² . The lying area must be covered with litter of straw, or similar natural material. | <p>Natural material similar to straw includes (but is not limited to) wood fibres, sawdust or sand.</p> <p>Bulls that are kept with the herd 24 hours a day must have permanent access to a space of at least 16 m² covered with litter. In a loose housing system, this condition is complied with.</p> | Verify and record whether the surface area is complied with. Record non-conformities. | RI |
| Young calves | | | | | |
| HK01 | Contact between cow and calf | Immediately after calving, the mother is given the opportunity to lick the calf dry. | | Ask and record how long the calves are separated from their mothers. | AR |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| HK01a | Contact between cow and calf RECOMMENDATION | The calf remains with its mother or foster mother for at least the first three months on the farm of its birth and suckles from this cow. | The Society for the Protection of Animals is working on a project that will make cow calf contact applicable in practice within the 3 star Better Life label scheme for dairy cattle. Following the results of this project, the details of how cow calf contact will be applied to these criteria will follow. | Consult and record the I&R administration to determine the age at which the calves left the farm. | RECOMMENDATION |
| HK01b | Contact between cow and calf | The chain is working on the cow calf contact project, initiated by the Society for the Protection of Animals. | | Verify and record whether the chain cooperates in the cow calf project. | AR |
| HK02 | Colostrum management programme | A colostrum management programme is applied. | This programme specifies at least the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cow is fully milked at the first milking after calving; - If possible, the colostrum of the calf's own mother is used; - 3-4 litres of colostrum is given within 1 hour; - A total of 6-8 litres of colostrum is given within 24 hours, - Colostrum is warmed to 40° C; - Colostrum is given with a nursing bottle; - The colostrum supply is hygienic; - The colostrum quality is checked; - The intake of antibodies is checked using a blood test in the event of health problems. Source: Fact sheet colostrum, ULP | Verify and record whether the colostrum management programme complies with the conditions. Verify and record whether the protocol in the colostrum management programme is followed. | AR |
| HK03 | Suckling position | Calves are fed milk in a natural suckling position up to at least 6 weeks of age. | A natural position means that the calf drinks with its head up. The calf can drink from a teat bucket or a 'milk bar' calf feeder. | Verify and record the drinking position of the calves. | RI |
| HK03a | Number of teats | At least one teat is permanently available for each calf in the pen. | If there are not enough teats available, for example because a milk bar feeder is used, separate teats may be provided at an easily accessible height for the calves. | Verify and record whether there is at least one teat for each calf in the pen. | RI |
| HK04 | Duration of stay dairy farm | The calf must remain on the farm of its birth for at least the first three months, or is sent, after at least 28 days on the farm of its birth, to a rearing farm within a 50 km radius. From 01-01-2023. | | Consult the I&R administration to determine the age at which the calves left the farm and record the age. | After criterion for veal calves takes effect: AR |
| HK05 | Calf hutches | Up to the age of 14 days, calves may be kept in individual calf hutches with straw bedding with visual and physical contact with other calves. After 14 days of age, they must be kept in groups. | Physical contact may take place between the bars. Sick calves may be kept individually in a sick bay. In this case there must an animal care statement from the veterinary practitioner. | Verify and record whether the individual calf hutches have straw bedding and permit visual and physical contact with other calves. | RI |
| HK05a | Width calf hutches | The width of the individual calf hutch is at least 90 cm. | | Verify and record whether the individual calf hutches comply with this condition. | RI |
| HK05b | Length calf hutches | The length of the individual calf hutch is at least 130 cm. | | Verify and record whether the individual calf hutches comply with this condition. | RI |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| HK05c | Height calf hutches | The height of the individual calf hutch, if a roof is fitted, is at least 125 cm. | | Verify and record whether the individual calf hutches comply with this condition. | RI |
| HK06 | Climate indoor housing calves | Calves must be housed in an environment where the climate (ventilation, humidity and temperature) is controlled and adapted to the requirements of the calves. After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2040. | | Verify and record after new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, whether the calves are housed indoors. | After new construction or renovation: Suspension |
| HK06a | Monitoring the barn climate | The temperature, humidity, CO ₂ and ammonia concentration of the barn climate are monitored. RECOMMENDATION | The standards for air quality are maximum 2,000 ppm CO ₂ and 25 ppm NH ₃ . | Verify whether the temperature, humidity, CO ₂ and ammonia concentration are monitored. | RECOMMENDATION |
| HK06b | Measuring the barn climate | There is an automatic system that measures the following climate parameters in the barn: - Indoor temperature - - CO ₂ concentration - Ammonia concentration - Humidity RECOMMENDATION | The equipment complies with the following specifications: - A minimum of three months memory capacity to store historical measurement data; - Sampling takes place at least four times an hour; - Sensors are suspended in the middle of the pen above the calves; - Sensor maintenance takes place at least once every two years; - The sensor automatically reports malfunctioning. The standards for air quality are maximum 2,000 ppm CO ₂ and 25 ppm NH ₃ . | Verify whether there is an automatic system and whether the standards are complied with. | RECOMMENDATION |
| HK06c | Monitoring the barn climate is discussed | The results of monitoring the barn climate are discussed with the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner at least once every six months. RECOMMENDATION | If the standards have been complied with three consecutive times, monitoring the results once a year is sufficient. | Record whether the indicators for the barn climate are below the set standards. Record, for farms that fail to comply with these standards, whether the standards for the barn climate are complied with within two consecutive years. | RECOMMENDATION |
| HK06d | Action plan barn climate | If the standards for the barn climate are systematically exceeded for two months and correcting these standards permanently is not possible, an improvement plan for the air quality must be established. RECOMMENDATION | | Verify whether there is an action plan for the barn climate. | RECOMMENDATION |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| HK06e | Climate expert barn climate | <p>If the standards have not been complied with after one year, an external climate expert should be contacted for second line advice in the form of an action plan that will enable the farm to comply with the standards for the barn climate within the next year.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> | | <p>Verify whether a farm that failed to comply with the barn climate standards for more than one year has contacted an external climate expert and verify whether an action plan has been established.</p> <p>Verify whether the farm is able to comply with the barn climate standards within one consecutive year (i.e. after 2 consecutive years).</p> | RECOMMENDATION |
| HK07 | Forage young calves | From the age of 2-15 weeks, the calves are provided with an average of 1500 g of dry feed that contains fibre per day. | Dry feed that contains fibre means feed with a minimum dry matter content of 50%. | Record the amount and type dry feed that contains fibre provided to the calves. Verify and record using purchase orders, feeding plans and/or calculation. | Suspension |
| Straw-bedded pens young stock | | | | | |
| HK09 | Straw-bedded pens young stock | <p>Calves must be kept in groups on straw from a maximum of 28 days of age to an age of 4 months.</p> <p>After new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, but no later than 01-01-2030, the calves are kept in groups from an age of 5 days.</p> | Calves may only be kept individually in a sick hutch with bedding on the instructions of a veterinary practitioner. For group housing up to an age of 3 weeks, housing in groups also satisfies this condition. | <p>Verify and record whether calves are kept in groups on straw bedding from a maximum of 28 days of age.</p> <p>Verify and record after new construction or renovation after 16-05-2022, whether calves are kept in groups on straw bedding from 5 days of age.</p> | RI |
| HK10 | Solid floor feed fence in straw-bedded pen | A solid floor, without straw, may be present behind the feed fence. This solid floor must occupy a maximum of 50% of the pen. | | Verify and record the percentage of floor that is solid relative to the percentage of the floor covered with straw. | RI |
| HK11 | Width of forage eating place for young stock in straw pens | An effective eating place is freely accessible to the animals, contains feed and is at least 35 cm wide. | Up to an age of 2 months, an eating place with a width of 20 cm also satisfies this condition. | Determine and record the number of effective eating places by measuring the length of the feed fence (only that part that is freely accessible to the calves and that actually has feed in front of it). Divide this figure by 35 cm. Compare the number of eating places to the average number of BLL animal places in the barn. | RI |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| HK12 | Surface area straw pen | The minimum surface area in straw pens for young stock is 1.5 m ² per animal. | | Verify and record whether the space in m ² in straw pens for young stock complies with this condition. | RI |
| Cubicles young stock | | | | | |
| HK13 | Cubicles | From the age of 4 months, calves may be kept in cubicles with at least 1 cubicle per animal. | | Verify and record whether at least 1 cubicle per animal is available for calves older than 4 months. | RI |
| HK14 | Access to and width of eating place young stock 4 to 12 months old | Young stock aged 4 to 12 months, kept in cubicles, have unrestricted access to 0.8 eating place with a width of at least 45 cm per calf. | | Determine and record the number of effective eating places by measuring the length of the feed fence (only that part that is freely accessible to the calves and that actually has feed in front of it). Divide this figure by 45 cm. Compare the number of eating places to the average number of BLL animal places in the barn. Verify whether there is at least 0.8 effective eating place for each BLL animal place. | RI |
| HK14a | Access to and width of eating place young stock 12 to 18 months old | Young stock aged 12 to 18 months, kept in cubicles, have unrestricted access to 0.8 eating place with a width of at least 50 cm per calf. | For animals over 18 months of age, the width of the eating place as specified in H25 must be satisfied. | Determine and record the number of effective eating places by measuring the length of the feed fence (only that part that is freely accessible to the calves and that actually has feed in front of it). Divide this figure by 50 cm. Compare the number of eating places to the average number of BLL animal places in the barn. Verify whether there is at least 0.8 effective eating place for each BLL animal place. | RI |
| HK15 | Dimensions cubicles young stock | The dimensions of cubicles for young stock from the age of 4 to 12 months allow the animals to assume different positions and demonstrate their natural lying behaviour without being hindered. | The following dimensions satisfy the conditions for cubicles for young stock from the age of 4 to 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width is at least 80 cm; - Length is at least 180 cm; - Height of the neck bar is at least 85 cm; - To ensure sufficient headroom, there are no obstacles (e.g. head rail) present, higher than 15 cm. | Measure and record whether the cubicle dimensions comply with this condition. | RI |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| HK15a | Dimensions cubicles young stock | The dimensions of cubicles for young stock from the age of 12 to 18 months allow the animals to assume different positions and demonstrate their natural lying behaviour without being hindered. | <p>The following dimensions comply with the conditions for cubicles for young stock from the age of 12 to 18 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width is at least 90 cm; - Length is at least 200 cm; - Height of the neck bar is at least 95 cm; - To ensure sufficient headroom, there are no obstacles (e.g. head rail) present, higher than 15 cm <p>For animals over 18 months of age, the cubicle dimensions as specified in H24 must be complied with.</p> | Measure and record whether the cubicle dimensions comply with this condition. | RI |
| Emergency facilities | | | | | |
| N01 | Property information card | A card showing the plan of the building(s) is present. | <p>The property information card is available immediately for the fire/emergency services in the event of an emergency (displayed visibly and outside the barn).</p> <p>The property information card shows: floor plans of buildings/barns, access doors, materials used, utilities, fire-extinguishing water point, locations containing flammable materials/or with activities that could cause fires, animal evacuation routes etc.</p> | Verify and record that the contents of the property information card comply with the requirements. | AR |
| N02 | Agricultural electrical inspection | For fire safety reasons, an agricultural electrical inspection must be carried out at least once every five years. | <p>The first inspection must be carried out no later than per 01-01-2025 or 5 years after first date of participation in BLL.</p> <p>Any new installation must be tested in accordance with NEN1010 before operation. A reinspection must be carried out every five years in accordance with NEN 3140.</p> <p>An agricultural electrical inspection accepted by the insurer also satisfies the conditions of BLL.</p> <p>On foreign farms, the certification of new installations, and reinspection every five years, must be performed in accordance with the national standard based on HD-IEC 60364 and NEN-EN 50110, respectively. NEN-EN 50110.</p> | <p>Verify and record whether there is a certificate of the last inspection and record the date.</p> <p>If there is no certificate, verify and record after 01-01-2025 whether the farm has not yet participated in the BLL scheme for more than 5 years.</p> | AR |
| N03 | Fire detection | <p>Any technical areas, if present, must be equipped with a fire detection system. This system also sends alerts to the farmer's telephone.</p> <p>With new-constructions and renovation projects, but no later than 01-01-2025.</p> | <p>A technical area is e.g. the area with the mechanical control of e.g. feed/drinking installations, pump (for spring water), ventilation systems, control computer, drive system for manure removal or switch box.</p> <p>The fire detection system complies with NEN2535. Examples of fire detection and alarm systems can be found in the report '(Criteria voor) brand- en rookdetectiesystemen in technische ruimten van veestallen in de intensieve veehouderij: Een inventariserende studie ., available (in Dutch) at https://edepot.wur.nl/514402.</p> | Verify and record whether there are any technical areas. If technical areas are present verify whether there is a fire detection system that sends alerts to the farmer's telephone. | With new constructions and renovation projects, but no later than 01-01-2025: AR |
| N04 | Separate storage area for (heat generating) vehicles/equipment | <p>There is a separate storage area for (heat generating) vehicles and equipment.</p> <p>With new construction and renovation but no later than 01-01-2035.</p> | Heat generating vehicles/equipment must therefore not be stored in the same space as the animals or in spaces where bedding or feed is stored. For example, the tractor or the feed mixer must not be kept in the barn. | Verify and record whether there are separate storage areas for (heat generating) vehicles and equipment in new constructions and renovation projects. | In new constructions and renovation projects, after 01-01-2035: RI |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| N05 | Water supply | Sufficient water for extinguishing fires is available at the farm. | On farms with no water available for extinguishing fires (or insufficient water), additional water sources (spring/well/pond/bioswale) must be installed in consultation with the municipality/fire services/safety region. | Verify and record whether the municipality/fire services/safety region has investigated the availability of water (or sufficient water) for extinguishing fires or whether an additional source (drilled well/pond/bioswale) is being built. | AH (action plan, realisation within 1 year) |
| N06 | Emergency power supply | There is an emergency power supply with sufficient capacity to operate the usual management tasks (milking installation, ventilation, etc.). In other cases, there must be a contract to install a working emergency power generator within 4 hours. | | Verify and record whether there is an emergency power supply or a contract to install a working emergency power generator. | AR |
| N07 | Action plan heat stress | An action plan has been established that describes the measures to be taken in temperature and humidity conditions that could cause heat stress. | To determine the conditions that induce heat stress consult, 'Figure 1 Heat stress depending on temperature and humidity' from the fact sheet heat stress in dairy cows (see the Better Life website) source: GD Monitor, 2004). Examples of measures to reduce heat stress in the barn include additional fans, misting or sprinklers, insulation, and/or contact with the outdoor climate. An example of a measure to reduce heat stress during grazing is allowing the animals to graze in the evening instead of in the daytime. | Verify and record how heat stress is dealt with and the measures used to reduce heat stress by interviewing the farmer. | AR |
| N07a | Heat stress | Measures must be taken to prevent heat stress once moderate heat stress occurs. These measures should be tailored to the specific situation on the farm and may therefore differ from one farm to another. | To determine the moment from when measures must be taken to prevent heat stress consult, 'Figure 1 Heat stress depending on temperature and humidity' from the fact sheet heat stress in dairy cows (see the Better Life website) source: GD Monitor, 2004). | Ask the farmer and record from what temperature and humidity level measures are taken to prevent heat stress. | AR |
| N07b | Measuring humidity | Data on humidity levels to determine the risk of heat stress risk may be obtained using a hygrometer in the meadow or by consulting the current weather conditions online. | The hygrometer in the meadow is installed at animal level. | Ask and note how humidity is measured. | AR |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| Health | | | | | |
| Gz01 | Contracted veterinary practitioner | The dairy farmer has a bilateral contract with a certified, assured bovine veterinary practitioner who is responsible for the entire veterinary supervision on the farm. A visit logbook that list the tasks of the veterinary practitioner is present | <p>The veterinary practitioner may contract other specialists/veterinary practitioners to provide full cover, for example as a replacement during illness or holidays. If the farm changes its veterinary practitioner, the farm file shall be transferred by the 'old' veterinary practitioner to the 'new' veterinary practitioner.</p> <p>Certified, assured bovine veterinary practitioners are listed in the register on the website of the <i>Stichting Geborgde Dierenarts</i>. An example of a bilateral contract that should be used has been included in the Regulations of Assured Veterinarians.</p> <p>For foreign participants, an agreement must be concluded with a regular veterinary practitioner, with knowledge of the history of the farm and expertise in the field of cattle husbandry. This veterinary practitioner does not have to be registered as an assured certified bovine veterinarian.</p> | Verify and record, for example, based on Quality Milk Chain (KKM) accreditation (or equivalent) whether the farmer has an agreement with a certified, assured veterinary practitioner and that a visit logbook is present. | AR |
| Gz02 | Farm health plan | The dairy farmer has a specific farm health plan in which, or based on, they and the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner describe which measures are taken to inspect and improve animal health. | <p>The plan includes information about the herd, the health status and the conditions on the farm. Information from diagnostic tests, epidemiological conditions in the region and feedback systems of the abattoir are used to plan future interventions (e.g. improvement to the barns, vaccinations, use of and documents concerning veterinary medicines, etc.).</p> <p>The health plan may be drawn up based on the KoeKompas management system.</p> | Verify and record, for example based on participation in KoeKompas, whether a farm health plan is present. Verify and record whether the farm health plan is followed. | AR if incomplete. Suspension if not present. |
| Gz03 | Farm treatment plan | The dairy farmer has a farm treatment plan for the use of veterinary medicines and veterinary medicines that do not have to be prescribed by a veterinary practitioner in which they and the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner describe which treatments and methods of treatment are used for the most common diseases. | The plan describes which veterinary medicines /antibiotics are used as the first and second choice to treat a certain disease/disorder. The plan includes the most common disorders and their treatment. | Verify and record whether a farm treatment plan is present. Verify and record whether the farm treatment plan is followed. | AR if incomplete. Suspension if not present. |
| Gz04 | Health registration | All cases of mortality, disease, outbreaks and euthanasia are registered and discussed with the veterinary practitioner. | | Verify and record, for example based on participation in KoeKompas, or based on the administrative records whether mortality, disease, and euthanasia are registered and discussed with the veterinary practitioner. | AR |
| Gz05 | Daily inspection | The farmer inspects the health status of the herd daily. | <p>Attention is paid to the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal health, particularly udder health, abnormalities at milking, lameness • Lying behaviour; • Injuries, abscesses and other swellings; • Abnormal behaviour . | Verify and record whether the herd is inspected daily for the aspects above by interviewing the farmer | AR |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| Gz06 | Hoof care | The hooves are trimmed at least 1 x year by a professional hoof trimmer, or a person who has demonstrably followed a training course for this purpose. Hoof care is registered. | Professional hoof trimmers are registered with VVRP (association for professional cattle hoof trimmers) and are listed on the member's page on the website of the VVRP. | Verify and record the hoof care records and verify the registration or training of the hoof trimmer. | AR |
| Gd06a | Treatment of hoof inflammation | All cases of hoof/claw inflammation are treated immediately. Pain relief is provided in case of severe inflammation. | | Verify and record whether any cases of hoof/claw inflammation are treated immediately. | AR |
| Gz07 | Antibiotic use | Use of antibiotics is only permitted within the framework of therapy following an examination by a veterinary practitioner or by the farmer if stated in the farm treatment plan. | The cow number, indication, how long the antibiotic was administered for and the withdrawal period of the antibiotic are recorded. | Verify and record whether the cow number, indication and how long the antibiotic was administered for have been recorded. Verify and record, in addition, for 5 treatments whether they are covered by the veterinary practitioner's treatment plan or were prescribed by the veterinary practitioner. | AR |
| Gz08 | No antibiotic use with healthy udders | Cows with healthy udders should not be dried off or treated with antibiotics, except on the indication of the veterinary practitioner. | The limit used for this purpose complies with the 'Dry-off Directive' of the Royal Dutch Veterinary Association (KNMVD): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With heifers: somatic cell count > 150,000 cells/ml • with older cows: somatic cell count > 50,000 cells/ml | Verify and record whether any dry cow therapy treatments are present and whether they are used, and if there is an indication from the veterinary practitioner. | AR |
| Gz09 | Ban on 3rd choice of antibiotics | The use of antibiotics reserved for human health care is not permitted. | The <i>Formularium voor Melkvee van de Werkgroep Veterinair Antibiotica Beleid</i> is leading in this respect. The document indicates which antibiotics are 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice treatments for certain conditions and is leading in this respect. 3rd choice antibiotics are antibiotics that are of critical importance for human health (e.g. fluoroquinolones and 3rd, 4th generation cephalosporins). These antibiotics are only used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for individual animals - if bacteriological testing has shown that 1st and 2nd choice antibiotics are not effective. | Verify and record whether 3rd choice antibiotics (fluoroquinolones and 3rd, 4th generation cephalosporins) are only administered to individual animals and only if bacteriological testing including sensitivity determination has shown that 1st and 2nd choice antibiotics are not effective. Record the findings. | Suspension |
| Gz09a | Extent of antibiotic use | Antibiotic use must be at an acceptable level. | This means that within 2 years the use of antibiotics must be below the target value established by the Netherlands Veterinary Medicines Institute (SDa). For more information, see the website of the SDa. | Record and verify the dose per animal per day in the last year compared with the established standard. Verify whether the use of antibiotics is within the target value established by the SDa | On 1st observation: AH, action plan In 2nd consecutive year: Suspension |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| Gz10 | Sick bay and calving barn | Sick animals and animals that are just about to calve must be placed in separate pens. | | Verify and record whether sick animals and heavily pregnant animals are placed in separate pens. | RI |
| Gz10a | Sick bay | A separate barn/area with bedding is used as a sick bay. The space must have a surface area in m ² that is at least 0.03* the number of cows * 10. Visual, but no physical, contact with other cattle is possible in the sick bay. | Bedding consists of straw, sawdust, sand or similar natural material. The sick bay does not have to be permanently present, but may also be created if there is a sick animal that needs to be separated from the herd. The sick bay must not also be used as a calving area. | Verify and record whether the sick bay contains bedding, whether visual contact with other cows is possible and whether the area is large enough to accommodate 3% of the cows. | RI |
| Gz10b | Calving area | A separate barn/area with bedding is used as a calving area. The space must have a surface area in m ² that is at least 0.03* the number of cows * 10. Visual, but no physical, contact with other cattle is possible in the sick bay. | Bedding consists of straw, sawdust, sand or similar natural material. The calving area is permanently present and must not be used for other purposes such as a sick bay. A barn with bedding used for dry cows, which is also used as a calving area, may also be considered to be a calving area, provided that cows about to calve can separate themselves physically, or can be physically separated. Farms with loose housing systems or a deep litter barn do not have to provide a separate calving area if the cow calves in the herd. | Verify and record whether the calving area contains bedding, whether visual contact with other cows is possible and whether the area is large enough to accommodate 3% of the cows. | RI |
| Gz10c | Providing straw and hygiene in straw-bedded pens | The bedding in straw-bedded pens is clean and dry so it creates a soft, dry, deformable place to lie. | Soiled bedding must be removed daily and the pens must be cleaned regularly, particularly each time after it has been used to house a cow. An exception is the pen for dry cows, where clean bedding is added daily but not removed. Bedding consists of straw, sawdust, sand or similar natural material. | Verify and record whether bedding is added daily to the straw-bedded pens and that the straw bedding creates a soft, dry, deformable place to lie. | RI |
| Gz10d | Feed, water and milking in sick bay and calving area | There must be facilities for feed and water and to milk the cows in the sick bay and calving area. | This may be a mobile milking system. | Check and record whether feed and water is provided in the sick bay and calving area. | RI |
| Gd10e | Incidence of sick calves | The dairy farmer must record the number of calves and the incidence of, in any case: - diarrhoea, - respiratory problems, - umbilical inflammation, - parasitic disorders, - mortality within 24 hours, - mortality after 24 hours, All cases must be treated directly in accordance with the farm specific treatment plan. Pain relief is administered where necessary. | | Verify and record the sickness registration of the calves. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
|----------|------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Gz11b | Treatment of mastitis | All cases of clinical mastitis must be treated immediately, and the root causes must be addressed. Pain relief must be administered if the udders are swollen. | Treatments are prescribed by the veterinary practitioner, for example in the treatment plan. | Verify and record whether any cases of mastitis are treated immediately. | AR |
| Gz12 | Freeze branding | Freeze branding cattle is not permitted | The practice of freeze branding must not be used from the initial participation in the Better Life label scheme. This condition will still apply when a farm registers then deregisters. | Verify and record whether cattle are being freeze branded by comparing the age of animals that have been freeze branded to the date of the initial participation in the Better Life label scheme. | Suspension |
| Gz13 | Removing supernumerary teats | Removing supernumerary teats must only take place at the same time as disbudding, surgically (not by applying a ligature) with pain relief administered afterwards. | | Verify and record how supernumerary teats are removed, e.g. based on a statement from the veterinary practitioner. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Gz14 | Preventing horn growth | Disbudding (preventing horn growth) must take performed before the calves are two months of age | Disbudding (removing full-grown horn or partially removing it, blunting) in bovine animals older than six months of age is only be permitted in incidental cases that involve veterinary necessity/problems. For example, if the horns are deformed which leads to self-injury or injury to other cows or if the horn is broken. | Verify and record the age at disbudding, for example, based on a statement from the veterinary practitioner. Record the age at disbudding. If the animal was older than six months, verify whether the procedure was a veterinary necessity. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Gz14a | Disbudding | Disbudding is performed by or on the instructions of the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner | Disbudding is performed by or on the instructions of the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner or by an organisation/person authorised to perform disbudding (veterinary procedure) in accordance with the applicable, national legislation. | Verify and record whether disbudding was performed by or on the instructions of the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner, based on a statement from the veterinary practitioner. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Gz14b | Disbudding method | When disbudding is performed (preventing horn growth) this procedure must be done using a hot iron | The application of disbudding paste is not permitted in the Better Life label scheme due to the risk of pain after the procedure and the risk of the paste running (e.g.running into the eyes because of rain, or being licked by other calves). | Verify, if disbudding is performed, and record whether a hot iron is used, for example, based on a statement from the veterinary practitioner. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Gz14c | Anaesthetic at disbudding | Disbudding is performed under anaesthetic | The anaesthetic was administered by the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner or by an organisation/person authorised for veterinary procedures in accordance with national legislation. | Verify and record whether disbudding was performed under anaesthetic, for example, based on KoeKompas or the visit logbook. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |

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| Gz14d | Analgesic at disbudding | The animals are administered a subsequent analgesic (for up to at least three days) by or under the responsibility of the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner . | | Verify and record whether the treated animals receive pain relief, for example, based on medication records and whether the pain relief used remains effective for at least three days after disbudding. | If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Gz15 | Reproductive techniques | Routine use of embryo transfer and Ovum Pick Up are not permitted. | Embryo transfer or Ovum Pick Up have been used on maximum 5% of the animals. | Verify and record whether, and if yes, on how many animals embryo transfer and Ovum Pick Up have been used in the past year. | RI |
| Gz16 | Beef on dairy crossing | Beef on dairy crossing with beef breeds is only permitted if it does not lead to difficult calving or increase the incidence of caesarean sections. | | Verify and record, e.g. based on KoeKompas or the visit logbook, whether the number of difficult calvings and caesarean sections is discussed with the veterinary practitioner. | AR |
| Gz17 | Hormones | The use of hormones is not permitted unless the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner considers this necessary. | Each use of hormones is registered by the veterinary practitioner, stating the reason, in for example in the visit logbook. | Verify and record whether hormones are present in the medicine records and among the medication. Record non-conformities. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: RI |
| Gz18 | Slaughter findings | The slaughter findings of the cows are discussed with the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner at least once every 12 months. | Together with the contracted veterinary practitioner, the dairy farmer incorporates this information in the farm health plan in order to improve animal health and further reduce medication use, where necessary. | Verify and record whether the administration records contain a report signed by the veterinary practitioner at least once a year regarding the slaughter findings. | RECOMMENDATION |
| Gz20 | Registration early culling/mortality | The farmer must record the reasons for early culling and mortality of dairy cows. | The records must indicate whether there was a veterinary indication. | Verify and record, e.g based on KoeKompas or the visit logbook, whether the reasons for early culling and mortality of dairy cows are discussed with the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |

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| Animal-related measurements | | | | | |
| Gd01 | Animal-related measurements | A number of animal-related measurements are performed in random samples. | <p>More information on animal-related measurements can be found in the 'Protocol for performing animal-related measurements among dairy cows', which can be found on the Better Life Label website.</p> <p>The following animal-related measurements are performed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body condition score; • Lameness; • Cleanliness; • Skin score; • Swelling. | Perform the animal-related measurements according to the 'Protocol for performing animal-related measurements among dairy cows' and record the percentages per element. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Gd02 | Incidence of animal diseases | The incidence of sick calves and mastitis is recorded. | | Record the incidence of sick calves; Record the incidence of mastitis. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Gz11 | Prevalence of mastitis | Record the number of animals with an average somatic cell count per year of: - < 100,000, cows with healthy udders - > 250,000, cows with clinical mastitis / notable animals - For cows on their first lactation, the number of animals with SCC \geq 100,000 | <p>Based on data from Milk Recording (MPR).</p> <p>All the dairy cows on the farm are included in the assessment.</p> | Verify and record the overview of the individual SCC data from Milk Recording (MPR) for the past year. Record the number of cows with SCC < 100,000 and with SCC \geq 250,000. Record the number of cows on their first lactation with SCC \geq 100,000. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Gz11a | Mastitis treatments | Record the number of mastitis treatments in the last year. | | Consult and record the farmer's antibiotics records. Record the number of mastitis treatments in the last year. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Gz19 | Average age at culling | Record the average longevity of dairy cows at culling. | The longevity of dairy cows is gradually increasing. Data on average lifetime data will contribute to this. | Record the average longevity at culling in the last year. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Gz21 | Mortality | Record the mortality rate of cows on the farm in the last year. | Verify, based on the animal register, the number of animals that died on the farm in the last calendar year, for example spontaneous mortality, emergency slaughter or euthanasia. | Record the mortality rate (percentage) of cows that died on the farm in the last year based on the animal register. | Up to 01-01-2023: not applicable AR |
| Parcels of land | | | | | |
| P01 | Percentage of grassland | The percentage of grassland used for dairy farming is at least 85% of the total farmland. | <p>The farmland: all land use on one UBN number and all land that is additionally leased / contracted for this UBN.</p> <p>The criterion for 85% grassland may be deviated from to a minimum of 80% if the percentage of permanent grassland (P02) in this case is at least 30%.</p> | Verify and record the surface area of the farmland and how the parcels are used based on the most recent data from the combined declaration submitted to the RVO. | AR |

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| P02 | Percentage of permanent grassland | The percentage of permanent grassland used for dairy farming is at least 25% of the farmland. | <p>Permanent pasture is: grassland that has not been ploughed or harrowed for at least 10 years and has one of the following crop codes in the combined declaration submitted to the RVO: 265, 331 or 336. Overseeding is permitted.</p> <p>This period of 10 years may be calculated from the first year of participation in BLL. After the first 10 years of participation in BLL, the same or another plot of grassland should be used as permanent grassland.</p> <p>Herb-rich grassland may be included in the percentage of permanent grassland if it complies with the standard for permanent grassland.</p> | Verify and record the surface area and how the parcels are used based on the most recent data from the combined declaration submitted to the RVO (crop codes 265, 331 or 336) and compare with the findings of the previous annual BLL inspection audit. | AR |
| P03a | Percentage of herb-rich grassland - low NL | <p>Of the total surface area of plots used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 10% must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in BLL in 2021. Within 3 years, the surface area must increase to at least 20% extensive herb-rich grassland</p> <p>From 01-01-2023, at least 20% of the total surface area of plots used for dairy farming (owned or leased), must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland.</p> | <p>For the definition of herb-rich grassland, the following management packages from the Agricultural Nature Management (ANLb) scheme (Agrarisch Natuurbeheer) with the same conditions for use comply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 G and H marshy area; - 5 A up to and including K herb-rich grassland in combination with package 7 (solid manure); - 13 A up to and including D grassland with botanical value. <p>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</p> <p>Herb-rich grassland requires long-term management, which is why the area of herb-rich grassland is fixed for the duration of participation in BLL.</p> <p>If necessary, a temporary exemption can be requested for the development of herb-rich grassland by means of transitional management (more frequent mowing, no fertilisation) in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management Act. This may be applied on the same parcel for a maximum of 6 years. See the Better Life website for the herb-rich grassland fact sheet.</p> | <p>Verify and record whether the maps in the farm's nature management plan indicate where the herb-rich grassland is to be created and which form of management applies.</p> <p>Verify and record whether the percentage of herb-rich grassland on the farm satisfies the minimum limit.</p> <p>Also verify and record whether the location of the herb-rich grassland has not changed compared with the previous year.</p> | AR |

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| P03b | Percentage of herb-rich grassland - high NL | <p>Of the total surface area of plots used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 5% must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in BLL in 2021. Within 3 years, the surface area must increase to at least 15% extensive herb-rich grassland</p> <p>From 01-01-2023, at least 15% of the total surface area of plots used for dairy farming (owned or leased), must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland.</p> | <p>For the definition of herb-rich grassland, the following management packages from the Agricultural Nature Management (ANLb) scheme (Agrarisch Natuurbeheer) with the same conditions for use comply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 G and H wet grass; - 5 A to. K, herb-rich grassland and in combination with package 7 (rough manure); - 13 A to D botanically valuable grassland. <p>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</p> <p>Herb-rich grassland requires long-term management, which is why the area of herb-rich grassland is fixed for the duration of participation in BLL.</p> <p>If necessary, a temporary exemption can be requested for the development of herb-rich grassland by means of transitional management (more frequent mowing, no fertilisation) in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management Act. This may be applied on the same parcel for a maximum of 6 years.</p> <p>See the Better Life website for the herb-rich grassland fact sheet.</p> | <p>Verify and record whether the maps in the farm's nature management plan indicate where the herb-rich grassland is to be created and which form of management applies.</p> <p>Verify and record whether the percentage of herb-rich grassland on the farm satisfies the minimum limit.</p> <p>Also verify and record whether the location of the herb-rich grassland has not changed compared with the previous year.</p> | AR |
| Environmental impact | | | | | |
| MB01 | Ban on use of glyphosate | The presence on the farm or the use of glyphosate as a crop protection product is prohibited. | <p>This applies to all plots of land used (owned, leased, ground-leased or rented).</p> <p>The crop protection products used must be registered from the first year of participation. The records of crop protection products must describe which substances/products have been applied in which quantities (kg) on a surface area of land (ha).</p> | Verify and record based on the crop and crop protection product registration, ledger account, physical observation (in the field and where the products are stored) and/or invoices of contractors (with specification of crop protection products used) whether glyphosate has been used. | Not demonstrable: AR Glyphosate used: Suspension+ action plan |

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| MB02 | Crop protection on grassland | Only crop protection products that have been approved by SKAL must be used on grassland. | <p>The farmer may use substances containing active substances approved by Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control.</p> <p>The SKAL Organic Input List lists all permitted agents whose active substances are covered by this regulation. For more information, see the website of SKAL (page 'certification')</p> <p>In addition, only mechanical weed control is used.</p> <p>This applies to all plots of land used (owned, leased, ground-leased or rented).</p> | <p>Verify and record whether the participant has a SKAL certificate, or</p> <p>Verify and record whether only substances authorised by SKAL are used. Verify and record whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The use of plant protection products is recorded; - The agents used are permitted according to Regulation (EC) No. 889/2008, by means of a random test; - The registration is correct on the basis of a random test of the crop and agent registration, ledger account, physical observation (in the field and the agent cupboard) and/or invoices from contract workers (with specification of agents used). | AR: Action plan |
| MB03 | Crop protection on land used for maize | Only crop protection products that have been approved by SKAL must be used on grassland. | <p>The farmer may use substances approved by Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control.</p> <p>In addition, only mechanical weed control is used.</p> <p>This applies to all plots of land used (owned, leased, ground-leased or rented).</p> | <p>Check and note whether the participant has a SKAL certificate, or</p> <p>Check and note whether only substances authorised by SKAL are used. Verify and record whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The use of plant protection products is recorded; - The agents used are permitted according to Regulation (EC) No. 889/2008, by means of a random test; - The registration is correct on the basis of a random test of the crop and agent registration, ledger account, physical observation (in the field and the agent cupboard) and/or invoices from contract workers (with specification of agents used). | AR: Action plan |
| MB04 | Environmental impact herb-rich grassland | The use of crop protection products on herb-rich grassland is not permitted. | <p>If necessary, localised applications to control thistles and bitter dock are permitted. This must be included in the farm nature management plan. In compliance with the most recent management conditions of packages 5, 13 and 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme.</p> | Verify and record, based on spray registration, and the farm's nature management plan that crop protection products are not used on the herb-rich grassland. | 1st year certification: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR (action plan) |
| MB05 | Renting land | Renting land is only permitted if cultivation takes place according to organic standards. | The tenant may only use substances approved by SKAL. | Verify and record whether the tenant has SKAL certification for the rented plot. | AR |

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| MB05a | Rental contract rented land | A crop protection products clause has been included in the rental contract when renting land. | This clause states: - That only organic cultivation is permitted on the rented land. | Verify and record whether the rental contract includes a crop protection products clause and that it complies with the conditions. | AR |
| Nature management | | | | | |
| NA01 | General - determination of location in low-lying or high-lying Netherlands | Based on the physical geographical regions (see map in tab 2) the farm has determined which type of soil the farm is located on. A distinction is made between: 1. Location in low-lying Netherlands (fenland, river area, sea clay and reclaimed land) or 2. Location in high-lying Netherlands (peatlands, sandy soils, coastal zone, hilly land) | The nature criteria for low-lying and high-lying regions of the Netherlands are different, in order to best match the differences in biodiversity in each region. A farm that is not entirely located in a low or high-lying region of the Netherlands will be classified where >75% of the plots are situated. Borderline cases will be submitted to the BLL Foundation for assessment. The classification of the farm into a low-lying or high-lying region of the Netherlands is determined at the BLL entry audit. This classification is fixed for the duration of participation in BLL, unless major changes (>10% of total area) regarding land ownership take place. The case will then be submitted again to the BLL Foundation for assessment. | Verify and record, based on registration of the plots with the government, whether the farm (>75% of the plots) is located in a low-lying or high-lying region of the Netherlands. The classification of the farm into a low-lying or high-lying region of the Netherlands is recorded at the BLL entry audit. This cannot be changed. | AR |
| NA02 | Farm nature management plan | The farm has a nature management plan that contains a baseline measurement and advice from an ecological adviser approved by the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN) on the natural area to be created. | The farm nature management plan contains at least: - a map of the farm and the corresponding parcels; - where and how the criterion of herb-rich grassland is satisfied, indicated on the map of the farm, - the location of landscape elements specific to the region are registered and indicated on maps and vertical elements in the landscape (woodland, trees, buildings etc.) have been indicated; - there is a distance of at least 300 m from the herb-rich grassland and reed beds, woodland, trees, buildings, highways or paths/hiking trails. - a statement of whether the farm participates in the Agricultural Nature Management (ANLb) scheme; - an indication of which plots are grazed; - where and how the criterion of rewetting is satisfied, indicated on the map of the farm. - any deviations observed by the ecological adviser in relation to the criteria for nature and landscape management and advice on how to rectify them. More information about approved ecological advisers and farm nature management plans can be found on the Better Life website. | Verify and record whether there is a farm nature management plan established by an ecological adviser approved by BLL. Verify and record whether the farm nature management plan has been established in accordance with the BLL template (see the Better Life website). | At entry audit: AR Subsequent years: if farm nature management plan is not followed in practice: AR: Action plan |
| NA02a | Evaluation of farm nature management plan | The farm nature management plan is evaluated and amended at least once every 3 years by an ecological adviser approved by the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds. | The dairy farmer is advised once every 3 years by an ecological adviser about updating the farm nature management plan. The ecological adviser verifies that at least the criteria for nature and landscape are satisfied and that attention and action points from the previous farm nature management plan have been followed up and records any non-conformities per criterion. | Verify and record whether the farm nature management plan has been updated every 3 years in response to advice from an ecological adviser approved by the BLL. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR (based on new advice ecological adviser) |

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| NA03 | Grazing on herb-rich grassland | Grazing on herb-rich grassland during the rest period from 1 April to 15 June is permitted on a fixed part of up to 30% of the area of herb-rich grassland, in compliance with the conditions of management package 6 of the agricultural nature management scheme. | Grazing is permitted with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 1.5 LU/ha, with cattle with a low flight speed (dry cows, beef cattle). Grazing by sheep, goats, young stock and horses is not permitted. Chemical weed control is not permitted during the grazing period. This applies only to the plots included in the area of herb-rich grassland. | Verify (random check) and record whether a maximum 30% of the area of herb-rich grassland has been grazed in the period from 1 April to 15 June. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: RI |
| NA04 | Tillage of herb-rich grassland | Plots of herb-rich grassland must not be ploughed, harrowed or reseeded. | Seeding in localised patches or spreading herb-rich clippings (applies parcel-wide) is permitted but must be done using local material. In compliance with the most recent conditions of management packages 5,13 and 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme. | Verify and record whether plots of herb-rich grassland have not been ploughed, harrowed or reseeded in the previous year. N/A at the entry audit. | AR |
| NA05 | Rewetting of herb-rich grassland - low-lying Netherlands | Rewetting of herb-rich grassland must take place on farms in low-lying NL between at least 15 February and 15 June. N/A for farms located in located in high-lying NL | Rewetting can take place by: A) 150 linear metres of rewetting through trenches with at least 5 cm of water per hectare of herb-rich grassland, or b) 150 linear metres of high water ditches a maximum (average) of 10 cm below ground level per hectare of herb-rich grassland. For the high water ditch, a surface water level of 0-20 cm below ground level (no lower), or c) 0.5 hectare of marshy area in compliance with the conditions of management package 3G of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme. The area for rewetting using option C, marshy area, may be included in the percentage of herb-rich grassland. Rewetting is included in the farm nature management plan. | Verify and record whether rewetting has been included in the farm nature management plan and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. N/A for farms located in located in high-lying NL | AR |
| NA06 | Regional landscape elements | A part of the farmland area consists of regional landscape elements. - farms in low-lying NL: 2% of the surface area of the farmland - farms in high-lying NL: 3% of the surface area of the farmland | The most recent management packages of the agricultural nature management scheme comply with the definition of landscape elements. Existing local landscape elements, that belong to the (open) pasture landscape (ditches, rows of coppiced willows and tracts of woodlands in the pastures). Planting in the farmyard is not included. Regional landscape elements are indicated on the map of the farm in the farm nature management plan A process follows during which the ecologically desirable percentage of each landscape element is established that is required to conserve and/or restore local biodiversity. Details are also established of the best way to realise this aim. The minimum percentage is equal to 1 star criteria. This will be increased in the future. | Verify and record whether at least 2% (low-lying NL) or 3% (high-lying NL) has been included in the farm nature management plan and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR (based on new advice ecological adviser) |

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| NA07 | Maintaining trenches and ditches | The number of trenches and ditches is kept to a minimum. | At the entry audit, all the trenches must be indicated on the map of the farm in the farm nature management plan. The location of ditches must also be indicated on the map per parcel (precise location is not necessary). Moving trenches and ditches is permitted, provided the total length at the edges of the trenches remains at least the same. The ecological adviser verifies at least once every three years whether the total length of trenches and ditches has remained at least the same. | Verify and record whether all trenches and ditches present are indicated in the farm nature management plan and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities. N/A at the entry audit. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR (based on new advice ecological adviser) |
| NA08 | Maintaining open landscape character - Low-lying the Netherlands | No new trees, woodlands and reeds are planted outside the farmyard on farms that are located in low-lying NL. N/A for farms located in high-lying NL. | Farmyard is defined as the land on which the farm buildings are situated, including gardens, excluding land for production. Existing trees, groups of trees and shrubs and reeds outside the farmyard are indicated on the map of the farm. No new trees, groups of trees and shrubs or reeds are planted outside the farmyard on land used for production. | Verify and record whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding maintaining the open character of the landscape in the farm nature management plan. N/A for farms located in high-lying NL | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |
| NA09 | Planting native species farmyard | There are at least 300 linear or square metres of native species planted in the farmyard. | See the Better Life website for a list of native species. Farmyard is defined as the land on which the farm buildings are situated, including gardens, excluding land for production. All native species must be indicated on the map of the farm in the farm nature management plan. The surface area does not need to be contiguous. | Verify and record, based on the farm nature management plan, whether the criterion for planting native species has been complied with and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |
| NA10 | Barn swallow | At least one of the farm buildings is accessible to barn swallows and suitable for nesting. | This criteria is satisfied if at least one of the buildings is accessible to barn swallows (an opening of at least 10-15 cm wide, or, for example, the doors are left open with a gap of 10-15 cm for the birds in the period from April to September). This building must not house the milk tanks. This is an area for foodstuffs, and as such, no animals are permitted. The accessibility of farm buildings for barn swallows must be indicated on the map of the farm in the farm nature management plan. | Verify and record whether the farm nature plan includes the provision that at least one of the farm buildings is accessible to barn swallows and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |
| NA11 | House sparrow or starling | There are nesting places for house sparrows (under the roof tiles of the farmhouse) or starlings (under the roof tiles of the farmhouse and barn) | This means that a gap of 10 cm of must be left between the roof tiles and insulation for house sparrows and starlings to nest. | Verify and record whether the farm nature plan includes the provision that there are nesting places for house sparrows and starlings and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |

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| NA12 | Nest boxes - High-lying the Netherlands | There is at least one nest box for little owls, church owls or kestrels. N/A for farms located in low-lying NL | Nest boxes must be indicated on the map of the farm in the farm nature management plan. | Verify and record, based on the farm nature management plan, whether there is a nest box for little owls, church owls or kestrels and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. N/A for farms located in low-lying NL. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |
| NA13 | Nest management | A nest management plan is demonstrably observed on the farm. | <p>Nest management complies with the most recent management conditions of package 4 from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme. The method of nest management used is described in the farm nature management plan.</p> <p>Nests are demonstrably searched for and their location is indicated on a map hanging in the barns. This map shows the location of nests and the dates and times of the the search. Any nests and/or chicks found are protected from all agricultural operations, at least through creating enclaves (= uncut and/or grazed parts of the meadows) that consist of at least 50 m2 (on grassland) or by implementing a rest period from 1 April to 15 June or by placing nest protectors. Nest protectors are used when cattle are grazing and a wide margin of grass (at least 5 metres) is cut to protect ground-nesting birds.</p> <p>Nest management is not necessary on the plots with herb-rich grass with a deferred cutting date, because in this case, the sward is only cut once the chicks are able to fly.</p> <p>On the rest of the farm, the sward is cut starting at the centre of the plot and cutting towards the edges.</p> | Verify and record whether the method of nest management used is described in the farm nature management plan and whether the ecological adviser has observed any non-conformities regarding this component. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |
| Manure and minerals | | | | | |
| MM01 | Mineral accounting system RECOMMENDATION | The farmer maintains a mineral accounting system according to the KringloopWijzer, MINAS method or a similar calculation method. | <p>The purpose of this recommendation is to give the farmer insight into any losses of N and P and surpluses or deficiencies per hectare and to take appropriate action. The aim is not to encourage intensification.</p> <p>A different mineral accounting system may also be used if it clearly provides the same data.</p> | Verify and record whether the farmer maintains a mineral accounting system according to the KringloopWijzer, MINAS method or a similar calculation method. | RECOMMENDATION |

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| MM02 | Land-based | The dairy farmer is land-based. | <p>The farmer is land-based if the manure processing capacity of the farm equals the phosphate production. The manure processing capacity is only valid if the land is owned or leased. This land must be used for dairy farming.</p> <p>Possibly exchanging manure (for example from other species of animal) is permitted.</p> <p>The manure processing capacity is calculated as follows: (fixed phosphate usage standard) / Farm Specific Excretion Dairy (BEX) including correction factor) *100%. This figure must be at least 100% or higher.</p> | Calculate, verify and record the manure processing capacity of the farm based on the figures from the KringloopWijzer or the land-based module of CRV. Verify and record whether this figure is at least 100%. | AR |
| MM03 | Manure fermentation | Manure fermentation is not applied on the farm, and manure is not processed in a digester. | <p>This applies to manure fermentation on the farm or to a party that buys the manure.</p> <p>If, on initial participation in the BLL scheme, a farm has a co-fermentation plant, the farm must switch to mono-fermentation or stop manure fermentation within a maximum of 2 years. The farm must no longer co-ferment manure from 01-02-2024.</p> <p>If, on initial participation in the BLL scheme, the farm has a contract regarding manure disposal with a company that uses another method of manure fermentation, the current contract may continue until the terms of the contract expire. No new contracts for other methods of manure fermentation must be concluded after participation in the BLL scheme starts.</p> | <p>Verify and record whether manure fermentation takes place at the farm.</p> <p>Verify, based on for example, the KringloopWijzer, manure disposal contracts, farmer-farmer transport or manure receipts, whether manure fermentation is used.</p> | RI |
| MM03a | Manure disposal | Manure is not disposed of to a manure processor | <p>Manure disposal is only permitted if it concerns farmer-farmer transport or disposal to private individuals.</p> <p>In the case of farmer-farmer transport, manure is transported by the participant directly to the recipient farmer with land (arable farmer / livestock farmer). This does not involve the intervention of a manure intermediary/trader.</p> | Verify and record, based on invoices and/or sales contracts, whether the manure on the farm is not sent to a manure processor. | AR |
| MM04 | Max. spring fertiliser application herb-rich grassland | In spring, a maximum of 10 tons of manure (solid manure fraction of slurry) per ha/year may be applied on the 10% of herb-rich grassland before 1 April. | <p>In compliance with the most recent management conditions package 7 from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme.</p> <p>A spring fertiliser application may only consist of solid manure or a similar product, such as bokashi, compost or the thick fraction of slurry. This must be included in the farm nature management plan.</p> | Verify and record based on the farm nature management plan, and verify based on, for example, the KringloopWijzer, purchase orders, or the manure accounting system (known to the RVO), whether the spring fertiliser applied on the 10% of herb-rich grassland is limited to 10 tons of solid manure or thick fraction per hectare. | AR: Action plan |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| MM04a | Max. fertiliser application herb-rich grassland annually | A maximum of 20 tons of solid manure per hectare may be applied to the 10% of herb-rich grassland annually. | In compliance with the most recent management conditions package 7 from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme. This must be included in the farm nature management plan. During the rest period from 1 April to 15 June, no manure may be applied to the area of herb-rich grassland. | Verify, based and record on the manure accounting system (known to the RVO), whether the total fertiliser applied on the 10% of herb-rich grassland annually is limited to 20 tons per hectare. | AR: Action plan |
| MM05 | Ban on phosphate fertilisers | Applying phosphate fertilisers is not permitted. | | Verify and record based on the KringloopWijzer (or similar system) or manure accounting system. | AR: Action plan |
| MM05a | Ban on artificial fertilisers on herb-rich grassland | Applying artificial fertilisers on herb-rich grassland is not permitted. | This must be included in the farm nature management plan. In compliance with the latest management conditions of packages 5, 13 and 41 from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme. | Verify and record, based on the farm nature management plan, and verify based on, for example, the KringloopWijzer or the manure accounting system (known to the RVO), whether artificial fertiliser is applied on the herb-rich grassland. | AR: Action plan |
| Energy and climate | | | | | |
| EK01 | Electricity consumption and electricity generation | The electricity purchased from the grid is max. 50 kWh (or 180 MJ) per 1000 kg of milk (excluding milk processing and private use) based on the previous year's annual energy consumption figures. As of 01-01-2023, the amount of electricity purchased from the grid (excluding milk processing and private use) is max. 25 kWh (or 90 MJ) per 1000 kg milk. As of 101-01-2028, the farm must generate all its own electricity (excluding dairy processing and private use) and must no longer buy electricity from the grid. The aim is to be electricity neutral from 01- 01- 2028. | Electricity purchased = electricity consumption minus electricity generated on the farm. Placing additional electricity meters can be used to demonstrate the percentage of energy consumption accounted for by the farm. For a list of energy saving measures, see the RVO website, via Kenniscentrum Infomil. If more electricity is consumed, an action plan must be drawn up by an energy consultant within one year. This plan must describe how the farm intends to satisfy the standard within three years by energy saving measures and/or generating energy on the farm. The action plan includes concrete measures that will be implemented, including calculated energy savings, any investment costs and a time scale. The farmer may consult an external energy consultant of their own choice. | Verify and record, based on the climate module in the KringloopWijzer, whether the last electricity invoice (minus estimated private energy consumption and the amount of milk produced (e.g. using Z-net) and/or receipts of green electricity were paid for by the dairy farmer but to an external energy supplier. If too much electricity was purchased from the grid, verify and record at the next annual audit inspection whether an action plan has been drawn up by an external energy consultant. Verify and record whether the farm complies with this component within three years of establishing an action plan. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) 2nd, 3rd and 4th year: AH (Action plan for 3 years) Subsequently: Suspension |
| EK02 | Green energy | The farm has a contract to purchase 100% green energy - solar or wind turbines- generated in the Netherlands. | Green energy is defined according to the contract with the energy supplier. In the case of a contract to supply grey energy, the farmers must switch to a green energy supplier within 1 year of starting participation in BLL. | Verify and record based on a green energy contract with an energy supplier. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit) Subsequent years: AR |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| EK03 | Natural gas | Barns are constructed without a gas connection. For completely new construction. | | Verify and record with a completely new construction, whether there is a gas connection with a gas meter in the new building. | RI |
| Transport | | | | | |
| T01 | Certified BLL dairy transporter | BLL dairy is transported by a dairy transport company certified by the Grazing Foundation (certificate B) or VLOG (Logistics Certificate). | The farmer must ensure, in consultation with the chain manager, that the transport company complies with the required condition(s). | Verify which company transports the dairy produce and whether the transport company is certified by the Grazing Foundation (certificate B) or VLOG (Logistics Certificate). Record the name of the transport company. | RI |
| T02 | Supply of cattle | All cattle supplied to the dairy farm originate from farms that are certified as Better Life label Dairy cattle of at least 1 star. From 01-01-2023 | Breeding bulls are an exception. | Verify, from 01-01-2023, the BLL Dairy cattle 1 star certificate of farms that supply cattle. Record the UBNs of these farms. | Exclusion |
| T03 | Transport time cattle | The transport distance for the supply or removal of cattle (excluding slaughter animals which are transported to slaughter) must comply with a transport distance of no longer than 560 km. | The maximum transport distance of 560 km corresponds to a maximum transport time of 8 hours, assuming an average speed of 70 km per hour based on the EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) guidelines for livestock transport. The transport distance between livestock farms must be verified using Routenet.nl with a 40T truck selected as the vehicle. | Verify and record the transport distance of the animals, based on the departure and arrival addresses, using Routenet.nl with a 40T truck selected as the vehicle. Verify the transport documents. Record UBN(s) of the farms supplying/receiving the cattle. | Suspension |
| T04 | Buyer of calves | There is a regular Better Life label certified calf rearing farm for calves intended for veal production RECOMMENDATION | The animal welfare of calves intended for veal production can be improved in stages when there is a more permanent relationship between the calf rearing farm and the dairy farmer. An important part of this is feedback of welfare-related data from the calf rearing farm to the dairy farmer. | Record whether there is a regular Better Life label certified calf rearing farm for calves intended for veal production. | RECOMMENDATION |
| T05 | Electric cattle prods | No electric cattle prods are used on the dairy farm and during the transport of cattle. | There are no electric cattle prods on the farm. | Verify and record whether no electric cattle prods are present on the farm and record which alternatives are used. | RI |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| T06 | Transport time slaughter animals | The distance travelled for the transport of slaughter animals to the abattoir must comply with a maximum transport distance of 280 km. | The maximum transport distance of 280 km corresponds to a maximum transport time of 4 hours, assuming an average speed of 70 km per hour based on the EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) guidelines for livestock transport. The transport distance between the livestock farm and the abattoir must be verified on the basis of Routenet.nl with a 40T truck selected as the vehicle. | Using a 40T truck as the vehicle, verify and record the transport distance of the animals according to the departure and arrival address via Routenet.nl. Record the name of the abattoir. Verify based on I&R and transport documents Record UBN(s) of the farms supplying/receiving the cattle. | Suspension |
| T07 | Pregnancy test | Before a cow is transported to the abattoir, the dairy farmer must always check whether the animal is pregnant (this applies to all stages of pregnancy). | On the day of removing the cow from the farm to the abattoir, the result of the pregnancy test must not be older than 4 months. In the case of insemination more recently than 4 months ago, the pregnancy test must not be older than the number of days from insemination. A pregnancy test is only applicable if the cow has been inseminated after calving. In the event of a positive pregnancy test, the dairy farmer must wait until the cow has calved. Exceptions to this are: 1. Cows that calved max. 21 days since calving; 2. Emergency slaughter or euthanasia provided this is done on the indication of a veterinary practitioner; 3. If the cow is less than 90 days pregnant and there is a veterinary indication that the animal must be culled. The pregnancy test must be performed by a specialised external party. For example, by a veterinary practitioner or AI station. | Verify and record the pregnancy tests of culled animals. If a pregnant animal has been slaughtered, verify the length of the pregnancy and whether there was a veterinary indication. Record non-conformities. | 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: If not demonstrable: AR if not satisfied: Suspension |
| Supplementary | | | | | |
| A00 | Number of animals | The number of BLL animal places and the number of animals present are recorded for each animal category during the annual audit inspection. | For this purpose, the BLL inspector measures the various buildings used to house cattle on the farm during the entry audit, and with new constructions and/or renovation projects. The BLL inspector determines the total area per animal category on the farm based on this area per type of pen/section. The inspector then determines the total number of BLL animal places per animal category for the farm based on the required area per animal category, as defined in the BLL criteria. | Record the number of BLL animal places and the number of animals present. Based on measurements of the different pens/sections and the BLL area criteria by animal category. | |
| A00A | Number of BLL places for lactating cows | The number of BLL places for lactating cows is: | | Record the number of BLL places for lactating cows | |
| A00A1 | Number of lactating cows present | The number of lactating cows present is: | | Record the number of lactating cows present | |

| Standard | Welfare aspect | Standard | Interpretation | Method of measurement | Sanction |
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| A00B | Number of BLL places for dry cows | The number of BLL places for dry cows is: | | Record the number of BLL places for dry cows | |
| A00B1 | Number of dry cows present | The number of dry cows present is: | | Record the number of dry cows present | |
| A00C | Number of BLL places for young stock under the age of 28 days | The number of BLL places for young stock under the age of 28 days is: | | Record the number of BLL places for young stock under the age of 28 days | |
| A00C1 | Number of young stock under the age of 28 days present | The number of young stock under the age of 28 days present is: | | Record the number of young stock under the age of 28 days | |
| A00D | Number of BLL places for young stock over the age of 28 days | The number of BLL places for young stock over the age of 28 days is: | | Record the number of BLL places for young stock over the age of 28 days | |
| A00D1 | Number of young stock over the age of 28 days present | The number of young stock over the age of 28 days present is: | | Record the number of young stock over the age of 28 days | |