

Self-evaluation participant abattoir calves and cattle

This self-evaluation checklist is intended for abattoir calves and cattle considering participation in the Better Life label. The checklist aims to provide a quick assessment of the feasibility of participating in the Better Life label for your business. As a participant, it is your responsibility to comply with the complete list of Better Life criteria for your company type. In order to proceed with the application for participation in the Better Life label, please complete this self-evaluation checklist and confirm that you have read it. Additionally, ensure that all required information is filled out in the Better Life portal.

Upon approval from the Better Life Certification Body, the Certification Body of your choice will be notified. The Certification Body will conduct an Entry Check and, upon successful completion, will issue a certificate valid for a specific duration. Once you have obtained the Better Life certificate from your chosen Certification Body, you are allowed to receive, process, and distribute Better Life raw materials. Within four months following the approval and the entry check, the Certification Body will conduct an unannounced check of the new secondary participant. The Certification Body must have unrestricted access to your business at all times. Any business location that is considered a product owner of Better Life products, must be registered for participation in the Better Life label.

Disclaimer: Please be aware that this is an abridged version of the complete list of criteria. It is essential to meet all criteria relevant to your business type. You can find them on our website at betterlife.dierenbescherming.nl/zakelijk. Your quality manual/work instructions should demonstrate that your business operates in accordance with the Better Life criteria.

Personnel

Code	Criteria	Interpretation	Reference to quality manual
7.3	The procedures and work instructions specified in the quality manual and that comply with the BLL criteria are applied when working with live animals. The procedures and work instructions describe the correct way to handle animals to avoid causing them pain, stress or injury. There is a training plan for the personnel that states which training has been followed and how to work with Better Life animals and/or products..	The procedures and work instructions describe at least: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Method of incoming inspection for BLL-eligibility of the animals supplied and registration of BLL-eligibility;2. Method of downgrading animals supplied that do not (no longer) comply with BLL criteria/are not recognisable as BLL-eligible;3. Method of unloading;4. Method of killing seriously ill or injured animals;	

5. Method of effective stunning and bleeding (dead) animals;
6. Method of verifying stunning and bleeding of the animal until the death of the animal,
7. Method in the event of failed stunning and unsuccessful bleeding;
8. The procedure to be followed when the slaughter line or stunning process is stopped (for any reason). E.g. in the event of an abnormality/malfunction in the stunning /killing system;
9. Inspection of stunning equipment (establishing abnormalities/calibration);
10. Presence of (functioning) spare stunning equipment.

Animal species-specific procedures

Cattle and calves:

- Method of driving.

A description of at least the following is provided:

- what needs to happen;
- how and how often this is done;
- who is responsible;
- who carries it out.

Personnel involved in the (production) process (e.g. purchasing, supply of animals, sales and communication about Better Life products) are aware of:

- The BLL criteria and the procedures established in the quality manual and working instructions concerning the production of Better Life label products;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The characteristics used to recognise BLL animals/products. 	
S7.4.2	At least one Animal Welfare Officer holding a valid certificate is present on the work floor at the abattoir at all times during the slaughter process.	<p>The slaughter process runs from unloading to killing/bleeding the animals. The work floor includes the areas in the abattoir where the animals are present from unloading to killing/bleeding. An Animal Welfare Officer must be present during unloading, driving, stunning and bleeding. Supervision by an Animal Welfare Officer is only necessary when working with the animals. The Animal Welfare Officer does not have to remain with the animals in the abattoir if they are only resting and the animals are not being worked with .</p> <p>Only certificates issued by training institutes and which are recognised by the competent authority of the relevant European Member State under European Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals during slaughter'erkend' are permitted.</p> <p>In the Netherlands, animal welfare official training given by SVO (www.svo.nl) is approved by the NVWA under EU Regulation 1099/2009. Bristol University's Animal Welfare Officer' is also recognised. Bristol University can also run the course in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The Animal Welfare Officer' certificate issued by an approved training institute must have been obtained before slaughtering for BLL commences.</p> <p>At least two employees must have completed animal welfare officer training so there is a replacement if either is</p>	

		absent to ensure at least one animal welfare officer is present on the work floor at the abattoir.	
S7.5.1	Personnel that handle live animals have a certificate of professional competence with regards to animal welfare for abattoir personnel that is approved by the competent authority under EU Regulation 1099/2009.	<p>In the Netherlands, for example, a certificate in butchery from the SVO is approved by the NVWA under EU regulation 1099/2009. In all cases, personnel working with live animals includes all personnel responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anloading, driving, transporting, handling and caring for animals in the lairage/reception area prior to stunning; • restraining of animals for stunning or killing; • stunning of animals; • assessing the effectiveness of stunning; • hooking up or hoisting live (stunned) animals; • bleeding live (stunned) animals. 	

Slaughter process

Code	Criteria	Interpretation	Reference to quality manual
S17.4	No (electric) cattle prods or hard objects that could be used to strike animals (e.g. sticks) are used to drive BLL or non-BLL animals. No electric cattle prods may be present at the company site. Animals are only driven when there is sufficient space in front of the animals.		
S18.1	The animals are stunned using one of the methods prescribed in EU Regulation 1099/2009, which renders the animals immediately unconscious and insensible.	<p>Permitted stunning methods for each species of animal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Penetrating captive bolt 2. Firearm with free projectile 3. Electrical stunning: <p>The following methods of restraining or stunning as described in EU Regulation 1099/2009 are prohibited:</p>	

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suspending or hoisting conscious animals. With the exception of the water bath as a back up method; 2. Mechanical clamping or tying of the legs or feet of animals; 3. Severing the spinal cord; 4. The use of electric currents to immobilise the animal that do not stun or kill it under controlled circumstances. In particular any electric current application that does not span the brain. 	
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canalization

Code	Criteria	Interpretation	Reference to quality manual
S4.4	The participant has a visible, strict separation between animals/products with different Better Life scopes (BLL species of animal and number of stars) and non-BLL-eligible animals/products throughout the entire production process.	Throughout the entire production process (from arrival to delivery and invoicing) of BLL-eligible and non-BLL-eligible raw materials/animals, work is carried out in accordance with the separation system laid down in the quality manual. Separation can be demonstrated by means of coloured crates, stickers, coloured crate bags, labels and so on.	
S6.1	<p>The participant has a system that safeguards the traceability of Better Life products throughout the entire production process. There is a visible, strict separation between animals for slaughter/meat/products with different Better Life label scopes. In addition, there is a strict separation between BLL animals/meat/products and non-BLL eligible animals for slaughter/meat/products.</p> <p>The entire production process is considered to be:</p>	There is a traceability system that covers the entire process from arrival through processing up to and including shipping. There is clear separation on the workfloor between BLL products and non-BLL products. This must be clearly described in the quality manual. Separation is made physically visible throughout the entire production process. Separation can be demonstrated by coloured labels, stickers and stamps, by marking the first and last carcass/cut of meat/product with a label or ribbon, etc. Control Method must be described in a procedure. Procedure must at least describe the following: Traceability and identification of various better life scopes and animals/products with the BLK and non-BLK-worthy animals/meat /products.	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incoming inspection (if applicable, including waiting time in the lairage); 2. Slaughtering process(if applicable, including waiting time in the lairage); 3. Production process (cutting, processing, grading); 4. Storage (of both raw materials and finished products); 5. Shipping. 		
<p>S6.2.1</p>	<p>The participant should be able to demonstrate the traceability of products with a Better Life scope (see glossary) at all times. Traceability of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raw material with a Better Life scope to a final product with a correct Better Life scope 2. Final product with a BBL to a raw material a correct Better Life scope. 	<p>The following steps in the process must substantiate the quantity of BLL product: Raw material to final product:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quantity of raw material (received batch + any initial stock). 2. Quantity used in the batch of semi-finished/final product recipe. 3. If applicable, the quantity in the next step or waste flow. 4. Quantity of batch of final product with the quantity of BLL raw material it contains. 5. The quantity delivered of this batch. 6. Any current stock. <p>Final product to raw material :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The quantity produced of the batch of final product . 2. The quantity delivered of this batch. 3. If applicable, the current stock. 4. Quantity of batch of final product with the quantity of BLL raw material it contains. 5. Quantity used in the batch of semi-finished/final product recipe. 6. Any quantity in the next step or waste flow. 7. Quantity of raw material. 	

S6.4	The number of BLL products delivered may not exceed the number of BLL products/raw materials supplied.	<p>The participant is responsible for being able to demonstrably prove at all times that the delivered products are BLL-eligible. This proof may be requested for the applicable period of the cross-check/mass balance, but also for a more limited period.</p> <p>The participant is able to account for any changes in the stocks. Inventory positions of stock must not be incorporated into the substantiation if this is not based on demonstrable proof.</p>	
S7.6	The activities, and any problems/non-conformities established in the previous quarter are evaluated. This is reported to the management/board. Evaluation in the presence of the Animal Welfare Officer, among others, and at least one animal welfare employee with a certificate of professional competence with regards to animal welfare for abattoir personnel. Preventive measures are demonstrably implemented where necessary based on the analysis. The preventive measures are recorded in an action items list.	<p>The assessment includes at least the following activities (based on a representative random sample and recorded camera footage):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unloading of animals in the lairage/reception area; 2. Animals not effectively stunned at once; 3. Moving animals from the lairage to the stunning chamber; 4. Stunning, including arrival at the stunning chamber; 5. Registration and findings of the key parameters of stunning; 6. Hanging of (stunned) animals after stunning; 7. Bleeding of (stunned) animals; 8. The verification inspection that is performed periodically. 	
S10.1	A verification inspection has verified whether activities relating to the Better Life label scheme comply with the procedures established in the quality manual.	The frequency may vary depending on the complexity of the system. A verification inspection must be performed at least once every three months. The verification inspection may be part of the regular hygiene inspection. The verification inspection may include, but is not limited to, the method of separation into channels, how live animals are handled, aspects of building construction that relate to animal welfare, the labelling of finished products and raw materials.	

		The results and findings of the verification inspection are included in the quarterly analysis	
S10.2.1	An internal audit has verified whether activities relating to the Better Life label scheme comply with the set requirements and the effectiveness of the quality assurance system has been established. Any findings stated in the internal audit report have been demonstrably followed up.	An internal audit must be performed at each department at least once a year. The frequency of internal audits is established in an annual plan. This frequency may be altered if a particular department has to be audited more often. The audit must be performed by an independent, qualified and trained auditor. The audit programme (day plan) is drawn up in consultation with the auditor. The information necessary to assess the quality assurance system can be obtained by asking questions, observations of the auditor and verification of the information supplied.	
S10.4	The management must ensure that the management system applied for the Better Life criteria is reviewed at regular, planned intervals, but at least once every 12 months. The review must address whether the management system is suitable, appropriate and effective. Records of management reviews are maintained.	This assessment must also include investigating possible improvements. The board must provide resources to enable appropriate corrective/preventive measures to be taken.	

Camera surveillance

Code	Criteria	Interpretation	Reference to quality manual
S24.1.1	Camera surveillance (CCTV) is installed and used to monitor the animals during the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unloading of animals in the lairage and in the race to the holding area; • In the holding area; 	This footage must demonstrable be used by the abattoir itself to evaluate their processes and train personnel, or for security purposes. The findings of the footage are included in the quarterly analysis.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The race used by animals from the lairage to the stunning chamber; • Stunning, including arrival at the stunning chamber; • Hanging of animals after stunning, and; • Bleeding of animals 		
S24.1.2	The camera's are positioned in such a way that there is always an unobstructed view of the processes being monitored.	Before date criterion takes effect, sanction: warning. After date criterion takes effect, sanction: suspension. See 24.1.1 for date criterion takes effect	

Supplier and buyer

Code	Criteria	Interpretation	Reference to quality manual
S3.2.1	When Better Life animals/products are received from the primary participants, the participant verifies whether the Better Life animal/product is accompanied by a document demonstrating its Better Life eligibility	<p>Before the participant includes the animals/products in the production process as BLL eligible, the documents accompanying the animals/product have been used to verify whether the animals/products actually comply with the relevant BLL scope. BLL eligibility is determined based on correct statement of details on the incoming transport document (such as CMR document or packing slip) and label. The corresponding invoice must be checked with the administrative records. The transport document and invoice must state the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For each animal or group of animals: the applicable Better Life scope (see glossary) ; 2. For each product line, the applicable Better Life scope; 3. The applicable species of animal for each product 4. The applicable number of stars for each product. 	

S3.3	The animals, ungraded eggs and raw milk supplied by the farmer originate from BLL-certified farms. The BLL register is consulted at each delivery to verify that the farmer is certified.	Whether the farmer is BLL-certified is verified at each delivery of animals, ungraded eggs and raw milk from the farmer. Certifications can be verified via the register on the Better Life label website: https://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/zakelijk/register/register-veehouderijen/	
S5.1	The carcasses/products delivered as Better Life eligible are supplied to companies approved or certified by the BLLF	<p>Certifications can be verified via the register on the Better Life label website: https://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl/zakelijk/register/register-secundaire-bedrijven</p> <p>The participant verifies and records whether the buyers/customers are certified for the correct Better Life scope at least once every six months. Registration of buyers/customers in the BLL portal. A declaration of no communication is an option.</p>	