

**Following the conclusive formal adoption of these criteria, the supplementary decisions and interpretations below have been drafted in conjunction with the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals. These decisions/interpretations have not yet been formally adopted and, in the event of exceptional circumstances, are subject to change before being included in the established BLL criteria. In anticipation thereof, certification will be carried out on the basis of these supplementary decisions and interpretations.**

Date	Norm no. or topic	Question	Supplementary decision or interpretation
17-10-17	UIT01 Other activities	With effect from 01/01/2018, double-muscled breeds are no long permissible on BLL-certified pig farms. What is the approach for existing pig farms that have already been certified for the Better Life label and also keep double-muscled breeds?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals does not want Better Life-certified farms to keep double-muscled breeds as this could imply that the Society also permits double-muscled breeds under the Better Life label.</p> <p>The only option for keeping double-muscled breeds on a BLL farm is to register them under a different UBN.</p> <p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals grants BLL-certified pig farms that currently keep double-muscled breeds a two-year transition period. In the opinion of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, this gives these farms sufficient time to finish and remove the double-muscled breeds that they currently have, or to accommodate them under a different UBN.</p>
21-11-19	UIT01 Other activities	<p>Keeping meat cattle with a double-muscle factor, with a high incidence of caesarean sections, is not permitted on BLL farms.</p> <p>Does this also apply to veal calves: dairy cows crossed with a double-muscled bull?</p>	<p>This criterion does not apply to cross-bred veal calves from dairy farms (dairy cows crossed with a double-muscled bull).</p> <p>Dairy farmers who inseminate a cow, whose calf they do not wish to keep can opt to inseminate that cow with the sperm of a double-muscled bull. However, dairy farmers always opt for a (double-muscled) bull with such ease of delivery that a caesarean section is rarely, if ever, needed. As such, with cross-bred veal calves (originating from dairy farming), there is not a high incidence of caesarean sections. As such, cross-bred veal calves are permitted on Better Life label farms.</p>
28-01-22	UIT05 Standard for mega-enclosures	<p>Criterion UIT05 states that livestock must not be kept in a mega-enclosure. According to the criterion, a mega-enclosure means one UBN (or EU registration number) with 330 NGE (Dutch size units) or more. However, based on the interpretation of criterion UIT05 it appears that exactly 330 NGE is permitted and this is not considered a mega-enclosure. When is one UBN (or EU registration number) considered as a mega-enclosure?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to amend criterion UIT05. A mega-enclosure means one UBN (or EU registration number) with more than 330 NGE.</p> <p>For example, the following locations are classified as mega-enclosure in the context of the Better Life label, and excluded from participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• porker farms with more than: <math>7,551 \text{ porkers} (7,552 \times 0.0437 = 330.02 \text{ NGE})</math></li> <li>• breeding farms with more than: <math>1,266 \text{ sows and their weaned piglets} (1,267 \times 0.2606 = 330.18 \text{ NGE})</math></li> <li>• farms with more than: <math>600 \text{ sows and } 3,973 \text{ porkers} (601 \times 0.2606 + 3973 \times 0.0437 = 330.24 \text{ NGE})</math></li> <li>• weaned piglet farms with more than: <math>10,000 \text{ piglets} (10,001 \times 0.0330 = 330.03 \text{ NGE})</math></li> </ul> <p>The criterion will be adjusted in the next revision.</p>

<p>18-02-22</p>	<p>UIT05 Standard for mega-enclosures          &amp;          A00A, A00A1, A00B, A00B1, A00C, A00C1, A00D, A00D1, A00E and A00E1 Number of BLL animal places and number of animals present</p>	<p>To determine the number of NGE on the farm, the number of pigs based on the Better Life operating capacity must be multiplied by the following numbers of NGE per animal category: The following animal categories are used in the BLL criteria: sow, porker, weaned piglet with and without sows at the location. This does not cover all animal categories present. How to deal with animal categories not mentioned in the criterion?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that animal categories will be added to calculate the number of NGE.</p> <p>From 01/01/2022, the following animal categories with associated NGE values must be used to calculate the total number of NGE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 mating, gestating or farrowing sow, 50 kg or more (on site, with weaned piglets) = 0.2606 NGE</li> <li>• 1 mating, gestating or farrowing sow, 50 kg or more (on site, without weaned piglets) = 0.2370 NGE</li> <li>• 1 rearing sow or boar of 20-50 kg or 1 rearing sow of 50 kg or more, not covered = 0.0577 NGE</li> <li>• 1 piglet up to 20 kg (without sows on site) = 0.0330 NGE</li> <li>• 1 piglet up to 20 kg (with sows on site) = 0.0000 NGE</li> <li>• 1 porker from 20 kg = 0.0437 NGE</li> <li>• 1 boar, 50 kg or more, ready to be covered = 0.2606 NGE</li> <li>• 1 boar, 50 kg or more, not yet ready to be covered = 0.0577 NGE</li> </ul> <p>The criteria A00A - A00E1 are adjusted on the basis of the above animal categories. The criteria are adjusted as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A00A: Number of BLL mating, gestating or farrowing sow places</li> <li>• A00A1: Number of mating, gestating or farrowing sows present</li> <li>• A00B: Number of BLL boar places</li> <li>• A00B1: Number of boars present</li> <li>• A00C: Number of BLL fattening pig places</li> <li>• A00C1: Number of fattening pigs present</li> <li>• A00D: Number of BLL rearing sow or boar places (20-50 kg) and BLL rearing sow places (50 kg or more)</li> <li>• A00D1: Number of rearing sows or boars of 20-50 kg and rearing sows of 50 kg or more present</li> <li>• A00E: Number of BLL piglet places (up to 20 kg)</li> <li>• A00E1: Number of piglets up to 20 kg present</li> </ul> <p>If existing participants (BLL participants registered before 01/01/2022) exceed the mega-housing standard as a result of the new NGE animal categories, these participants will not be sanctioned. These participants may adhere to the number of BLL animal places present on 31/12/2021. In case of renovation or new construction, the number of BLL animal places is reduced to 330 NGE or less.</p>
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04-11-19	A01a All pigs present are BLL-eligible	If a BLL pig farm chooses to end BLL production, the farm will, at some point, produce non-BLL-eligible piglets. Does this make the entire farm non-BLL-eligible? BLL-eligible pigs are still present. Can the BLL-eligible pigs still be dispensed of as BLL-eligible pigs?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that a BLL pig farm that produces non-BLL piglets and wishes to end BLL production may still sell pigs as BLL-eligible for a certain period of time under certain conditions, such as the Dutch Cessation Scheme (Stoppersregeling).</p> <p>The following conditions apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BLL pigs from the farm wishing to end BLL production may be sold for a maximum of three months after producing the first non-BLL piglets. It is no longer permitted after that point. The end date of the BLL pig certificate will be set as the same date (date of producing the first non-BLL piglets + three months).</li> <li>2. The farm may only make use of this rule if it actually ends BLL production. The farm is then prohibited from registering for BLL for a minimum of one year. In the event of re-registration, a new entry inspection must be carried out and all animals present on the farm must once again be BLL-eligible.</li> </ol>
27-02-17	A04 IKB certificate	Not all farms, for example foreign farms, have an IKB certificate. Can such farms satisfy this criterion in any other way?	<p>For 1-star farms must always have an IKB certificate. For 2 and 3 stars, one of the following is also sufficient:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A minimum equivalent certificate (the applicant provides a comparison of the certificates that is assessed by the BLLF and submitted to the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, which then decides if it can be accepted as equivalent or not)</li> <li>2. An IKB audit that is carried out at the same time as the BLL audit (without issuing an IKB certificate), whereby the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals determines in advance which IKB criteria are non-compulsory for the foreign farm.</li> </ol>
11-01-18	AV04e Water quality analysis	Can water be acidified without the intervention of a vet, for example as long as the standards are not exceeded?	<p>Provided the applicable national standards (in the Netherlands, these are the quality requirements imposed on drinking water for pigs by the Animal Health Service) are not exceeded when pre-treating water, this can be carried out without the intervention of a vet.</p>
11-01-18	G13a Pest control	<p>Which extermination and control companies are certified for the European CEN label? Do extermination and control companies that are certified for the Dutch label for pest management companies also satisfy this criterion?</p>	<p>Extermination and control companies that are certified for the European CEN standard have a 'CEPA' certificate. These companies can be found here: <a href="https://www.kpmb.nl/register/cepa-gecertificeerd">https://www.kpmb.nl/register/cepa-gecertificeerd</a></p> <p>Yes, extermination and control companies that are certified for the Dutch label for pest management also satisfy this criterion. These companies can be found here: <a href="https://www.kpmb.nl/register/keurmerk-plaagdiermanagement">https://www.kpmb.nl/register/keurmerk-plaagdiermanagement</a></p> <p>Further information on the Dutch label for pest management can be found here: <a href="https://www.kpmb.nl/stichting-kpmb/kwaliteitssysteem">https://www.kpmb.nl/stichting-kpmb/kwaliteitssysteem</a></p>

28-03-24	G13a Pest control	<p>Criterion G13a states that pest control and prevention on the farm is performed in compliance with European standard CEN-EN 16636.</p> <p>Legislation regarding KBA certification has been amended since 01-01-2023. Does this mean that criterion G13a will also be amended?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals complies with amended legislation. This means that KBA certification is no longer sufficient. Practically all chemical control products may only be used by trained pest controllers who work for certified pest control companies. This implies that only companies certified for CEPA or IPM Rodent Control (see Keurmerk Plaagdier Management Bedrijven - Register ( in Dutch) (kpmb.nl)) may apply chemical control products.</p>
20-12-23	G13b Separation between clean and dirty zones	<p>With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2018, but no later than from 01-01-2025, there must be a strict separation between the clean zone (the hygienic areas where the pigs are kept) and the dirty zone (the non-hygienic areas that are accessible to visitors, suppliers, trailers , etc.). It is difficult for many pig farmers to comply with this criterion as it is described. Is there any other way to comply with this criterion?</p>	<p>The KKB regulations also include a criterion regarding the separation between clean-dirty zones. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals will meet with Holland Varken to discuss the separation between clean and dirty zones so the requirements can be harmonised. In view of this development, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to extend the transitional period of criterion G13b by two years. This means that the separation between clean and dirty zones must be complied with by no later than 01-01-2027.</p>
2-09-20	AM02a, AM02a3, AM02a4, AM02a5 Emergency power generator	<p>Is it necessary to have an emergency power generator at the farm if it already has 2 different power supplies; namely, in addition to the option of using power from the regular network, also the option of an alternative form of power supply other than a generator?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that an alternative form of (emergency) power supply must be available at a farm. However, this does not have to be an emergency power generator, but should be an alternative power supply to the regular network power supply. Electricity may be generated using renewable energy or combined heat and power.</p> <p>In accordance with criteria AM02a3, AM02a4 and AM02a5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there must be an emergency power supply when the farm has mechanical ventilation with negative pressure;</li> <li>• an emergency power supply must be available within 4 hours in all other cases of mechanical ventilation;</li> <li>• the emergency power supply can be connected to the mechanical ventilation</li> <li>• and the emergency power supply must be tested every 2 months.</li> </ul>
06-12-19	AM03 Fire safety	<p>Is an agricultural electrical inspection that is accepted by the insurer also considered acceptable for the Better Life label?</p>	<p>Any new installation must be tested in accordance with NEN 1010 before operation. A re-inspection must be carried out every five years in accordance with NEN 3140 (Scios scope 8). However, other types of electrical inspection requested by the insurer (such as the Netherlands Technical Agreement, NTA, 8220, Scios scope 10) are also permitted.</p>
07-10-20	AM03 Fire safety	<p>The AREI electrical inspection is included in Belgian legislation. Does the AREI electrical inspection also meet the conditions set for the Better Life label regarding inspections of electrical systems?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has established that the Belgian AREI electrical inspection is equivalent to the requirements in accordance with NEN 1010 (entry control) and NEN 3140 (recovery control). It has therefore been decided that an AREI electrical inspection also meets the AM03 criterion.</p> <p>Belgian pig farms can have an AREI electrical inspection carried out and meet the AM03 Fire Safety criterion upon obtaining a valid certificate.</p>

22-11-17	AG04b 'Action plan for dealing with mortality at two years and above', AG12e 'Action plan for dealing with structural causes of euthanasia at two years and above'	Criteria AG04b and AG12e stipulate that a farm must consult an expert in the event of prolonged excessive mortality and excessive euthanasia. What is meant by 'consult'? AG08d clearly specifies guidance and an action plan. These are essentially different.	<p>In criterion AG08d 'Guidance by pig specialist in the event of excessive antibiotics use', the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has deliberately decided that the farm (after two successive years outside of the SDA target level) must receive active guidance by an independent expert.</p> <p>Within criterion AG04c 'Action plan for dealing with mortality at two years and above', AG12e 'Action plan for dealing with structural causes of euthanasia lasting two years or more', the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals considers it acceptable for a veterinary expert to provide advice on how the mortality rate or percentage of euthanised animals can be reduced. There does not, however, need to be active guidance.</p>
23-05-18	AG08a, AG08ab Antibiotics policy	For these criteria, the interpretation states that describing the antibiotics policy and reviewing it annually is not necessary if: 'The antibiotics policy on the farm lies within the SDA (Netherlands Veterinary Medicines Institute) target level from a structural standpoint (a minimum of three consecutive periods from 1 Jan to 1 Jan and 1 Jul to 1 Jul).' The requirement to draw up a farm health plan applies to all pig farmers, irrespective of the antibiotics used on the farm. This is stipulated in the Dutch Veterinary Medicine Regulation, Art. 5.1, paragraph 1g and Art. 5.22, paragraph 1, among others.	Under the Better Life label, there is a legal obligation to draw up a farm health plan and assess it annually. See BLL criterion AG02a. Consequently, having a farm health plan and reviewing it annually is also compulsory under BLL. As the interpretation included for these two criteria now leads to confusion, it will be removed as part of a subsequent review of these criteria.
17-04-18	AG08c Level of antibiotics use	<p>Use of antibiotics must be within the target level set by the SDA within two years. However, different animal categories have different target levels. The SDA has set target levels for the following animal categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sows/(suckling) piglets: daily dosage/year between 0 and 10</li> <li>- Weaning piglets: daily dosage/year between 0 and 20 DDDA</li> <li>- Fattening pigs: daily dosage/year between 0 and 10 DDDA</li> </ul> <p>Does this criterion apply per farm or per animal category?</p>	<p>This criterion may be interpreted as per animal category. For each animal category, the pig farmer has two years to reach the target level set by the SDA.</p> <p>Example: On a closed pig farm, the SDA target level has been exceeded for the animal category 'fattening pigs'. This problem was resolved within two consecutive years. At the next inspection, the SDA target level for the animal category 'weaning piglets' was recorded as exceeded. Consequently, the farm has had excessive antibiotics use in three consecutive years, although since the problem occurred in a different animal category in the third year, it is not yet necessary to call in an independent expert. The pig farmer also has two consecutive years for the animal category 'weaning piglets' to resolve the problem in that category.</p>
19-02-19	AG08c Level of antibiotics use	The SDA has published amended benchmark values. This removes the signalling level and lowers the boundary between action and target level even further. As a result, some farms that were previously at the target level are now in the action level due to the change of system. How is this dealt with under the Better Life label?	<p>Criterion AG08c has been adjusted accordingly. The obligation for pig farms to keep use of antibiotics under the SDA action level has been scrapped.</p> <p>The SDA, pig industry (POV) and government have jointly agreed that the new benchmark values will be phased in gradually. The Better Life label approach is in line with the sectoral approach to antibiotics use. Consequently, the same phased introduction of the new benchmark values will also apply under the Better Life label when checking and evaluating the aforementioned BLL pig criteria.</p>



<p>25-07-22 and 21-11-22</p>	<p>AG08d Guidance by pig specialist in the event of excessive antibiotics use</p>	<p>If antibiotic use is not within the SDA signalling threshold within two successive years, an independent veterinary expert in swine health must be contacted to provide second line advice in the form of an action plan that will enable the farm to be within the signalling threshold as established by the SDA within successive two years. The independent veterinary expert has no relationship with the practice of the farm's contracted veterinary practitioner and is, or is supervised by, a registered Dutch/European veterinary specialist/swine health care expert.</p> <p>Within IKB Pig, a process supervisor specialised in pig farming listed on the BAS-register of the VAB (Vereniging Agrarische Bedrijfsadviseurs) - the professional association for agricultural business consultants - must be contacted. Can a process supervisor/expert specialised in pig farming listed on the BAS-register of the VAB also be contacted for BLL?</p> <p>Within Belpork, an AB coach listed on the AB Register of Belpork must be contacted. Can an AB coach also be contacted for BLL?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that if antibiotic use is not within the SDA signalling threshold within two successive years, a process supervisor/expert specialised in pig farming listed on the BAS-register of the VAB, may also be contacted. In addition, Belgian participants can contact an AB coach listed on the AB Register of Belpork.</p>
<p>20-12-23</p>	<p>AH04 Air volume per piglet</p>	<p>With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025, the minimum volume of the house must be 1.2m<sup>3</sup> per piglet in order to ensure adequate climate control in the building. This criterion requires extensive renovation work or building a new house (if the same number of animals are kept). Is there any other way to ensure adequate climate control?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals is currently reviewing the BLL Criteria Pigs. The revised version will include criteria aimed at ensuring a good house climate in a different way by using new monitoring technology. These criteria will be established in 2024. A multi-year transitional period will apply to monitoring the house climate. If farmers are unable to comply with the criterion of an air volume of 1.2m<sup>3</sup> per piglet from 01-01-2025, an alternative will be offered by complying with the criteria for monitoring the house climate to be established in 2024 by 01-01-2025. In other words, pig farmers who cannot comply with the air volume per piglet will have an advantage on other participants regarding monitoring the house climate. These criteria for monitoring the house climate will cover a broader scope than just the weaned piglet section.</p> <p>A minimum air volume for each finisher also applies in the criteria for 3 stars. The exception stated here does not apply in that case.</p>

20-12-23	AH05C.1, AH05C.2 and AH05C.3 Daylight permeable surface	With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025, daylight permeable surfaces must be installed in the walls and/or roof. On hot and sunny days, the heat radiated through daylight permeable surfaces may cause heat stress. This can trigger tail biting. Is there a way to reduce heat stress caused by heat through daylight permeable surfaces?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that white chalk may be applied to daylight permeable surfaces during the months when high temperatures are likely. The permitted period is the summer half-year according to the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI). This is the period from 1 April to 30 September. The daylight permeable surfaces must be clear (free of chalk on the surfaces) from 1 October to 31 March.</p> <p>The layer of chalk must permit the transmission of daylight. It must not be thick enough to disrupt the natural day and night rhythm in the house.</p>
28-11-17	AH07 Enrichment material	What examples are there of enrichment material for pigs that satisfies the characteristics and requirements as specified in criterion AH07?	<p>See the information booklet on enrichment materials with further information and examples. This booklet is published on the business section of the Better Life website (<a href="http://beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl">beterleven.dierenbescherming.nl</a>), see 'Participants', 'Criteria and info', 'BLL 1, 2 and 3-star pigs' under 'Additional documents for pig farms'.</p> <p>A transition period of one year applies to the 'edible' characteristic. The enrichment material used must therefore also satisfy the 'edible' characteristic with effect from 01/01/2019.</p>
7-01-19	AH07 Enrichment material	Can enrichment material be offered in the feed trough?	<p>Pen enrichment must be offered in a place other than where the animals eat, rest or defecate. Different functional areas are very important for pigs. Unless it is impossible to do otherwise, as in the case of sows in a farrowing crate or pen, it is not permitted for the enrichment material to be provided through the feed trough.</p> <p>The booklet 'Pen enrichment for pigs', produced by WUR on behalf of LNV, also specifies that: 'Pen enrichment must be offered in a place other than where the animals eat, rest or defecate.' (see pages 13 to 15 of the booklet). This booklet will form the basis on which the NVWA will carry out checks and enforcement.</p>
9-01-18	AH07 Enrichment material and AH08.1 Provision of straw to groups >40	Is there a difference between criterion AH07.1 Enrichment material and AH08.1 Provision of straw to groups >40?	<p>Both criteria AH07 and AH08.1 have been largely comparable in their formulation since 01/01/2018. The only difference is that for groups larger than 40 (AH08.1), <u>permanent</u>, <u>loose</u> straw must be provided. For example, providing straw manually (not permanently present) in combination with a permanent enrichment material or straw chute (with compressed straw) complies with AH07.1 but not AH08.1.</p>
16-03-18	AH11 Drinking water meter	<p>It was previously assumed that the health of pigs could be monitored on the basis of water meters in each section.</p> <p>However, in practice, it would appear that pigs tend to eat less when they become ill.</p> <p>Water consumption does not differ enough between sections to be able to determine whether or not the pigs are ill.</p> <p>Monitoring water consumption has not, therefore, proved useful in practice.</p>	<p>Following confirmation from WUR that drinking water meters at section level have insufficient added value, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals will remove this criterion from the BLL criteria for 1, 2 and 3-star pigs as part of a subsequent review.</p>

25-03-21	Z04A.2 and Z04A.3 Tails of breeding animals	<p>The criterion states that the tail of sows and gilts is intact and that docking of the tail, or part of it, is not permitted.</p> <p>It is stated that starting BLL 2 or 3-star pig farms find it virtually impossible to purchase breeding sows and gilts with intact tails. Are docked 2 or 3-star sows and/or gilts allowed to be present during the entrance check for BLL?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that sows and gilts that are present at the entrance check at a 2 or 3-star Better Life pig farm can have a docked tail.</p> <p>After the entry check, the tails of sows and gilts may no longer be docked. The new breeding sows and gilts must have an intact tail. Other pigs present (boars, piglets and finishers) must have an intact tail during and after the entry check.</p> <p>After the entry check, the relevant livestock farmer has until the next annual check (1 year) to dispose of the docked breeding sows and gilts as non-BLL worthy. After the first year of participation, a suspension follows, based on criterion A01a, if sows and gilts with docked tails are found on the farm.</p>
17-11-23	Z08B.2 and V03D.2 Unobstructed view outdoor run (2 stars) Z08B.3, B03C.3 and V03D.3 Unobstructed view outdoor run (3 stars)	<p>The criteria (2 and 3 stars) state that at least one side of the outdoor run must have an unobstructed view of &gt; 5 metres, not directly into another pen. It is not always desirable to provide an unobstructed view in this way. Can a view of &gt; 5 metres, not directly into another pen be permitted?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to relax the criteria concerning the view from the outdoor run. A direct view into another pen is permitted. There are two ways to provide this: either at least half of one wall between pens must allow the pigs to see into another pen, or at least a quarter of two walls between pens must allow the pigs to look into another pen. For fire safety reasons, and to provide daylight, there must also be an open space of &gt; 5 metres next to/in front of the outside run. There must be no buildings, runs, other obstacles, etc. in this open space. When the view is provided by the wall to the open space, i.e. not directly into another pen, this remains mandatory over the entire length.</p>
16-03-18 and 20-12-23	Z09.1 Group housing for sows (1 star)	<p>With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025 sows must be kept in groups of 20 or more. With certain housing and/or feeding systems, large groups are less desirable for animal welfare.</p> <p>The surface areas and group sizes published on 16-03-18 that permit sows to be kept in smaller groups provided there is a larger floor surface area per sow are not considered to be feasible by farmers. Can the groups sizes be adapted?</p>	<p>On 16-03-18, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals decided to permit sows to be kept in smaller groups provided there is a larger floor surface area per sow. In addition, on 20-12-23, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals decided to adapt the previously published surface areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups of 1 up to and including 19: min. 2.40 m<sup>2</sup> per sow</li> <li>• Groups of 20 up to and including 39: min. 2.25 m<sup>2</sup> per sow</li> <li>• Groups of 40 or more: 2.25m<sup>2</sup> minus 10% = min. 2.03 m<sup>2</sup> per sow</li> </ul>



<p>2-12-22 and 27-09-23</p>	<p>Z09.1, Z09.2, Z09.3 Group housing system          V01B Stable groups          B01.1, B01.2 and B01.3 Surface area per piglet</p>	<p>Criteria Z09.1, Z09.2 and Z09.2 state that sows should be kept in groups of 20 or more animals by 2025 at the latest. Criterion Z09.2 states that finishers should be kept in groups of 20 or more animals by 2025 at the latest. (Smaller groups are also permitted. For the criteria, please refer to the supplementary decision to Z09.1 dated 18-03-2018 and the supplementary decision to V01B dated 14-12-2018). Criteria B01.1, B01.2, and B01.3 state that the surface area per piglet may be 10% less for a group of 40 or more animals. To comply with this criteria, sections can be renovated and passageways created between existing sections/ pens. What criteria must the passageways between existing sections/pens comply with?</p>	<p>The passageways between existing sections/pens must comply with the following criteria in order to provide the pigs with an unobstructed entrance that encourages them to use to the entire area available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The passageway must always be open, passageways may only be temporarily closed in the situations described in supplementary decision 27-09-2023   Z09.1, Z09.2 and Z09.3 Group housing system; V01A and V01B Stable groups; B01.1, B01.2 and B01.3 Surface area per piglet.</li> <li>• Two pigs must be easily able to pass through the passageway at the same time;</li> <li>• The passageway must have as few tight bends and/or dead ends as possible;</li> <li>• There must be no protrusions or obstacles (such as raised edges, ridges or recesses higher/deeper than the toes) in or around the passageway;</li> <li>• There must be sufficient lighting and the pigs are shielded from disruptive elements that can distract or scare them (e.g. moving objects, chains in the direction of movement).</li> </ul>
<p>27-09-23</p>	<p>Z09.1, Z09.2 and Z09.3 Group housing system          V01A and V01B Stable groups          B01.1, B01.2, and B01.3 Surface area per piglet</p>	<p>The supplementary decision to criteria Z09.1, Z09.2, Z09.3, V01B, B01.1, B01.2, B01.3 (dated 2-12-2022 and 27-09-2023) states the criteria the passageways between existing sections/pens must comply with. Can barriers be used to temporarily close the passageways?</p>	<p>The passageways may only be temporarily closed by barriers in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piglets:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For up to a maximum of the first seven days when a group of weaned piglets is placed in a pen to encourage the piglets to use the intended dunging area. The piglets must be distributed evenly over the space to comply with the prescribed minimum surface area, width/number of eating places and number of drinking places per piglet;</li> <li>- In the case of infectious diseases in the affected section. A declaration from the veterinary practitioner or a visit report signed by the veterinary practitioner must be shown. This may be done for as long as necessary to limit further spread of the disease where possible. The piglets must be distributed evenly over the space to comply with the prescribed minimum surface area, width/number of eating places and number of drinking places per piglet;</li> <li>- Up to 24 hours before the piglets leave the farm to prevent piglet movement between the connected pens which causes restlessness.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Finishers and sows:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the case of infectious diseases in the affected section. A declaration from the veterinary practitioner or a visit report signed by the veterinary practitioner must be shown. This may be done for as necessary to limit further spread of the disease where possible. The finishers or sows must be distributed evenly over the space to comply with the prescribed minimum surface area, width/number of eating places and number of drinking places per finisher or sow;</li> <li>- Up to 24 hours before the pigs are permanently delivered to the abattoir to prevent pig movement between the connected pens which causes restlessness.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

20-12-23	Z13 Dunging area for sows B02b Ddunging area for piglets V04 Ddunging area for finishers	The surface of the dunging area must provide the pigs with sufficient grip. With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025 new criteria for the dunging area must be complied with. However, the content of the criteria differs according to animal group (sows, piglets and finishers). This causes confusion. Can the criteria for the dunging area for finishers be harmonised with the other animal groups?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to harmonise the criteria for the dunging area for the different animal groups (sows, piglets, finishers). The dunging area for sows, piglets and finishers must comply with the following:</p> <p>The surface of the dunging area must provide sows, piglets and finishers with sufficient grip.</p> <p>With new construction/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025 the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>specifically purchased concrete floors must have a surface roughness of 63 Leroux or FSC2000 value 0.60;</li> <li>dunging areas with a solid floor must be covered with straw or similar litter.</li> </ul>
13-02-18	Z18 Number of drinking places for sows	Why is it necessary to have one drinking place for twelve sows? Most sow farmers currently have around one drinking place for twenty sows.	<p>Sows drink a large quantity of water, more than fattening pigs, for example. Having sufficient water available is an important condition for good animal welfare in sows.</p> <p>Under the Better Life label, one drinking place for twelve fattening pigs has long been prescribed. With the last amendment, effective on 01/01/2018, a minimum of one drinking place for twelve sows is also now prescribed. This standard of one drinking place for twelve sows is consistent with the standard included in the criterion for sustainable livestock farming.</p> <p>Since this is a completely new criterion, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals is granting affected sow farmers a transition period of one year. This means that sow farm that do not satisfy criterion Z18.1 at their initial inspection (after 01/01/2018) will have until the next regular annual inspection to make the changes needed to satisfy the overall criterion on the basis of the new criteria.</p>
5-09-18	Z18 Number of drinking stations for sows	Does there need to be one drinking station for every twelve sows if water is added to their feed at feed stations?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that for feed stations where water is added to the feed, the same standard may be applied as for supplementary feed. In that case, one drinking station per 24 sows would be sufficient. The feed station does not count as a drinking station.</p>

27-09-23	B01.1, B01.2 and B01.3 Surface area per pig B03A.3 Surface area outdoor run (3 stars)	In farrow-to-finish pens, the piglets remain in the pen after weaning while the sow is transferred back to the mating house. This avoids mixing weaned piglets from different litters and the piglets are moved less during the vulnerable weaning period. There are currently no separate Better Life criteria for farrow-to-finish pens. Pig producers must therefore comply with the Better Life criteria for both the farrowing house (K01-K12) and the weaned piglet house (B01 to B08A). When farrow-to-finish pens are used, the variation in litter size has more impact on the stocking density of weaned piglets. As a result, pig producers that use farrow-to-finish pens under the conditions of the Better Life label may have to transfer piglets more often in order to comply with the criteria for the stocking density of weaned piglets. Can the surface area per piglet in the house, and in the outdoor run for 3 stars, be determined in a different way when farrow-to-finish pens are used?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals aims to encourage the use of farrow-to-finish pens. With farrow-to-finish pens, the surface area per weaned piglet may therefore be 10% less.</p> <p>This means that the following applies for weaned piglets in farrow-to-finish pens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the house (B01.1, B01.2 and B01.3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 star: an average of 0.40 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.36 m<sup>2</sup> surface area will be an average of 0.36 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.32 m<sup>2</sup> surface area</li> <li>- 2 stars: an average of 0.50 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.45 m<sup>2</sup> surface area will be an average of 0.45 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.41 m<sup>2</sup> surface area</li> <li>- 3 stars: an average of 0.60 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.55 m<sup>2</sup> surface area will be an average of 0.54 m<sup>2</sup> and no individual piglet has less than 0.50 m<sup>2</sup> surface area</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In the outdoor run (B03A.3): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 stars: an area in the outdoor run of 0.40 m<sup>2</sup> per weaned piglet will be an area in the outdoor run of 0.36 m<sup>2</sup> per weaned piglet</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6-12-19	B02a Floor design	For newly-built or rebuilt sheds, the solid floor section for weaned piglets must be covered with straw or fitted with underfloor heating. Would other forms of heating, e.g. heat lamps, be sufficient?	<p>Young animals (suckling piglets) have a greater need for warmth. In sheds with high ceilings, the heat rises and does not reach where it is needed, i.e. the animals themselves. To properly regulate the temperature for piglets, a heat lamp is also suitable alongside underfloor heating.</p> <p>From the point of view of fire prevention, underfloor heating is preferred.</p>
27-09-23	B03A.3 Surface area outdoor run (3 stars)	Criterion B01.3 states the minimum pen surface area per weaned piglet. The criterion states that the minimum pen surface area per piglet may be 10% less for a group of 40 or more animals. However, this exception does not apply to the surface area of the outdoor run, criterion B03A.3. Can this be made equivalent?	The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to apply this exception stated in criterion B01.3 to criterion B03A.3. This means that with a group size of 40 or more weaned piglets, the surface of the outdoor run may also be 10% less per piglet.
1-01-15	B06.1 Prohibition on castration of boar piglets	If a new farm commences participation in BLL 1-star pig scheme but there are still castrated piglets/fattening pigs on the farm, can the farm participate in BLL? If yes, can the castrated animals be delivered under BLL?	New participants may not castrate any further piglets after the entry inspection; only piglets that were castrated before the BLL entry inspection may be present on the farm and delivered under the Better Life label.



13-03-17	B06 Castration of boar piglets	Why is the castration of 1-star piglets prohibited, but not 2 and 3 stars?	<p>Considerable research has been carried out in the Netherlands into ceasing castration. Based on that research, the castration of 1-star piglets is prohibited under the Better Life label and has been for several years</p> <p>Research has also been carried out into ceasing castration of 2 and 3-star piglets on pig farms under the Better Life label. The natural conditions under which 2 and 3-star animals are held seem more likely to lead to problematic behaviour in boars and a higher incidence of boar taint. It is, therefore, harder to cease castration in these cases.</p> <p>If 2 and 3-star pigs are castrated, this must be done under anaesthetic and with pain control afterwards per the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals guidelines.</p>
6-12-19	B06 Castration of boar piglets	Castrated piglets may not be present on BLL 1-star pig farms. Does this ban only apply to surgical castration? Or does the ban also apply to immunocastration?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals prohibits all forms of castration among BLL 1-star pigs, including immunocastration. All forms of castration are a serious intervention into the hormonal system and bodily functions of male pigs and are an attack on the intrinsic value and physical integrity of the animal.</p> <p>Information has been collated for several years now on how to keep boars. The risk of boar taint has been reduced to less than 4% through breeding, feeding and care. On the slaughter line, potential carcasses with an abnormal odour are removed. Research indicates that additional inulin in the feed in the last three weeks before slaughter can reduce the risk of board taint to virtually 0%.</p>

<p>14-12-18 and 20-12-23</p>	<p>V01B Stable groups</p>	<p>With new construction and/or renovation after 01-01-2011, but no later than from 01-01-2025 finishers must be kept in groups of 20 or more. With certain housing and/or feeding systems, large groups are less desirable for animal welfare.</p> <p>The surface areas and group sizes published on 14-12-18 that permit finishers to be kept in smaller groups provided there is a larger floor surface area per finisher are not considered to be feasible by 1 star pig farmers. Can the groups sizes be adapted?</p>	<p>On 14-12-18, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals decided to permit finishers to be kept in smaller groups provided there is a larger floor surface area per finisher. In addition, on 20-12-23, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals decided to adapt the previously published surface areas:</p> <p>1 star:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups of 1 up to and including 19: an average of 1.09 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.09 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 20 up to and including 39: an average of 1 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 0.95 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 40 up to and including 39: an average of 0.9 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 0.85 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided not to adapt the areas and group sizes for 2 and 3 stars as published on 14-12-18:</p> <p>2 stars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups up to and including 10: an average of 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.45 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 11 up to and including 19: an average of 1.3 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.25 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 20 and more: an average of 1.2 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.15 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>3 stars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups up to and including 10: an average of 1.7 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.65 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 11 up to and including 19: an average of 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.45 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Groups of 20 and more: an average of 1.3 m<sup>2</sup> per finisher and no single finisher with an area smaller than 1.25 m<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p>29-05-18</p>	<p>T00B Downgrading pig farms/abattoirs</p>	<p>It must be verified that a pig farm is only delivering to BLL-eligible pig farms and abattoirs. This information is not always available at the pig farm. It may be the case that a breeder delivers to a dealer who does not know where the piglets will ultimately end up. Any deliveries to non-BLL farms must be downgraded as the purchasers do not have a BLL certificate and cannot supply BLL pigs. Is it necessary to verify transfers to BLL-eligible pig farms?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that this criterion will be amended as part of a subsequent review. A check only needs to be carried out to determine whether or not pigs are transferred as BLL-eligible to a BLL-eligible abattoir. Checking whether BLL-eligible pigs are only transferred to BLL-eligible pig farms will be abolished.</p>



27-02-24	T02 Electric goads	<p>The 'Electric goads' criterion states that no Electric goads are used on the pig farm and during the transport of pigs.</p> <p>Imposing sanctions on farmers for using an electric goad during transport is illogical. Once the animals have left the farm, they are no longer the farmer's responsibility. How can we deal with this aspect?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals emphasises that the use of electric goads is not permitted under the conditions of the Better Life label. However, the 'during transport' section is worded in a way that may cause confusion. It will therefore be removed from the criteria at the next revision.</p> <p>In the context of the Better Life label, no electric goads must be used while the animals are housed at the BLL certified farm and during unloading at the BLL certified abattoir for which the relevant BLL participant is responsible.</p> <p>This aspect will be inspected (unannounced) by the CB.</p>
6-12-19	T05A Means of transporting piglets over distances in excess of 50 km	<p>With effect from 01/01/2020, it is compulsory for piglets being transported over a distance of more than 50 km to be transported exclusively within closed, climate-controlled cattle trucks to ensure that they are delivered in a healthier condition. Does this apply to all piglets?</p>	<p>No, this only applies to weaning piglets (average age of 25 days, no younger than 23 days). Typically, these are piglets transported from a sow farm to a weaning piglet farm. This criterion does not apply to fattening piglets (average age of 75 days) that are being transported to a fattening pig farm.</p> <p>Weaning is a sensitive time for piglets and can lead to stress, which has a major impact on the resilience of weaning piglets. This transition must be handled as carefully as possible, which includes transportation in closed, climate-controlled cattle wagons.</p>
2-04-12	PL01 to PL17 Platforms	<p>Can platforms be used in a farrowing pen? This would give the piglets more space.</p>	<p>Under the Better Life label, platforms are not permitted in a farrowing pen. The piglets are still too young to climb, so a platform does not provide any usable floor area. If the piglets do use a platform, it could lead to separation from the sow, for example if the piglets are not brave enough to get back down, which is not ideal.</p>
4-06-14	Floor feeding	<p>Is floor feeding permitted within BLL?</p>	<p>Floor feeding is not currently included in the BLL criteria.</p> <p>For floor feeding in groups of six to twelve animals, the space is too limited. For floor feeding in a small group, there is a risk of the pen becoming dirty and that the animals will have to eat their feed off the dirt.</p> <p>Under the Better Life label, working in larger groups is encouraged. For newly-built and rebuilt sheds, sows or fattening pigs must be kept in groups of 20 or more. Larger group sizes allow more room for exercise while allocating the same amount of area per animal. In addition, it is easier for the pigs to distinguish between functional areas (lying, exploring, feeding, defecating) in the larger space.</p> <p>Another point in relation to floor feeding is mutual feeding competition and whether all the pigs get enough feed with this method, which can be resolved by providing more ration.</p>



30-04-14	Animal protein/fats/blood plasma in pig feed	Are animal protein/fats and blood protein permitted in feed for pigs under the Better Life label?	<p>We have set limited criteria on animal feed under BLL.</p> <p>Under the Better Life label, we base feed quality primarily on the GMP+ certificate. There are currently no additional criteria or banned products under the BLL 1-star pig scheme with regard to animal protein/fats/blood plasma in pig feed. As such, they are permitted.</p> <p>However, it is possible that the chain itself imposes additional criteria over and above the Better Life criteria. To ensure that animal protein/fats/blood plasma may be used in a particular chain, you may consult the chain manager (usually the abattoir).</p>
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