

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
1-12-22	BLL calf older than a year, is BLL beef?	Can Better Life calves that are older than a year be marketed as Better Life cattle (beef)?	Legally, calves older than a year cannot be referred to as calves, so their meat is beef . Better Life beef must originate from cattle that have satisfied the Better Life criteria for cattle from birth. These stipulate, among other things, that calves must be able to suckle from the mother for at least three months, have access to grazing, that disbudding and castration is done under anaesthetic, etc. The Better Life criteria for calves diverge from this. If a Better Life calf is older than one year, it must be marketed as beef, but if this calf did not satisfy the Better Life criteria for cattle, this cattle (beef) cannot be marketed as Better Life cattle (beef).
1-12-22	A01 Certification	Foreign farms, for example, do not always have a Vital Calf (Vitaal Kalf) certificate. Can these farms also satisfy this criterion in another way?	For 1 star, the farm must always have a Vital Calf certificate. For 2 and 3 stars, one of the following is also sufficient: 1. at least an equivalent certificate (the applicant provides a cross-check 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), 2. A Vital Calf inspection is conducted at the same time as the BLL audit (without issuing a Vital Calf certificate), whereby the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals determines in advance which Vital Calf criteria are not necessarily compulsory for the foreign farm.
14-08-23	V03c Method of roughage provision from 12 weeks of age	Criterion V03c from the BLL Calves 1 star criteria states that for calves from 12 weeks of age, at least 3 roughage eating areas (of at least 0.40 m) per 6 calves must be available. This is a new requirement compared to the earlier set of criteria for calves and will require many farms to renovate or switch to a lower stocking density in order to comply. Can a transition period be used for this?	It is true there is no transitional requirement for criterion V03c. That is why the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to still apply a transitional period with new construction or renovation, but no later than 01-01-2030.
1-12-22	V07 Drinking water	How can calves be prevented from drinking large amounts of water?	The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals believes that calves should be given permanent access to fresh drinking water, so they can drink water at times when no calf-milk is provided. The problem is that some calves will drink a lot of water which can lead to health problems. This should be prevented by limiting the quantity of water/flow rate of the drinker or drinker nipple and/or by interrupting the flow of water after a certain quantity has been drunk. However, this limitation/interruption of the water flow should not be interpreted in any way as if a temporarily lack of drinking water supply is allowed.

28-03-24	HY04 Pest control	<p>Criterion HY04 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 HY04 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>
16-03-23	H06a Space allowance per calf in a group	<p>The BLL Calves 1 star criteria state that if not housed in individual calf hutches, the floor space allowance per calf must be at least 1.8m<sup>2</sup>. A floor space allowance of 1.8m<sup>2</sup> per calf is not feasible in the short term. Can this be postponed or amended to 1.5m<sup>2</sup> per calf?</p>	<p>The Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to maintain the floor space allowance per calf of 1.8m<sup>2</sup>. However, as the number of animal places in the suckling section is linked to the fattening section, as with criterion H06b, a transitional period will apply to H06a , namely:          No later than 01-01-2025, the floor surface area must be at least 1.8m<sup>2</sup> per calf.</p>
16-03-23	H08a Frequency of regrouping calves	<p>In order to give calves with insufficient weight the opportunity to eat and drink enough, calves are sometimes regrouped according to how quickly they eat and drink, and their body condition. Criterion H08a states that calves should only be regrouped in the first 12 weeks of their lives. However, in practice, this is also done at a later date, because the calves are only moved from the suckling section to the fattening section when they are older. May calves also be regrouped at an age of more than 12 weeks?</p>	<p>Criteria H08 and H08a are intended to prevent recurring conflicts in the social ranking order of calves and to prevent any spread of pathogens. The age of 12 weeks stated in criterion H08a is based on the assumption that BLL 1 and 2 star calves are moved from the suckling section to the fattening section at an age of 12 weeks.          As calves can also be moved from the suckling section to the fattening section at an age of more than 12 weeks, the Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to relax the age limit of 12 weeks for BLL 1 and 2 stars. The criterion will be amended as follows: Calves should only be regrouped in the suckling section and once again when they are moved to the fattening section. However, the principle that calves should be regrouped as little as possible remains unchanged.</p>
16-03-23	B03 Haemoglobin measurement	<p>Criterion B03 states that an HB measurement is taken at the age of 20 weeks and that if HB values are too low, iron must be administered as a supplement. It is not usual practice to monitor the HB level of rosé calves. How does this relate in practice to rosé calves where the HB level never had to be monitored in the past?</p>	<p>The Better Life criteria for calves include various criteria aimed at ensuring that calves are fed enough forage to provide them with sufficient iron. As a result, further monitoring of the HB level (at an age of 20 weeks) of Better Life calves is not necessary to realise the intended target of an average HB level of 7.0 mmol/l.</p> <p>This criterion therefore does not need to be verified. It will be removed from the BLL criteria at the next revision.</p>



27-02-24	T01 Electric cattle prods	<p>The 'Electric cattle prods' criterion states that no electric cattle prods are used on the veal farm and during the transport of calves.</p> <p>Imposing sanctions on farmers for using an electric cattle prod 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 cattle prods 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 cattle prods 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>
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