

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
18-05-26	Criteria: UIT05, UIT07 and UIT09	Can the sanction (exclusion/critical) for these criteria be reduced?	<p>The exclusion/critical sanction is intended for very serious shortcomings, for example where animal abuse or fraud is involved. In practice, it has become clear that there are also criteria with this sanction for which exclusion/critical is not always an appropriate measure. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to lower the sanction for these criteria. This applies to criteria UIT05, UIT07 and UIT09.</p> <p>The new sanction for criteria UIT05, UIT07 and UIT09 will be: suspension/major.</p>
28-03-24	A04 Pest control	<p>Criteria A04 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 criteria A04 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>
2-06-25	D04 Drinking water in the pasture	<p>According to criterion D04 one or more drinking points are available in the pasture. The distance between the cow and one drinking point never exceeds 500 meters. For 1 and 2 stars a ditch may be counted as a drinking water point, but each parcel must have at least one drinking point. For 3 stars a ditch does not qualify as a drinking water point. However, according to criterion D01 (Drinking water is permanently available) water must be permanently available for all animals and with e.g. outdoor access or grazing this may also be surface water (river, stream, ditch, seepage water, etc.). Therefore, criteria D01 and D04 are inconsistent in their interpretation of surface water as a valid drinking point in pasture.</p> <p>Can the criteria be harmonized to ensure consistency?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to revise the interpretation of criterion D04 (Drinking water in pasture). Surface water (river, stream, ditch, seepage water, etc.) may be counted as a drinking water point in the pasture for all scopes (1-star, 2-stars, and 3-stars).</p> <p>As a result, criterion D04 will be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: With e.g. outdoor access or grazing this may also be surface water (river, stream, ditch, seepage water, etc.).</i></p> <p>Accordingly, the following previous interpretations will be withdrawn: For 1- and 2-stars: A ditch may be counted as a drinking water point, but each parcel must have at least one drinking point. For 3-stars: A ditch does not qualify as a drinking water point.</p>
21-06-24	H06c Soiling of daylight permeable surface	<p>Criterion H06 states that the barn should have a daylight permeable area that covers at least 10% of the surface area accessible to the animals. Criterion H06c states that this daylight permeable surface must not be soiled. In the case of a barn with a daylight permeable surface area of more than 10%; must the entire daylight permeable surface be clean or only the required 10%?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that only the percentage of daylight permeable surface required to comply with the BLL criteria, as defined in criterion H06, needs to be clean. In other words, the daylight permeable area that covers at least 10% of the surface area accessible to the animals should be clean.</p>

<p>20-01-23 and 09-10-23</p>	<p>H24 Dimensions of cubicles (BLL 2 and 3 stars)</p>	<p>Criterion H24 states that dairy cows must be able to assume different positions when lying. Minimum conditions apply for cubicles. Due to an internal error when establishing the BLL 2 and 3 star criteria for dairy cattle, the total minimum length was amended from 240 cm to 260 cm. It could be assumed that this amendment does not mean a tightening of the criterion. However, it does in relation to the previous version. Due to this change some farms can no longer comply with this criterion. Can the total minimum length be reversed to 240 cm?</p> <p>In case of a correction of the total minimum length of the cubicles it is not possible to achieve at least 80 cm of unobstructed space between the cubicles and the wall for the cow to lunge its head. Can the minimum unobstructed space between the cubicles and the wall for the cow to lunge its head be modified to at least 60 cm?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to amend the total minimum length to 240 cm. Besides, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to amend the unobstructed space between the cubicles and the wall for the cow to lunge its head to at least 60 cm. The unobstructed space between the opposite cubicles for the cow to lunge its head of at least 80 cm remains unchanged. Both amendments are interim steps towards enlarging the cubicles in the future.</p>
<p>12-12-22</p>	<p>H29a Passageway cubicles (smaller breeds)</p>	<p>Various criteria for Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars state dimensions for smaller breeds, as modified dimensions permit animals with a smaller stature as defined in H20 to comply with BLL criteria.</p> <p>However, specifications of dimensions for smaller breeds were missing in criterion H29a. Can modified dimensions be drawn up for smaller breeds?</p>	<p>Based on amendments concerning the dimensions in other criteria, the modified dimensions relating to smaller breeds in H29a are as follows:</p> <p>1 star</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width of passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall 2.1m • Width after new construction or renovation 2.5m • Width if there is an open space after every 20 cubicles 2m <p>2 stars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width of passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall 2.1m • Width after new construction or renovation 3m • Width if there is an open space after every 20 cubicles 2m <p>3 stars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width of passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall 2.1m • Width after new construction or renovation 3m • Width if there is an open space after every 20 cubicles 2m
<p>16-03-23</p>	<p>H29a Passageway cubicles</p>	<p>Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars states requirements for the minimum width of the passageway between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall. The width is at least 2.5 m for lactating cows to allow the cows to pass each other easily without any conflict. If there is an open space of at least 2 m between every 20 cubicles, a passageway of 2.2 m wide is sufficient.</p> <p>Can this be deviated from if there is a passageway/open space that enables access to the milking robot or the pasture?</p>	<p>There is considered to be a passageway with a width of at least 2.5 m (or 2.2 m if there is an open space of at least 2 m between every 20 cubicles) if this passageway is between cubicles or between cubicles and the wall. If this passageway is used as a passageway/open space to access a specific destination such as for example the milking robot or the pasture (for grazing) where the cows can only move in one direction, this criterion does not apply.</p>

18-05-26	HK02 Colostrum management programme	Is criterion HK02 colostrum management programme automatically complied with if the calf is kept with the suckler cow?	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that in situations where the calf is kept with its mother for at least the first 24 hours after birth, it may be assumed that the colostrum management programme is complied with.</p> <p>As a result, the interpretation of criterion HK02 will be worded as follows: <i>This programme specifies at least the following:</i></p> <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. <p>Source: Fact sheet colostrum, ULP</p> <p><i>In situations where the calf is kept with its mother for at least the first 24 hours after birth, it may be assumed that this criterion is complied with.</i></p>
16-03-23	HK04 Duration of stay dairy farm	Criterion HK04 states that for 1 star the calf remains on the farm of its birth for at least the first 28 days and for 2 and 3 stars that 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. The criterion came into effect on 01-01-2023. However, in practice, this criterion is not yet workable. Must this criterion be complied with at the moment?	The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that criterion HK04 does not need to be complied with at the moment. This criterion will come into force after a transitional period that is still to be determined.
31-03-23	HK05a Width calf hutches HK05b Length calf hutches HK05c Height calf hutches	<p>Various criteria for Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars state dimensions for smaller breeds, as modified dimensions permit animals with a smaller stature as defined in H20 to comply with BLL criteria.</p> <p>However, specifications of dimensions for smaller breeds were missing in criteria HK05a, HK05b and HK05c. Can modified dimensions be drawn up for smaller breeds?</p>	<p>Based on amendments concerning the dimensions in other criteria, the modified dimensions relating to smaller breeds in HK05a, HK05b and HK05c for 1, 2 and 3 stars are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width is at least 80 cm (HK05a) • Length is at least 115 cm (HK05b) • Height is at least 110 cm (HK05c)

20-01-23	HK15 and HK15a Dimensions cubicles young stock (smaller breeds)	<p>Various criteria for Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars state dimensions for smaller breeds, as modified dimensions permit animals with a smaller stature as defined in H20 to comply with BLL criteria.</p> <p>However, specifications of dimensions for smaller breeds were missing in criteria HK15 and HK15a. Can modified dimensions be drawn up for smaller breeds?</p>	<p>Based on amendments concerning the dimensions in other criteria, the modified dimensions relating to smaller breeds in HK15 and HK15a for 1, 2 and 3 stars are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of 4 to 12 months (HK15): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width is at least 70 cm - Length is at least 155 cm - Height of the neck bar is at least 75 cm • Age of 12 to 18 months (HK15a): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Width is at least 75 cm - Length is at least 175 cm - Height of the neck bar is at least 85 cm
2-6-25 and 13-02-26	N03 Fire detection	<p>According to criterion N03 technical areas, if present, must be equipped with a fire detection system. This system also sends alerts to the farmer's telephone. The fire detection system complies with NEN2535. It is unclear whether each technical area must to be equipped with a fire detection system (there could be multiple areas) and which systems comply with the NEN standard. Could clarification be provided on this matter?</p>	<p>Due to the lack of clarity, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to extend the transition period to 01-01-2027. Now that the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has provided clarity on criterion N03 in 2025, dairy farmers have the year 2026 to make the necessary adjustments in order to comply with the criterion by 01-01-2027.</p> <p>As a result, criterion N03 will be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: The technical area/risk area (replacement term for technical area in existing buildings) must be equipped with a fire detection system. Mandatory from 01-01-2027.</i></p> <p><i>Interpretation: The technical area/risk area is the area where the majority and most high-risk equipment, posing a combustion hazard to the dairy herd, is located. High-risk equipment includes, but is not limited to: mechanical control of e.g. feeding and drinking systems, pump (for spring water), vacuum pump, electric broilers, ventilation systems, control computer, drive system for manure removal, solar-panel inverter or a fuse/switch box. The fire detection system complies with NEN2535 (or NEN-EN 54 outside the Netherlands), for example aspirating smoke detectors or thermal detectors and provides automatic notification to the farmer's phone. For qualified companies that install fire detection according to the correct standards, see https://hetccv.nl/certificaat-schema/brandmeldinstallaties/brandmeldinstallaties-brandmeldinstallaties/. For companies that perform the inspection of fire detection, see https://hetccv.nl/keurmerken/brandbeveiliging/inspectie-brandbeveiliging/overzicht-inspectie-instellingen/.</i></p> <p><i>Method of measurement: Verify and record from 01-01-2027 if technical areas/risk areas are equipped with fire detection that notifies the farmer's telephone and complies with NEN2535 (or NEN-EN 54 outside the Netherlands, based on a test report issued by the inspection body.</i></p> <p><i>Sanction: From 01-01-2027: 1st year: Warning (recovery at next annual audit). Subsequent years: AR</i></p>

16-02-23	<p>Gd01 Animal-related measurements Gd02 Incidence of animal diseases Gz11 Prevalence of mastitis Gz11a Mastitis treatments Gz19 Average age at culling Gz21 Mortality</p>	<p>The BLL criteria Dairy cattle include criteria that concern animal-related measurements (Gd01, Gd02, Gz11, Gz11a, Gz19 and Gz21). The criteria came into effect on 01-01-2023, but the 'Protocol for performing animal-related measurements among dairy cattle' has not yet been published. Must these criteria be complied with at the moment?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that criteria Gd01, Gd02, Gz11, Gz11a, Gz19 and Gz21 do not need to be complied with at the moment. These criteria will come into force after a transitional period that is still to be determined, at the moment that the animal-related measurements have been developed/the protocol is available and has been established by means of a supplementary decision.</p>
16-06-25	<p>P03 Percentage of herb-rich grassland (1 star) (part 1)</p>	<p>Of the total surface area of parcels used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 5% (1 star) must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland. For new participants, it is not always feasible to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in the Better Life label. This may be due to the need to develop herb-rich grassland first, or because nature conservation or leased land is not issued throughout the year. Are there any possibilities for these farmers to become participants despite this?</p>	<p>According to the interpretation of criterion P03 it is possible to apply for a temporary exemption for the development of herb-rich grassland. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, in collaboration with the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN), has decided to revise this exemption by introducing monitoring of transitional management practices: For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</p> <p>In addition, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals and the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds have decided that it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland. The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</p> <p>The interpretation of criterion P03 (1 star) will therefore be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: 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:</i></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>(part 2)</p>		<p><i>Up to 30% of the surface area of herb-rich grassland may be grazed extensively in compliance with the requirements of package 6A from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme.</i></p> <p><i>The creation of ecologically-valuable herb-rich grassland requires long-term management, which is why the location on the farm that is assigned to be herb-rich grassland is determined at the BLL entry audit and fixed for the duration of participation in BLL scheme.</i></p> <p><i>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</i></p> <p><i>If 5% of herb-rich grassland is (partly) created by not applying fertiliser along the edge of ditches (at least 2 m of the ditch), the dredgings or other material extracted by the dredger from the ditch during maintenance must not be placed on these (ditch) edges. These edges must also not be ploughed, harrowed or reseeded. Seeding in localised patches or spreading herb-rich clippings (applies parcel-wide) is permitted See the Better Life website for the herb-rich grassland fact sheet.</i></p> <p><i>For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively. Transitional management means more frequent cutting and clearing the cuttings is permitted (including during the rest period) but it is combined with restrictions relating to applying fertilizers, grazing and, if possible, combined with rewetting and requires extra attention to the nest management of meadow birds.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to transitional management it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (5%). The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (5%) will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</i></p>
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<p>16-06-25</p>	<p>P03 Percentage of herb-rich grassland (2 stars) (part 1)</p>	<p>Of the total surface area of parcels used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 10% (2 stars) must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland. For new participants, it is not always feasible to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in the Better Life label. This may be due to the need to develop herb-rich grassland first, or because nature conservation or leased land is not issued throughout the year. Are there any possibilities for these farmers to become participants despite this?</p>	<p>According to the interpretation of criterion P03 it is possible to apply for a temporary exemption for the development of herb-rich grassland. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, in collaboration with the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN), has decided to revise this exemption by introducing monitoring of transitional management practices: For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</p> <p>In addition, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals and the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds have decided that it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland. The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</p> <p>The interpretation of criterion P03 (2 stars) will therefore be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: 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:</i></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.
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	<p>(part 2)</p>		<p><i>Up to 30% of the surface area of herb-rich grassland may be grazed extensively in compliance with the requirements of package 6A from the Agricultural Nature Management scheme.</i></p> <p><i>The creation of ecologically-valuable herb-rich grassland requires long-term management, which is why the location on the farm that is assigned to be herb-rich grassland is determined at the BLL entry audit and fixed for the duration of participation in BLL scheme.</i></p> <p><i>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</i></p> <p><i>If 10% of herb-rich grassland is (partly) created by not applying fertiliser along the edge of ditches (at least 2 m of the ditch), the dredgings or other material extracted by the dredger from the ditch during maintenance must not be placed on these (ditch) edges. These edges must also not be ploughed, harrowed or reseeded. Seeding in localised patches or spreading herb-rich clippings (applies parcel-wide) is permitted See the Better Life website for the herb-rich grassland fact sheet.</i></p> <p><i>For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively. Transitional management means more frequent cutting and clearing the cuttings is permitted (including during the rest period) but it is combined with restrictions relating to applying fertilizers, grazing and, if possible, combined with rewetting and requires extra attention to the nest management of meadow birds.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to transitional management it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (10%). The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (10%) will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</i></p>
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<p>16-06-25</p>	<p>P03a Percentage of herb-rich grassland - low NL (3 stars) (part 1)</p>	<p>Of the total surface area of parcels used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 20% (3 stars low-lying Netherlands) must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland. For new participants, it is not always feasible to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in the Better Life label. This may be due to the need to develop herb-rich grassland first, or because nature conservation or leased land is not issued throughout the year. Are there any possibilities for these farmers to become participants despite this?</p>	<p>According to the interpretation of criterion P03a it is possible to apply for a temporary exemption for the development of herb-rich grassland. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, in collaboration with the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN), has decided to revise this exemption by introducing monitoring of transitional management practices: For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</p> <p>In addition, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals and the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds have decided that it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland. The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</p> <p>The interpretation of criterion P03a (3 stars) will therefore be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: 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:</i></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.
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	(part 2)		<p><i>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to transitional management it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (20%). The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (20%) will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</i></p>
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<p>16-06-25</p>	<p>P03b Percentage of herb-rich grassland - high NL (3 stars) (part 1)</p>	<p>Of the total surface area of parcels used for dairy farming (owned or leased), at least 15% (3 stars high-lying Netherlands) must consist of extensive herb-rich grassland. For new participants, it is not always feasible to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland at the start of participation in the Better Life label. This may be due to the need to develop herb-rich grassland first, or because nature conservation or leased land is not issued throughout the year. Are there any possibilities for these farmers to become participants despite this?</p>	<p>According to the interpretation of criterion P03b it is possible to apply for a temporary exemption for the development of herb-rich grassland. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, in collaboration with the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN), has decided to revise this exemption by introducing monitoring of transitional management practices: For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</p> <p>In addition, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals and the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds have decided that it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland. The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</p> <p>The interpretation of criterion P03b (3 stars) will therefore be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: 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:</i></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.
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	(part 2)		<p><i>A rest period on the herb-rich grassland applies from 1 April to 15 June.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>For the development of herb-rich grassland, transitional management (e.g. more frequent mowing, no fertilization, etc.) may be applied in accordance with the requirements of package 41 of the Agricultural Nature Management scheme for herb-rich grassland. This transitional management may be applied on the same plot for a maximum of 6 years. The certification body will monitor whether this management is carried out correctly and effectively.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to transitional management it is also permitted to include in the farm's nature management plan that, within a maximum of one year (counting from the date the first farm's nature management plan is drawn up), a lease agreement will be concluded to meet the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (15%). The farm's nature management plan must clearly specify the date (no later than one year after the farm's nature management plan is drawn up) by which the required percentage of herb-rich grassland (15%) will be achieved through the commencement of leasing a specified area of land.</i></p>
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<p>26-08-24</p>	<p>NA02</p> <p>NA01, NA04, NA05, NA06, NA07, NA08, NA09, NA10, NA11, NA12 en NA13</p> <p>Farm nature management plan</p> <p>Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars</p> <p>(part 1)</p>	<p>Criterion NA02 (1, 2 and 3 stars) entails that a farm nature management plan is present and what this plan must minimally contain. In addition, criteria NA01, NA04, NA05, NA06, NA07, NA08, NA09, NA10, NA11, NA12, and NA13 also include requirements that are incorporated into the farm nature management plan. Monitoring the implementation of these criteria proves difficult in practice. Can monitoring and assurance of these criteria be carried out in a more practical manner?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to facilitate the implementation, monitoring, and assurance of these criteria by consolidating them under criterion NA02, in order to allow execution, control, and assurance by the certified ecological advisor and Certification Bodies to be carried out more pragmatically:</p> <p>The farm nature management plan is present, including a baseline measurement survey and advice from an ecological adviser approved by the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (VBN) to fulfil the tasks related to nature conservation natural area to be created. The farm nature management plan contains at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and Landscape 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; • a conclusion with stipulating which components the farm still should achieve, referred to as 'action points', and the status of their implementation. <p>Supplemented with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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	<p>(part 2)</p>		<p>Netherlands (fenland, river area, sea clay and reclaimed land) or 2. Location in high-lying Netherlands (peatlands, sandy soils, coastal zone, hilly land) (NA01);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tillage of herb-rich grassland; displaying plots of herb-rich grassland not to be ploughed, harrowed or reseeded (NA04); • 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 (NA05); • 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 (NA06); • Maintaining trenches and ditches: the number of trenches and ditches is kept to a minimum (NA07); • 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 (NA08); • Planting native species farmyard; there are at least 100 linear or square metres of native species planted in the farmyard (NA09); • Barn swallow; at least one of the farm buildings is accessible to barn swallows and suitable for nesting (NA10); • 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) (NA11); • Nest boxes - High-lying the Netherlands; There is at least one nest box for little owls, church owls or kestrel (NA12); • Nest management: a nest management plan is demonstrably observed on the farm (NA13). <p>The method of implementation is further elaborated in the action plan, which is available to ecological advisors, chain directors, and certification bodies.</p> <p>The method of measurement and sanction of criterion NA02 remain unchanged.</p>
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<p>26-08-24</p>	<p>NA02a Farm nature management plan Dairy cattle 1, 2 and 3 stars</p>	<p>Criterion NA02a refers to the evaluation of the farm nature management plan. What are the consequences of not meeting the action points in the farm nature plan?</p>	<p>As a possible outcome of the evaluation by the ecological advisor, the option to sanction the dairy farmer should also be added if no action is taken on the points of advice.</p> <p>As a result, criterion NA02a will be formulated as follows: <i>Interpretation: The dairy farmer is advised once every 3 years by an ecological advisor on updating the farm nature management plan. The ecological advisor verifies that at least the criteria for nature and landscape are met and that attention and action points from the previous farm nature management plan have been followed up and records any non-conformities per criterion.</i></p> <p><i>If the evaluation shows that the dairy farmer has not implemented action points where they are feasible, or if two consecutive farm nature plans show that no action has been taken, then this criterion is also not met.</i></p>
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<p>5-01-26</p>	<p>MM02 Land-based 1 star</p>	<p>The farmer is land-based if the manure placement space of the farm is at least 80% of phosphate production. The manure placement space is only valid if the land is owned or leased. This land must be used for dairy farming. If there is more manure placement space on the farm, the farmer is obliged to place the remaining phosphate production (>80%) on the farm's (own) land too. Possibly exchanging manure (for example from other species of animal) is permitted. Due to the current phase-out of derogation in European manure legislation combined with other manure placement restrictions, the 80% land-based criterion for phosphate cannot be met by a significant portion of the BLL 1 star dairy farmers in 2026.</p> <p>The question is to adjust the land-based percentage for phosphate in 2026 to a percentage that is realistic given the phase-out of derogation.</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals intends to accommodate BLL 1 star dairy farmers by temporarily (2026) reducing the land-based criterion for phosphate. For BLL 1 star dairy farmers it will be reduced to 50%.</p> <p>As a result, criterion MM02 will be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: The dairy farmer is at least 50% land-based.</i> <i>Interpretation: The farmer is land-based if the manure placement space of the farm is at least 50% of phosphate production. The manure placement space is only valid if the land is owned or leased. This land must be used for dairy farming. If there is more manure placement space on the farm, the farmer is obliged to place the remaining phosphate production (>50%) on the farm's (own) land too. Possibly exchanging manure (for example from other species of animal) is permitted. The manure placement space is calculated as follows: (fixed phosphate usage standard) / Farm Specific Excretion Dairy (BEX) including correction factor) *100%. This figure must be at least 50% or higher.</i></p> <p>For 2027 and beyond, considering the many expected (political) developments in the dairy sector, it will be necessary to recalibrate what an appropriate percentage is for the land-based criterion of phosphate.</p> <p>This supplementary decision is valid until 31-12-2026.</p>
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<p>5-01-26</p>	<p>MM03a Manure disposal 1 star</p>	<p>MM03a entails that manure is not disposed of to a manure processor. Manure disposal is only permitted if it concerns farmer-farmer transport or disposal to private individuals. 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> <p>Due to the current phase-out of derogation in European manure legislation combined with other manure placement restrictions, the dairy farmer cannot place the same amount of manure on his own land or dispose of it through farmer-to-farmer transport or transfer to private individuals.</p> <p>The question is to allow manure transfer to a manure processor in 2026, provided that co-digestion is not used.</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals intends to accommodate BLL 1 star dairy farmers by allowing manure disposal in 2026 through farmer-farmer transport or disposal to private individuals, and additionally to a manure processor in 2026, provided that co-digestion is not used.</p> <p>As a result, criterion MM03a will be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: Manure may be disposed of to a manure processor.</i> <i>Interpretation: Manure disposal is permitted if it concerns farmer-farmer transport or disposal to private individuals. In the case of farmer-farmer transport, manure is transported by the participant directly to the recipient farmer with land (arable farmer/livestock farmer) within the Netherlands. Additionally, it is also permitted for manure to be disposed of to a manure processor in 2026, provided that co-digestion is not used. Manure may be disposed of to a mono-digester. In 2026 it is also permitted to dispose manure with intervention of a manure intermediary or trader, given the current state of the manure market.</i> <i>The farmer must be able to demonstrate where the manure has been disposed to.</i></p> <p>For 2027 and beyond, considering the many expected (political) developments in the dairy sector, it will be necessary to recalibrate what an appropriate method of manure disposal is for the coming years.</p> <p>This supplementary decision is valid until 31-12-2026.</p>
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<p>13-02-25</p>	<p>EK01 Electricity consumption and electricity generation</p> <p>1 star and 2 stars</p>	<p>As of 01-01-2025 (1 and 2 stars), 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. By 01-01-2030, the farm must generate all its own electricity (excluding dairy processing and private use) and must no longer buy electricity from the grid.</p> <p>It is indicated that not all livestock farmers are capable of generating sufficient electricity on their own. Is purchasing green electricity from local power producers through participation in a collective permitted? These power producers could be, for example, local businesses with solar panels which, through collective participation, supply green electricity (excess capacity) to the livestock farmer. This is typically facilitated by energy cooperatives or wind cooperatives.</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that if a farmer is not able to generate sufficient electricity, it is also permitted to receive surplus green electricity through a collective to meet criterion EK01. Electricity purchased outside the collective is considered purchased electricity.</p> <p>The farmer must demonstrate that they are a member/participant of the collective. A monthly invoice must be provided to demonstrate how much kWh of surplus green electricity the farmer has received from the collective.</p> <p>As a result, criterion EK01 will be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: As of 01-01-2025, 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 101-01-2030, the farm must generate all its own electricity (excluding dairy processing and private use) and must no longer buy electricity from the grid.</i></p> <p><i>Interpretation: Electricity purchased = electricity consumption minus electricity generated on the farm and/or minus electricity received through a collective for green electricity. Placing additional electricity meters can be used to demonstrate the percentage of energy consumption accounted for by the farm.</i></p> <p><i>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 describes how the farm intends to comply with the standard within three years by implementing 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.</i></p> <p><i>The farmer may consult an external energy consultant of their own choice</i></p>
<p>16-03-23</p>	<p>T02 Supply of cattle</p>	<p>Criterion T02 states that all cattle supplied to the dairy farm originate from farms that are certified as Better Life label Dairy cattle of at least 1 star. The criterion came into effect on 01-01-2023. However, in practice, this criterion is not yet workable. Must this criterion be complied with at the moment?</p>	<p>The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided that criterion T02 does not need to be complied with at the moment. This criterion will come into force after a transitional period that is still to be determined, at the moment that the criterion is achievable.</p>



18-05-26	Criterion: T02	Can the sanction (exclusion/critical) for this criterion be reduced?	<p>The exclusion/critical sanction is intended for very serious shortcomings, for example where animal abuse or fraud is involved. In practice, it has become clear that there are also criteria with this sanction for which exclusion/critical is not always an appropriate measure. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has decided to lower the sanction for these criteria. This applies to criterion T02.</p> <p>The new sanction for criterion T02 will be: recommendation.</p>
27-02-24	T05 Electric cattle prods	<p>The 'Electric cattle prods' criterion states that no electric cattle prods are used on the dairy farm and during the transport of cattle.</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>