

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
25-08-17	Spent laying hens	Can Better Life-certified laying hens also be used to produce BLL chicken when they are slaughtered?	Better Life-certified laying hen farms can sell spent BLL laying hens for the production of chicken meat. The chicken meat will receive the same number of stars as the eggs (as stated on the BLL certificate). The spent BLL laying hens must be slaughtered by a poultry abattoir approved by the BLLF. This is generally only possible at abattoirs that are specialised in slaughtering spent laying hens.
1-09-16	UIT06 Multistorey sheds	Are barn and free-range sheds for laying hens with a maximum of two storeys permitted only on existing Better Life farms, or also on new Better Life farms?	Barn and free-range sheds for laying hens with a maximum of two storeys are (always) exempt from the prohibition on multistorey sheds. The exemption applies to both existing and new participants. This is consistent with local legislation in The Netherlands (for instance, in Brabant (due diligence score) and Overijssel). Multistorey sheds are excluded from the Better Life label since the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals believes that animals should, in principle, be able to roam freely (be free-range). In multistorey sheds, the possibilities for creating these conditions are either non-existent or too limited. In addition, multistorey sheds are too closely associated with factory farming amongst the general public.
12-12-12	O01a Covered run	Must a covered run (BLL 1 star) always be covered?	Yes, that is part of the concept. Covering the run encourages the laying hens to go outside and improves the quality of the litter in the run (drier).
8-05-26	Criteria: O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H14a, UIT05, UIT06 and UIT07 (Laying hens 1 star)	Can the sanction (exclusion/critical) for these criteria be reduced?	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 O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H14a, UIT05, UIT06 and UIT07. The new sanction for criteria O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H14a, UIT05, UIT06 and UIT07 will be: suspension/major.

8-05-26	Criteria: O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H12 H14a, H22, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6 (Laying hens 2 stars)	Can the sanction (exclusion/critical) for these criteria be reduced?	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 O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H12 H14a, H22, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6. The new sanction for criteria O01a, O13, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05, H11, H12 H14a, H22, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6 will be: suspension/major.
7-08-26	O01b Day quarters (laying hens 3 stars)	The criteria specify that the surface area of the day quarters must be at least 100% of the surface area of the night quarters. Is it also permitted for part of this surface area to be provided at an elevated level?	Research indicates that providing part of the covered roaming areas at an elevated level has animal welfare benefits. Platforms provide shelter underneath and an elevated resting place on top of the platforms. This has also been tested in practice in 3-star houses, where the results were likewise positive. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has therefore decided to allow part of the area under this criterion to consist of platforms. The interpretation of criterion O01b will therefore be worded as follows: <i>Interpretation:</i> <i>The day quarters are a cold, covered roaming area with a fully roll up wall (option 1) or popholes (option 2) , which is directly connected to the barn to which all the laying hens have easy and unrestricted access. The day quarters are clearly lighter than the interior of the barn, has an outdoor climate and the run is protected against weather influences in a way that permits use even during bad weather (e.g. by installing windbreak/ventilation mesh).</i> <i>A non-conformity of up to 5% is only permitted for construction purposes. The day quarters can count towards in the usable area when calculating the stocking density.</i> <i>A maximum of 25% of the surface area of the day quarters may consist of elevated platforms that meet the following requirements:</i> <i>The platforms:</i> <i>-are no more than two levels high;</i> <i>-are at least 30 cm wide;</i> <i>-have a maximum slope of 8°;</i> <i>-provide at least 50 cm of unobstructed height above the entire surface area;</i> <i>-are made of natural materials;</i> <i>-do not allow manure to pass through.</i>

8-05-26	Criteria: O10, O13a, O13b, O17, O18e, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05a, H05b, H11, H12, H14a, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6 (Laying hens 3 stars)	Can the sanction (exclusion/critical) for these criteria be reduced?	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 O10, O13a, O13b, O17, O18e, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05a, H05b, H11, H12, H14a, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6. The new sanction for criteria O10, O13a, O13b, O17, O18e, V01, V05, A01, A03, A05, A06, H02, H04, H05a, H05b, H11, H12, H14a, UIT05, UIT06, UIT07 and VU6 will be: suspension/major.
9-04-26	O18b Number of system rows option 1 (planted edge option, Laying hens 3 stars)	The criterion of a maximum of one system row may be detrimental to animal welfare. The laying hens are unable to move upwards in a natural way, namely vertically. Could the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals indicate whether this criterion could be described in a way that is more consistent with the behaviour of the chicken?	The criterion of one system row indeed results in the animals having to move upwards through the aviary system by walking. Moreover, research has shown that with more than one system row, the animals still find their way to other parts of the barn or the outdoor run. The character of the chicken is decisive in how it uses the different parts of the barn, and the animals do not experience any negative effects from an additional system row. Two system rows are therefore also considered an acceptable housing system from an animal welfare perspective for the planted edge concept under 3 stars. As a result, criterion O18b will be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: A maximum of 2 system rows are present in the barn.</i> <i>Method of measurement: Verify and record whether a maximum of 2 system tiers are present in the barn.</i>

9-04-26	H20, H20a, H20b, H20c Access wall (planted edge option, BLL 3 stars)	The criteria for the access wall between the day and night quarters are not feasible in practice and often result in a poor barn climate with negative consequences for animal welfare. Could this be rephrased?	The criteria for the access wall were developed for a specific system and at a particular point in time, which indeed makes them not always widely applicable. Criterion H20 therefore requires a different formulation to ensure that ventilation and the barn climate remain positive for the laying hens, and that the day quarters genuinely have a different climate from the night quarters. Criterion H20 will therefore be formulated as follows: <i>Criterion: If there is a separation between the day and night quarters this is a wall or roll-up curtain.</i> <i>Interpretation: The roll-up curtain is open by 50 cm under normal weather conditions. If there is a wall between the day and night quarters and it contains openings, these must:</i> <i>1. be evenly distributed along the length of the wall;</i> <i>2. have a total length exceeding half of the wall length;</i> <i>3. be at least 40 cm high and at least 1 m wide per opening;</i> <i>4. at least 2 metres of openings must be provided for each 1000 laying hens.</i> <i>Method of measurement: Verify whether there is a wall or roll-up curtain between the day and night quarters. For a roll-up curtain, verify and record whether it is open by 50 cm under normal weather conditions. For a wall, verify and record whether it complies with the specified conditions.</i> With this amendment to criterion H20, criteria H20a, H20b and H20c will no longer apply.
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7-08-26	O18e Surface area of planted edge (Laying hens 3 stars)	The criteria specify that the surface area of the planted edge available to the laying hens is 360 cm ² per hen. Is it also permitted for part of this surface area to be provided at an elevated level?	Research indicates that providing part of the usable area at an elevated level has animal welfare benefits. Platforms provide shelter underneath and an elevated resting place on top of the platforms. This has also been tested in practice in 3-star houses, where the results were likewise positive. The Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals has therefore decided to allow part of the area under this criterion to consist of platforms. The interpretation of criterion O18e will therefore be worded as follows: <i>Interpretation:</i> <i>If the planted edge is covered (in accordance with the specifications set out in criterion O18h) and is therefore also accessible during normal access hours in poor weather and during periods of compulsory indoor confinement, a maximum of 25% of the surface area of the planted edge may consist of platforms. The platforms:</i> -are no more than two levels high; -are at least 30 cm wide; -have a maximum slope of 8°; -provide at least 50 cm of unobstructed height above the entire surface area; -are made of natural materials; -do not allow manure to pass through.
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