

Global Animal Partnership's 5-Step™ Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Chickens Raised for Meat



About the 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Program

The 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating program, the signature initiative of Global Animal Partnership, assesses the level of welfare of animals on-farm and during transport. Standards for additional components of production, such as breeding and slaughter, will be developed in the future.

Through its very design as a multi-tiered program, 5-Step promotes continuous improvement in animal agriculture; engages a broad spectrum of producers, rather than a minority segment of the agricultural community; allows for wider product selection for greater consumer options; provides more detailed information about the level of welfare of farm animals; and better informs consumers about the production systems they may choose to support.

Each set of tiered standards—from Step 1 to Step 5+—has its own requirements that must be met before certification to that particular Step level is assigned. As the standard-setter, Global Animal Partnership does not conduct audits nor make Step-rating certification decisions. Authorized, third-party certification companies, with trained and ratified auditors, perform the audits and issue 15-month Step certificates, as appropriate. Producers, consumers, and retailers alike can therefore be assured that Step ratings are fair, accurate, and free of conflict of interest.

About the 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Chickens Raised for Meat

This version of the 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Chickens Raised for Meat was issued on October 1, 2012, and is effective April 1, 2013, replacing all previous versions. Any operations audited on or after April 1, 2013, including those undergoing re-certification on or after April 1, 2013, will be audited to this version. The six-month implementation period from issue date to effective date enables producers, both new to the 5-Step program and those entering renewal certification, time to adjust their management practices and protocols as necessary. The development process included guidance from animal welfare scientific experts and producers, public comment, and review and approval by the Global Animal Partnership Board of Directors. After three years, the standards will be reviewed and revised through a process that again involves expert guidance from scientists and producers, and public comment, before the draft revision is presented to the Board of Directors for final review and approval.

Due to industry practices and related legislation in the European Union, operations in EU Member Countries are not eligible to achieve certification to Step 1 and may only be certified to Step 2 through Step 5+.

About Global Animal Partnership

Global Animal Partnership, a nonprofit charitable organization founded in 2008, brings together farmers, scientists, ranchers, retailers, and animal advocates—a diverse group with the common goal of wanting to improve the welfare of animals in agriculture.

For more information, contact us at info@globalanimalpartnership.org or 877 GAP 5 Step (+1.202.540.9880 if calling from outside the United States).

Program Overview

Generally, chickens raised in Step 1 systems live in a permanent housing structure and are provided the space to express natural behavior. In Step 2, they live in an enriched indoor environment. Chickens in Step 3 systems have seasonal access to the outdoors with provisions that encourage ranging and foraging. In Step 4, they live continuously in an enhanced outdoor environment during daylight hours, with access to housing; when they may be at-risk outdoors due to climatic conditions, the chickens have continuous access to a covered outdoor area with foraging material and natural light. In Step 5 and Step 5+, chickens live continuously outdoors in an enhanced environment during daylight hours and may only be housed during extreme weather conditions. At Step 5+, chickens spend their lives from placement on a single farm.

Standards applicable to a Step level are designated with a ● symbol in the corresponding Step column.

In the example below, the standard is required for each Step level, Step 1 through Step 5+:

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Handling							
3.8	Chickens must be handled in a manner that does not cause injury.	●	●	●	●	●	●

In this example, the standard is required only for Step 3 and Step 4:

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Indoor Enrichments							
5.13	The indoor environment must contain at least 2 different types of enrichments that are used by the chickens.			●	●		

The ⓘ symbol prefaces additional information provided to aid in the understanding of the standard:

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Cage Systems							
5.1	All cage systems are prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	ⓘ [5.1]: A cage is a fully enclosed structure made of mesh, bars, or wires that prevents full range of motion and the ability to express natural behavior, such as roosting, foraging, and exercising (e.g., battery cage, colony cage). Cages do not include fenced-in porches and outdoor enclosures provided they (1) allow for full range of motion and the ability to express natural behavior, and (2) are at least 6 ft (1.8 m) in height. Transport containers are also excluded from the definition of cages.						

Each of the following is applicable to each operation applying for certification to Global Animal Partnership's 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating program for chickens.

I. General

- a. The standards in this document are requirements.
- b. Standards for breeding and slaughter are not included in this document and will be developed in the future.
- c. Unless otherwise specified, standards in this document pertain to chickens of any age.
- d. The term "flock" is defined as a segregated group of chickens, whether in a house, on a floor of a multi-level house, or in an outdoor area.
- e. The term "operation" is defined as (i) a single farm or ranch, or (ii) a single entity with multiple locations all under the same ownership and management. A producer group, co-operative, or other affiliated entity that markets birds raised by contract growers does not meet the definition of an operation.
- f. In order to achieve certification to a particular Step rating, the operation must meet all applicable standards. For example, standards specified for Step 3 must be met in order to become certified to Step 3.
- g. Certification is for a 15-month period, which allows for animals and operations to be assessed seasonally.
- h. Each operation must follow a chain of custody program that is also maintained by the processor and any further processor. The chain of custody program can be developed and implemented by an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity) or created with the aid of external consultation.
- i. No standard in this document supersedes governmental regulations or laws, whether local, regional, state, provincial, territorial, federal, national, or other.

2. Applications

- a. Each operation is required to submit a new, completed 5-Step application for each certification cycle.
- b. In its 5-Step application, each operation must list its home site and any additional properties or locations where chickens are raised.
- c. Applications, as well as this document, can be downloaded at www.globalanimalpartnership.org/the-5-step-program/our-standards/ or by contacting Global Animal Partnership.

3. Audit and Certification

- a. Each operation involved in the production of chickens to be marketed as Step-rated must undergo an on-site audit prior to receiving a certification decision and, if appropriate, Step certificate.
- b. Each operation must be audited once every certification cycle.
- c. Each operation must have chickens on-site at the time of audit.
- d. If the operation has only 1 location and that 1 location has more than 1 house, not all houses must have chickens in them at the time of the on-site audit.
- e. If the operation has more than 1 location, not all locations must have chickens present at the time of the on-site audit.
- f. If an operation has 1 to 4 flocks on a site, then each flock will be inspected by the auditor.
- g. If an operation has more than 4 flocks on a site, then either 4 flocks or half of the flocks on site, whichever number is higher, will be inspected by the auditor.
- h. At the time of the on-site audit, the person(s) responsible for managing the operation and/or an animal caretaker must be present.
- i. Each operation applying for 5-Step certification is responsible for ensuring that all required records and documents are available, and that all applicable standards are met, including actions that may occur at the hatchery (e.g., chick shipment) or may be contracted or managed by another entity (e.g., catching and loading, transport, rodent control).

- j. All applicable standards, including those that may be controlled or managed by, or contracted to, another (e.g., the hatchery; a catching and loading crew; a transporter; a producer group, co-operative, or marketing entity; a processing plant), will be assessed for compliance by the certification company and incorporated into its overall assessment of the operation prior to the final Step determination.
- k. Catching and loading must be observed and audited by the certification company at least once each certification cycle. If the operation markets birds through an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity) that controls catching and loading for multiple operations, including the operation applying for 5-Step certification, the certification company is permitted to observe and audit the catching and loading process for the group rather than on the applicant's own operation, provided the assessment is performed at least once per certification cycle.
- l. An operation that markets its own birds and has only 1 location must have at least 1 flock inspected when chickens are within 10 days of slaughter.
- m. For an operation that markets its own birds and has more than 1 location:
 - i. approximately 25% of the locations must have at least 1 flock inspected when chickens are within 10 days of slaughter
 - ii. the remaining locations can be inspected when the chickens are at any age.
- n. For operations that market birds through an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity), rather than under the operation's own name or brand:
 - i. approximately 25% of those operations must have at least 1 flock inspected when chickens are within 10 days of slaughter
 - ii. the remaining operations can be inspected when the chickens are at any age.
- o. For operations that raise chickens seasonally, consideration for the requirements of 3.m.i, 3.m.ii, 3.n.i, and 3.n.ii will be given during initial certification. (Seasonal production is defined as raising chickens (1) specifically and only for holiday sales and/or (2) only during certain weather conditions (e.g., flocks raised outdoors only from April to October.)
- p. Auditors do not make Step-rating determinations nor provide consultative service to producers on meeting standards requirements. Step-rating determinations are made by reviewers or other agents of authorized certification companies. Producer guidance is offered by Global Animal Partnership or others independent of conducting the audit and/or making the Step-rating determination.
- q. Upon Step determination, Global Animal Partnership will receive from the certification company a copy of the 5-Step certificate, any affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity), any brand names that Step-rated products will be marketed under, and aggregate numbers of animals raised according to the 5-Step standards.

4. Step Ratings

- a. Each Step level—Step 1 through Step 5+—has its own requirements that must be met to be certified to that level. If an operation, for example, meets 100% of the requirements for Step 3, but also reaches some Step 4 requirements, the 5-Step certification will be for Step 3.
- b. If an operation markets chickens through an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity), rather than under the operation's own name or brand, and if the group does not segregate product from different operations, the lowest Step rating achieved by the members of that group will be the ultimate Step rating assigned to the products marketed by the group as a whole. For example, 10 farms owned by different operators raise chickens marketed under a single name, and product is not segregated according to farm. Of those 10 farms, 1 farm is certified to Step 1, 3 farms to Step 2, 4 farms to Step 3, and 2 farms to Step 5. Since the group does not segregate product, the final product marketed under that single name will be labeled as Step 1.
- c. If chickens to be marketed as Step-rated are not raised on a single operation and different stages of production are conducted by different operations, each operation must submit a completed 5-Step application and be audited and certified, and the lowest Step rating achieved will be assigned to the marketed product. For example, chicks are brooded at Farm A, which sells the birds to Farm B for grow-out. Farm A achieves a rating of Step 2, and Farm B is certified to Step 3. The final product will be labeled as Step 2.

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PLANS, PROTOCOLS, PROCEDURES, AND TRAINING

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Farm and Animal Health Plan							
1.1	<p>Each operation must have a written plan describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. an overview of the operation, including size, type/stage of production, location, and typical climatic conditions b. all commercially raised species and breed(s)/strain(s), including approximate numbers and stocking densities of each species on-farm c. operational practices and policies for chicken production: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. provision for daily feed and water, including ration details ii. health programs (e.g., supplementation, vaccination and other preventative, maintenance and/or health-promoting practices) iii. routine husbandry procedures iv. brooding v. care of sick and/or injured chickens, including on-farm euthanasia policies d. management of outdoor areas, if applicable to production system e. rodent, wild bird, and predator control practices f. emergency procedures, including those for natural disasters, fire, water shut off, and, if applicable, power failure g. biosecurity procedures and protocols. 						
	<p>i [1.1]: <i>The Farm and Animal Health Plan can be provided by an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity) or created with the aid of external consultation (e.g., extension agents, veterinarians, peers), but must include information specific and relevant to the operation applying for 5-Step certification. See standard 10.4 for documentation requirements.</i></p>						
Biosecurity Procedures and Protocols							
1.2	<p>Each operation must have an implemented biosecurity program that covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. procedures for bringing any chickens onto the site, including new chicks and any returning birds (e.g., show birds) b. procedures and policies for employees (e.g., dress code and footwear requirements, policies concerning pets and/or the keeping of chickens or other birds off-site) c. procedures and policies for visitors to the operation (e.g., provision of foot baths, booties, and protective clothing; minimizing visitors) d. feed trucks and equipment delivery to the operation e. shared borders with neighboring operations, if applicable f. clean-out procedures of housing units between flocks. 						

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Back-Up / Alternative Power Supply							
1.3	<p>If power is essential to the operation of heating, cooling, ventilation, watering, and/or feeding systems, each operation must have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a back-up/alternative power supply and/or fail-safe device in working condition b. a method of notification in the event of power failure. 	•	•	•	•	•	•
Training							
1.4	<p>Each operation must provide training to all chicken care-givers and/or managers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is written and/or hands-on b. is presented in all necessary languages c. includes instruction on recognizing signs of normal and abnormal chicken behavior d. describes all aspects of the individual's responsibilities e. describes emergency procedures f. is provided prior to the individual's handling of any chickens on the operation g. covers all requirements of this version of the 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Standards for Chickens Raised for Meat h. is on-going as necessary and, at a minimum, when any changes affecting the care and management of chickens are implemented. 	•	•	•	•	•	•
<p>i [1.4]: See standard 10.10 for documentation requirements.</p>							

ANIMAL SOURCE AND HEALTH

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Source / Breed / Lines							
	<p>i <i>Rapid growth rate has significant impacts on the welfare, including health, of chickens. As some measures that have been practiced to slow growth can negatively impact the animals (e.g., providing low-nutrient feed) and since birds do not gain weight linearly, thresholds for maximum daily weight gains may not be an effective measure. It is the intention of Global Animal Partnership to continue to research and explore means by which to address the current high growth rates achieved in much of chicken production, as well as develop robust standards for breeding birds and genetic selection priorities.</i></p>						
2.1	Intentional use of genetically engineered or cloned chickens, or their progeny, is prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.2	Breeds / lines must be chosen for good leg health and for low levels of mortality.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	i [2.2]: See related standards 3.14.1 to 3.14.3, 3.16.1 to 3.16.3, 3.17.1 to 3.17.3, and 3.18.						
2.3	Breeds / lines must be chosen for the ability to range and for good immune systems.				•	•	•
	i [2.3]: See related standards 3.14.3, 3.16.3, 3.17.2, 3.17.3, and 3.18.						
2.4	Breeds / lines must be able to perch from 10 days of age throughout their lives.					•	•
	i [2.4]: See related standards 5.22 and 6.11.						
Medication							
	i See standards 10.11 and 10.12 for documentation requirements.						
2.5	Sub-therapeutic use of antibiotics, ionophores, beta agonists, and/or sulfa drugs is prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.6	Off-label / extra-label use of medicines is prohibited unless prescribed or advised by a veterinarian.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.7	Off-label / extra-label medicines must be identified with the prescribing veterinarian's label affixed over the manufacturer's label and detailing the prescribed method of usage, duration of administration, and withholding time, if any.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.8	Administration of expired medication is prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Treatment							
	i See standards 10.11 and 10.12 for documentation requirements.						
2.9	Sick or injured chickens must be promptly treated or euthanized according to standards 2.12 to 2.16.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.10	Veterinarian-prescribed treatments must be administered according to veterinarian guidance.	•	•	•	•	•	•
2.11	If sick or injured chickens are separated from the flock for treatment, they must be kept in designated pens or other segregated areas that meet the space requirements and housing conditions detailed in the HOUSING section.	•	•	•	•	•	•

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
On-Farm Euthanasia							
2.12	Euthanasia must be performed by a veterinarian or other trained person.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	📌 [2.12]: Euthanasia will not be required to be observed during audit.						
2.13	Euthanasia must cause rapid and irreversible insensibility immediately followed by death.	●	●	●	●	●	●
2.14	The person performing euthanasia must remain with the chicken(s) until death is evident.	●	●	●	●	●	●
2.15	The following euthanasia methods are permitted:						
	a. penetrating and non-penetrating captive bolt pistols / captive bolt guns used to the manufacturer's specifications						
	b. manual (non-mechanical) cervical dislocation	●	●	●	●	●	●
	c. overdose of injectable anesthetics, including barbiturates and barbituric acid derivatives						
	d. gas stunning and killing using (i) two-phase (also known as two-stage) carbon dioxide, (ii) argon, (iii) nitrogen, or (iv) a mixture of these gases.						
	📌 [2.15]: If an operation uses a method of euthanasia not listed above, written approval from Global Animal Partnership must be received prior to use in order to meet this standard. If chickens are to be euthanized by manual (non-mechanical) cervical dislocation, Global Animal Partnership encourages an effective pre-stun.						
2.16	All euthanized chickens must be removed from housing and/or outdoor areas in use.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	📌 [2.16]: It is the responsibility of the operation to dispose of dead animals according to local, state, provincial, territorial, and/or federal or national regulations.						

ANIMAL CARE AND MANAGEMENT

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Daily Flock Management							
3.1	Each flock must be observed and monitored at least twice daily.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [3.1]: See standards 10.13 to 10.17 for records requirements.						
3.2	Any dead chickens observed must be removed from housing and/or outdoor areas in use.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [3.2]: It is the responsibility of the operation to dispose of dead animals according to local, state, provincial, territorial, and/or federal or national regulations.						
Hazard Management							
3.3	Equipment, fittings, openings, protrusions, housing, outdoor areas, fences, and any other structures must be maintained to prevent injury.	•	•	•	•	•	•
3.4	Chickens must be kept from contact with any potentially toxic substances (e.g., those used for maintenance, sanitation, cleaning, insect and rodent control).	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chicks and Brooding							
	📌 See standards 4.3 and 4.7 for water and feed requirements, standards 8.1 to 8.6 for chick transport requirements, and standards 10.7 to 10.9 for records and documentation requirements.						
3.5	Chicks must be delivered to the operation within 48 hours of removal from the hatcher.	•	•	•	•	•	•
3.6	Placement of chicks must begin within 2 hours of delivery to the operation.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [3.6]: Chick delivery boxes should be kept low to the ground and tipped in a manner that does not cause injury during unloading.						
3.7	Houses must be pre-warmed prior to chick arrival to accommodate their thermal needs.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [3.7]: At chick height, a minimum temperature of 90°F (32°C) is recommended, but chick behavior should be the ultimate determinant of their thermal comfort.						
Handling							
3.8	Chickens must be handled in a manner that does not cause injury.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Physical Alterations							
3.9	All physical alterations are prohibited, including, but not limited to:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. beak trimming / beak conditioning b. dubbing c. caponization d. de-spurring e. toe trimming / toe clipping / de-toeing / toe conditioning. 	•	•	•	•	•	•

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Thermal Comfort							
3.10	The thermal comfort of chickens must be maintained at all times through management and the provision of supplemental heating and/or cooling, as necessary.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Feather Pecking							
3.11	Any evidence of feather pecking must be promptly addressed and managed. i [3.11]: See standard 10.14 for records requirements.	•	•	•	•	•	•
3.12	The use of goggles, blinkers, contact lenses, or any other artificial devices to control feather pecking is prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Footpad Dermatitis							
3.13	Each operation must have a footpad dermatitis monitoring program that includes a random sampling of 100 feet from 100 chickens in each flock (i.e., 1 foot from 100 chickens per flock). i [3.13]: The monitoring program can be implemented at the operation during the final week prior to slaughter and/or the processing plant, but must be implemented for each flock. See Appendix I: Identifying and Scoring Footpad Dermatitis for charts, scoring protocol, and specification on calculating the flock's total footpad dermatitis sum, and standard 10.18 for records requirements.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	If the incidence of footpad dermatitis found during random sampling of 100 feet per flock exceeds the total footpad dermatitis sums detailed below, an intervention plan that addresses, at a minimum, feed composition, litter management, humidity control, and stocking density must be implemented immediately to reduce levels in subsequent flocks: i See standard 10.19 for documentation requirements of any intervention plans that are implemented. As per the scoring and calculation protocol detailed in Appendix I, the maximum total footpad dermatitis sum for a flock is 200 points.						
3.14.1	Not to exceed a total sum of 20	•					
3.14.2	Not to exceed a total sum of 15		•				
3.14.3	Not to exceed a total sum of 10.			•	•	•	•
Lameness							
3.15	Lameness evaluations must be conducted on 100 chickens from each flock on the operation during the final week prior to slaughter. i [3.15]: See Appendix II: 3-Category Lameness Evaluation for scoring protocol and specification on calculating the flock's total lameness sum, and standard 10.20 for records requirements.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Lameness determined during the evaluation conducted during the final week prior to slaughter must not exceed the total lameness sums detailed below: i As per the scoring and calculation protocol detailed in Appendix II, the maximum total lameness sum for a flock is 200 points.						
3.16.1	Not to exceed a total sum of 20	•					
3.16.2	Not to exceed a total sum of 15		•				
3.16.3	Not to exceed a total sum of 10.			•	•	•	•

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Mortality							
	If flock mortality for chickens 7 days and older, and excluding loss from predators, exceeds the percentages below, an intervention plan that addresses, at a minimum, potential cause(s), stocking density, health, environment, lighting, and management factors must be implemented immediately to reduce levels in the existing and subsequent flocks:						
	① <i>Flock mortality numbers do not include chickens who are culled. See standard 10.15 for records requirements and standard 10.21 for documentation requirements of any intervention plans that are implemented.</i>						
3.17.1	Not to exceed 0.5% in a 24-hour period	•	•	•			
3.17.2	Not to exceed 0.35% in a 24-hour period				•		
3.17.3	Not to exceed 0.25% in a 24-hour period.					•	•
Culling							
	Any chickens meeting the following criteria must be culled according to acceptable euthanasia methods:						
	a. runts						
	b. exhibiting a lameness score of 2						
	c. sick or injured without chance for recovery						
	d. reluctant or unable to stand on both feet, excluding chickens who choose not to move in hot temperatures						
	e. reluctant or unable to move, excluding chickens who choose not to move in hot temperatures.						
3.18		•	•	•	•	•	•
	① [3.18]: See Appendix II: 3-Category Lameness Evaluation for details on scoring lameness, standards 2.12 to 2.16 for euthanasia requirements, and standard 10.16 for records requirements.						
Other Commercially Raised Animals on the Operation							
3.19	All species of animals raised commercially on the operation (for which 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Standards exist) must be raised and handled according to Step 1 standards or higher.					•	•
Domestic Animals on the Operation							
	All domestic animals on the operation must be provided with:						
	a. food and water on a daily basis, as evidenced by healthy body condition score						
	b. surroundings that do not cause them injury						
	c. an environment that allows for freedom of movement and exercise						
	d. a comfortable resting area that provides protection from temperature extremes						
	e. veterinary attention if required.						
3.20						•	•
	① [3.20]: Domestic animals include dogs, cats, horses, or any other species kept for non-commercial purposes, whether as pets or working animals.						
3.21	There must be no obvious signs of neglect or abuse of any domestic animals on the operation.	•	•	•	•	•	•

FEED AND WATER

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Water Availability							
4.1	All chickens must have continuous access to drinking water.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [4.1]: See related standard 7.3.						
4.2	Waterers must be free of debris.	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.3	Water must be available for brooding chicks within any areas with supplemental heat.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Feeding Requirements							
4.4	All chickens must have <i>ad-libitum</i> access to feed during daylight hours.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	📌 [4.4]: See related standard 7.4.						
4.5	Feeders must be designed and distributed to allow chickens to eat without restriction.	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.6	Chickens fed whole grains and/or given outdoor access must be provided with insoluble grit.	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.7	Feed must be available for chicks being brooded within any areas with supplemental heat.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Feed Hygiene							
4.8	Feed in storage and in feeders must be uncompromised in quality:						
	a. free from mold						
	b. free from mildew						
	c. free from rodent contamination						
	d. free from insect infestation	•	•	•	•	•	•
	e. does not have excessive fines, if pelleted						
	f. not stale						
	g. not rancid.						
4.9	Feeders must be free of debris.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Additives and Ingredients in Feed or Water							
	📌 See standard 10.22 for documentation requirements.						
4.10	Mammalian by-products are prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.11	Avian by-products, including eggs, are prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
4.12	Fish by-products are prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•

HOUSING

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Cage Systems							
5.1	All cage systems are prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.1]: A cage is a fully enclosed structure made of mesh, bars, or wires that prevents full range of motion and the ability to express natural behavior, such as roosting, foraging, and exercising (e.g., battery cage, colony cage). Cages do not include fenced-in porches and outdoor enclosures provided they (1) allow for full range of motion and the ability to express natural behavior, and (2) are at least 6 ft (1.8 m) in height. Transport containers are also excluded from the definition of cages.						
Access							
5.2	All chickens must have continuous access to housing.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.2]: Structures that provide protection from the elements and predation, whether mobile or permanent, meet this standard.						
Litter and Flooring							
5.3	Floors of all houses, including mobile houses that are stationary for more than 3 days, must be covered with non-toxic, fibrous, and friable litter.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.3]: Caked litter, whether wet or dry, in areas directly under water lines does not violate this standard if it does not exceed 12 inches (30 cm) in width.						
5.4	Litter must be of quality and quantity to: a. provide a comfortable environment b. allow for dust-bathing behavior.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.4]: At the time of audit, if litter quality and/or quantity are found to be insufficient, 5-Step auditors will perform an assessment of soiled feathers as an additional indicator of litter conditions. See Appendix III: Soiled Feather Assessment.						
5.5	Slatted and/or wire floors are prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Air Quality							
5.6	Air quality must be assessed at least once each day, using calibrated meters or testing strips, or sensory evaluation.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.6]: See standard 10.17 for records requirements and Appendix IV: Sensory Evaluation of Air Quality.						
5.7	If air quality levels exceed 10 mg/m ³ for dust and 20 ppm for ammonia (if assessed with meters or strips) or score '2' or higher according to Appendix IV: Sensory Evaluation of Air Quality (if assessed using sensory evaluation), an intervention plan designed to improve air quality must be implemented immediately.	●	●	●	●	●	●
	i [5.7]: See standard 10.23 for documentation requirements of any intervention plans that are implemented.						

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Lighting							
	<p>i <i>Operations are strongly encouraged to provide natural light in all housing, whether permanent or mobile.</i></p>						
5.8	Light intensity in housing during daylight hours, either from artificial or natural light, must be at least 20 lux (2 foot candles).	•	•	•	•	•	•
	By day 3 after placement (except when raised under natural lighting conditions and dark periods are shorter), chickens must be provided with:						
5.9.1	A daily minimum of 6 hours of continuous darkness throughout their lives	•	•				
5.9.2	A daily minimum of 8 hours of continuous darkness throughout their lives.			•	•	•	•
	<p>i <i>[5.9.1 to 5.9.2]: Global Animal Partnership strongly encourages chickens to be provided with the above daily minimum of continuous darkness from placement.</i></p>						
Space Requirements							
5.10	Chickens must have enough space to express natural behavior, including standing, turning around, and preening, without touching another chicken.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Stocking density, calculated based on the average weight of all chickens per flock per area at the time of catching and loading, must not exceed:						
	for birds placed April 1, 2013, to September 30, 2014:	for birds placed on or after October 1, 2014:					
5.11.1	7.5 lb/ft ² (36.6 kg/m ²)	•					
5.11.2	7 lb/ft ² (34 kg/m ²)		•				
5.11.3	6.5 lb/ft ² (32 kg/m ²)			•			
5.11.4	6 lb/ft ² (29 kg/m ²)				•		
5.11.5	5.5 lb/ft ² (27 kg/m ²) if chickens are confined in housing at night without access to the outdoors.					•	•
	<p>i <i>[5.11.5]: This standard is <u>not</u> required for operations that do <u>not</u> confine chickens in housing at night.</i></p>						
	<p>i <i>[5.11.1 to 5.11.5]: Stocking density is calculated as follows:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">[(total number of chickens per flock per area) multiplied by (average final liveweight of the flock)] and divided by the area</p> <p><i>For example: In a 10,000 ft² (929 m²) house, a flock of 12,000 birds is raised to an average weight of 5.5 lb (2.5 kg) at the time of catching. The stocking density in lb/ft² for the flock is (12,000 x 5.5 lb) / 10,000 ft², to equal 6.6 lb/ft²; the stocking density in kg/m² for the flock is (12,000 x 2.5 kg) / 929 m², to equal 32.3 kg/m².</i></p>						
Indoor Enrichments							
	<p>i <i>Enrichments are materials that are provided to chickens to add complexity to their environment and encourage the expression of natural behavior, such as foraging, without losing their novelty. Examples include, but are not limited to, bales of straw or hay, raised platforms, provision of forages or brassicas, and scattered grains. Perches, dust-baths, and litter are not considered enrichments. (See standards 5.22 and 6.11 for indoor and outdoor perch requirements for Step 5 and Step 5+, and standards 5.3 and 5.4 for litter requirements.) Items that quickly lose their novelty and/or go unused by the chickens, such as pipes and PVC tubing, are not considered acceptable enrichments.</i></p>						
5.12	The indoor environment must contain at least 1 type of enrichment that is used by the chickens.		•				

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Indoor Enrichments <i>continued</i>							
5.13	The indoor environment must contain at least 2 different types of enrichments that are used by the chickens.			•	•		
	i [5.13]: <i>As chickens raised in Step 5 and Step 5+ systems may only be housed at night and during extreme weather conditions, indoor enrichments are not applicable.</i>						
5.14	Indoor enrichments must be provided by the time the chicks are 10 days old.		•	•	•		
5.15	Indoor enrichments must be maintained throughout the life of the chickens.		•	•	•		
5.16	For every 1,000 ft ² (93 m ²) of indoor space, there must be a minimum of 1 enrichment.		•	•	•		
5.17	For houses that are smaller than 1,000 ft ² (93 m ²), there must be a minimum of 2 enrichments.		•				
5.18	For houses that are smaller than 1,000 ft ² (93 m ²), there must be a minimum of 2 different types of enrichments.			•	•		
5.19	Indoor enrichments must be placed throughout the house.		•	•	•		
5.20	Blinds must be provided by the time the chicks are 10 days old.		•	•	•		
	i [5.20]: <i>Blinds are vertical barriers or screens that chickens can use to hide or isolate themselves from aggressive flock mates. Examples include, but are not limited to, hanging screens and bales of straw or hay. Blinds that are dual-purpose—e.g., a straw bale that serves as an isolating barrier and also to encourage pecking and foraging—also qualify as an enrichment.</i>						
5.21	Blinds must be maintained throughout the life of the chickens.		•	•	•		
Perches							
5.22	If chickens are housed at night, perches must be provided in the housing structures at a minimum of 7 in (18 cm) of perch space per chicken to enable all birds to perch simultaneously.					•	•
	i [5.22]: <i>Perches are to be elevated off the floor, be easily used by the chickens, and positioned at heights to allow for use by birds from an early age throughout their lives.</i>						

OUTDOOR CONDITIONS

① Outdoor areas can include pastures, rangelands, lots, cover crop areas, woodlands, and harvested crop areas. Requirements for specific Step level designations are detailed below.

① Movable chicken coops / huts without floors (also commonly known as chicken tractors and arks) that confine birds and only allow them to range within the unit can only qualify as meeting the Outdoor Conditions requirements of Step 3 through Step 5+ if all standards are met (e.g., provisions and space allowance) for that particular Step level. Additionally, the Step-specific Housing requirements must also be met. If the mobile confinement structure does not meet all of the requirements in both the Housing and Outdoor Conditions sections for a particular Step level (e.g., Step 3, Step 5), the highest Step rating possible to achieve is Step 2.

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Access							
	① Operations are strongly encouraged to provide chickens access to the outdoors from the youngest age possible and for as much of their lives as possible.						
6.1	All chickens from 4 weeks of age must be given continuous access to the outdoors during daylight hours if climatic conditions do not pose a welfare risk.			•	•		
6.2	All chickens from 4 weeks of age must be given continuous access to the outdoors during daylight hours except during extreme weather conditions.					•	•
	① [6.2]: Chickens in Step 5 and Step 5+ systems may only be housed during extreme weather conditions (e.g., tornadoes, hurricanes, monsoons, blizzards, floods) that necessarily jeopardize their welfare. Seasonal housing due to inclement climatic conditions is prohibited.						
6.3	Any chickens slaughtered before 28 days of age must have access to the outdoors during daylight hours for a minimum of 2 weeks.			•	•	•	•
	① [6.3]: See standard 10.24 for documentation requirements.						
6.4	Openings from the house, whether stationary or mobile, must allow chickens free access to the outdoors during daylight hours.			•	•	•	•
	① [6.4]: As houses are constructed in a variety of designs and dimensions, this standard does not designate a minimum number of access points or the dimensions of each opening. Rather, it requires that houses be constructed with sufficient entry / exit points so that chickens are readily able to access the outdoors. A house may have several smaller openings spaced along one or more walls (e.g., pop holes) or a single large opening (e.g., a door or wall segment).						
Ground Conditions							
6.5	At least 25% of each occupied outdoor area must be covered with vegetation and/or forage.			•			
	① [6.5]: This standard can be met by placing a variety of natural material(s) in the outdoor area (e.g., bushes, cover crops, wood chips, and cut or harvested vegetation and/or forages, such as alfalfa hay). Litter does not meet the standard.						

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Ground Conditions <i>continued</i>							
6.6	At least 50% of each occupied outdoor area must be covered with vegetation and/or forage.				•		
	<i>📌 [6.6]: For stationary houses, the first 10 ft (3 m) immediately outside of the house is excluded from this calculation. This standard can be met by placing a variety of natural material(s) in the outdoor area (e.g., bushes, cover crops, wood chips, and cut or harvested vegetation and/or forages, such as alfalfa hay). Litter does not meet the standard.</i>						
6.7	At least 75% of each occupied outdoor area must be covered with vegetation and/or forage.					•	•
	<i>📌 [6.7]: For stationary houses, the first 10 ft (3 m) immediately outside of the house is excluded from this calculation. This standard can be met by placing a variety of natural material(s) in the outdoor area (e.g., bushes, cover crops, and wood chips). Litter does not meet the standard. This standard also cannot be met by placing cut or harvested vegetation and/or forages, such as alfalfa hay, in the outdoor area.</i>						
6.8	Each flock must be placed on land that is managed and maintained to minimize parasite and disease risk.			•	•	•	•
	<i>📌 [6.8]: Outdoor areas should be used in rotation and rested between flocks.</i>						
Provisions							
6.9	Each occupied outdoor area must contain features that encourage the chickens to range.			•	•	•	•
	<i>📌 [6.9]: Examples include, but are not limited to, bushes, shrubs, shade cloth, A-frame structures, and perches. The house, whether stationary or mobile, and any structures attached to the house do not qualify as meeting the requirement of this standard. The features required by this standard are in addition to the vegetation and/or forage required in standards 6.5 to 6.7. The provisions should be dispersed throughout the outdoor area to encourage roaming and foraging.</i>						
6.10	Shade must be provided to cover all chickens in each occupied outdoor area.			•	•	•	•
	<i>📌 [6.10]: Shade can be provided through natural or artificial means, such as trees, shrubs, shade cloth, and structures. Shade can be provided in one or more areas and must be able to cover all birds who are in the outdoor area at one time. "Shade" provided under the roof of the house or a covered outdoor area used for Step 4 production during inclement weather does not qualify.</i>						
6.11	If chickens are <u>not</u> housed at night, each occupied outdoor area must contain perches at a minimum of 7 in (18 cm) of perch space per chicken to enable all birds to perch simultaneously.					•	•
	<i>📌 [6.11]: Perches are to be elevated off the ground, be easily used by the chickens, and positioned at heights to allow for use by birds from an early age throughout their lives.</i>						
Space Requirements							
<i>📌 The ground conditions requirements listed above for Step 4 through Step 5+ operations, along with geographical, climactic, and topical conditions, directly influence land and animal management. As such, there is no outdoor space requirement for these Step levels.</i>							
6.12	The outdoor area must be equal to or greater than 25% of the total indoor floor space of the house.			•			

STANDARD	Step Level					
	1	2	3	4	5	5+
Covered Outdoor Areas						
	<p>i <i>Step 4 requires chickens to have continuous access to covered outdoor areas during climatic conditions posing a risk to their welfare. However, not all operations may need covered outdoor areas due to typical climatic conditions in their regions, production schedules, or other. The standards in this section are applicable for any covered outdoor areas, but operations in regions where climatic conditions do not typically prevent birds from having regular outdoor access will not fail the requirements by not constructing them.</i></p>					
6.13	<p>If outdoor climatic conditions pose a welfare risk to chickens requiring them to be housed, all chickens must have continuous access to a covered outdoor area that is a minimum of 25% of the total floor space of the house during daylight hours from 4 weeks of age.</p>					
6.14	<p>Materials that encourage foraging behavior must be provided.</p>					
	<p>i [6.14]: <i>Materials that encourage foraging behavior include, but are not limited to, whole grains, hay, and straw.</i></p>					
	<p>At least 2 different types of enrichments that are used by the chickens must be provided.</p>					
6.15	<p>i [6.15]: <i>Enrichments are materials that are provided to chickens to add complexity to their environment and encourage the expression of natural behavior, such as foraging, without losing their novelty. Examples include, but are not limited to, bales of straw or hay, raised platforms, provision of forages or brassicas, and scattered grains. Perches, dust-baths, and litter are not considered enrichments. (See standards 5.22 and 6.11 for indoor and outdoor perch requirements for Step 5 and Step 5+, and standards 5.3 and 5.4 for litter requirements.) Items that quickly lose their novelty and/or go unused by the chickens, such as pipes and PVC tubing, are not considered acceptable enrichments.</i></p>					
6.16	<p>Slatted and/or wire floors are prohibited.</p>					
6.17	<p>The covered outdoor area must provide natural light.</p>					

LOADING

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Condition of Chickens							
7.1	Transporting unhealthy, non-ambulatory, or injured chickens is prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.2	All unhealthy, non-ambulatory, injured, or small chickens (runts) who are not loaded for processing must be euthanized within 12 hours of feed being withheld for the flock. i [7.2]: See standards 2.12 to 2.16 for euthanasia requirements.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Water and Feed Withdrawal							
7.3	All chickens must have continuous access to drinking water: a. until loading begins if water lines do not need to be elevated prior to catching and loading b. until 1 hour before loading begins if water lines must be elevated prior to catching and loading.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.4	Feed must not be withheld for more than 12 hours prior to slaughter.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Catching and Loading							
i See standards 10.25 and 10.27 for records requirements.							
7.5	Lights must be dimmed throughout the catching and loading process.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.6	Chickens must be caught calmly to minimize stress and risk of injury.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.7	Kicking, throwing, striking, punching, hitting, or otherwise causing injury to chickens is prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.8	Chickens must never be lifted or carried by the head, neck, one or both wings, or tail. i [7.8]: Global Animal Partnership discourages the carrying of chickens by a single leg and urges industry to move away from this practice.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.9	Catchers are prohibited from carrying more than 4 chickens per hand	●	●	●	●		
7.10	Catchers are prohibited from: a. carrying more than 2 chickens per hand b. carrying chickens by a single leg.					●	
7.11	Each chicken must be caught by the body with both hands and carried upright.						●
7.12	Mechanical loaders and conveyor belts are permitted for catching and loading chickens into containers only if they are: a. well-maintained b. well-managed c. do not cause harm to the chickens.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.13	Chickens must be loaded into transport containers without causing injury.	●	●	●	●	●	●

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Transport Containers							
7.14	Containers, whether modules, coops, drawers, or other, must be in clean and sound operational condition, and of a design that does not cause injury to the chickens.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.15	Wire floors are prohibited.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.16	All chickens must be provided the space to sit on the floor of the container at the same time.	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.17	Containers must be of adequate height to allow the chickens to move their heads freely while sitting.	●	●	●	●	●	●

TRANSPORT

① The standards in this section apply to any transport of chickens onto, within, or off of the operation. Standards for transport containers can be found in the **LOADING** section.

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Transport of Chicks							
	① See standards 10.7 to 10.9 for records and documentation requirements.						
8.1	The thermal comfort of chicks must be maintained at all times through management and the provision of supplemental heating and/or cooling, as necessary.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.2	Each chick must be provided a minimum of 4 in ² (25.8 cm ²) floor space within the delivery box.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.3	Each delivery box must be designed with holes for ventilation.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.4	Each delivery box must contain a new, absorbent floor pad or be constructed in such a way that chicks stay dry and do not slip.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.5	Each delivery box sent by next-day air carrier must be prominently labeled “LIVE BIRDS.”	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.6	Mortality during transport must not exceed 0.5% per shipment.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Equipment and Vehicles							
8.7	Equipment (e.g., a trailer) and vehicles must be managed to provide for the thermal comfort of chickens at all times.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.8	If equipment (e.g., a trailer) or vehicles have open sides or tops, they must have cover(s) that can be fitted securely and adjusted as necessary to protect chickens from inclement weather.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Transport Personnel Responsibilities and Procedures							
8.9	A clear, written procedure must be made available to the auditor and/or certification company that includes actions and contact information for the driver to follow in case of accident or emergency.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.10	The driver must be knowledgeable in all of his or her responsibilities and transport protocols, including those in the case of accident or emergency as per standard 8.9.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.11	If the vehicle is scheduled to pick up chickens from more than one operation and/or source, a separate bill of lading/delivery note for each operation is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	① [8.11]: See standard 10.26 for documentation requirements.						

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Transport Personnel Responsibilities and Procedures <i>continued</i>							
8.12	If the vehicle is transporting chickens from more than one operation and/or source, each different group of chickens must be segregated in identifiable containers.	•	•	•	•	•	•
8.13	Transport or movement of chickens with other species on the same vehicle and in the same compartment is prohibited.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Duration							
	ⓘ <i>Duration of any transport, including on-site movement, is calculated for each vehicle or trailer and begins when the first chicken is loaded into the container and ends when the vehicle or trailer arrives at its destination. See standards 10.25 and 10.27 for documentation requirements.</i>						
	Duration must not exceed:						
8.14.1	8 hours	•	•	•			
8.14.2	4 hours				•	•	
8.14.3	2 hours.						•
	ⓘ [8.14.3]: <i>Chickens raised in Step 5+ systems can only be moved to on-site or local slaughter.</i>						

RODENT, WILD BIRD, AND PREDATOR CONTROL

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Rodent Control							
	<i>ⓘ The standards in this section are applicable to any rodent control efforts, whether contracted or not.</i>						
9.1	Exclusion of rodents from housing and feed storage must be the first level of control.	•	•				
9.2	Exclusion of rodents from feed storage must be the first level of control.			•	•	•	•
9.3	Lethal control is permitted only if the following conditions are met: a. exclusion was ineffective and chickens are at risk b. the method of control (i) is swift, efficient, and does not cause undue suffering, or (ii) causes rapid and irreversible insensibility immediately followed by death c. the method of control targets only rodents.	•	•	•	•	•	•
	<i>ⓘ [9.3]: Glue boards, drowning, and drowning traps do not meet the above requirements.</i>						
9.4	Any live traps must be checked at least once daily and acted upon immediately.	•	•	•	•		
	<i>ⓘ [9.4]: Live traps, also known as humane traps, do not contain poison or in any other way result in lethal control.</i>						
9.5	Any live traps must be checked at least twice daily and acted upon immediately.					•	•
	<i>ⓘ [9.5]: Live traps, also known as humane traps, do not contain poison or in any other way result in lethal control.</i>						
Wild Bird Control							
9.6	Wild birds must be excluded from housing.	•	•				
Predator Control							
	<i>ⓘ The standards in this section are applicable to any predators, including aerial predators, and to any predator control efforts, whether contracted or not.</i>						
9.7	Non-lethal methods of predator exclusion from housing and occupied outdoor areas must be the first level of control.	•	•	•	•	•	•
9.8	Lethal control is permitted only if the following conditions are met: a. non-lethal methods were ineffective and chickens are at risk b. the method of control (i) is swift, efficient, and does not cause undue suffering, or (ii) causes rapid and irreversible insensibility immediately followed by death c. the method of control targets only the offending predator(s).	•	•	•	•	•	•
	<i>ⓘ [9.8]: Poisons, drowning, all snares, and all traps other than live traps do not meet the above requirements.</i>						
9.9	Any live traps must be checked at least once daily and acted upon immediately.	•	•	•	•		
	<i>ⓘ [9.9]: Live traps, also known as humane traps, cannot contain poison or in any other way result in lethal control.</i>						
9.10	Any live traps must be checked at least twice daily and acted upon immediately.					•	•
	<i>ⓘ [9.10]: Live traps, also known as humane traps, cannot contain poison or in any other way result in lethal control.</i>						

RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
General Requirements							
10.1	Records and documents must be in a written format and made available to the auditor and/or certification company. i [10.1]: Acceptable formats for the written records and documents include, but are not limited to, record sheets and cards, calendars, notebooks, and electronic documents. Records can be collected and stored by an affiliated group (e.g., a producer group, co-operative, marketing entity), but must be available at the time of audit.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.2	Records and documents must be maintained and presented in an organized manner.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.3	All materials and correspondence, including all records, reports, and past and current Step certificates, must be kept for 1 certification cycle and be made available to the certifier for the following certification cycle.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Farm and Animal Health Plan							
10.4	Each operation must have a written plan meeting requirements of standard 1.1.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Traceability							
10.5	Each operation must have documentation tracing each flock from the hatchery to slaughter. i [10.5]: The operation applying for 5-Step certification is responsible for presenting records for each flock from the hatchery to slaughter to the auditor and/or certification company, regardless of whether the chickens were owned and raised throughout their entire lives by the applying operation. If ownership or management of chickens changed at any time during the period of hatching to slaughter, the operation applying for 5-Step certification must include any relevant information (e.g., sellers and/or buyers) to meet this requirement.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.6	Once the operation has achieved 5-Step certification, one or both of the following must travel with each shipment of chickens off of the operation, whether to another operation or to a slaughter and/or processing facility, and with each transport vehicle: a. a legible copy of the 5-Step certificate b. certificate number, expiration date, and Step rating	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hatchery							
10.7	A record of the total number of chicks received from the hatchery for each flock is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.8	A record of the total number of dead-on-arrivals (DOAs) for each flock is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.9	Documentation (whether a trucking sheet, bill of lading, delivery slip, delivery invoice, or other) of each shipment of chicks from the hatchery is required that includes: a. date and time of chick removal from the hatcher b. date and time of arrival onto the operation applying for 5-Step certification c. date and time of placement. i [10.9]: If chicks are hatched on-site rather than delivered from an off-site hatchery, documentation of time of chick removal from the hatcher and time of placement in the house meet this requirement.	•	•	•	•	•	•

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Training							
10.10	Documentation of each training, including training dates, topics covered, and participants.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Medication and Treatment							
10.11	Documentation of any treatment of any flock or individual chicken is required, including: a. any medicines administered b. method of usage c. duration of administration d. withholding / withdrawal times, if any e. treatment outcomes.	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.12	Documentation of any preventative treatment used on each flock (e.g., the use of probiotics, acidification of water lines) is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Daily Flock Records							
10.13	Records of daily inspections of each flock are required, including the total number of chickens in the flock. <i>📌 [10.13]: Standard 3.1 requires a minimum of two inspections each day for each flock. Each inspection must be recorded to meet this standard.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.14	Records of any evidence of feather-pecking are required, including: a. date observed b. percentage of injured birds per flock c. actions taken to address the feather-pecking d. outcomes of the actions taken. <i>📌 [10.14]: Records are required only if there is evidence of feather-pecking.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.15	Daily records of mortality and causes (if known) for each flock are required. <i>📌 [10.15]: Mortality and any known causes must be recorded once each day for each flock.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.16	Records of all culls and the reason for culling during each inspection for each flock are required. <i>📌 [10.16]: As per standard 3.18, any necessary culling must be performed during the minimum of twice-daily flock monitoring and according to standards 2.12 to 2.16.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.17	Daily records of air quality scores for each flock are required. <i>📌 [10.17]: See Appendix IV: Sensory Evaluation of Air Quality.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
Footpad Dermatitis Records and Intervention Plans							
10.18	Records of footpad dermatitis found in the monitoring sample (i.e., the numbers scoring '0,' '1,' and '2') and the total footpad dermatitis sum for each flock, whether assessed and recorded at the operation or the processing plant, are required. <i>📌 [10.18]: See Appendix I: Identifying and Scoring Footpad Dermatitis for charts, scoring protocol, and specification on calculating the flock's total footpad dermatitis sum.</i>	•	•	•	•	•	•
10.19	Documentation of any intervention plans implemented to address footpad dermatitis incidence that exceeds the total footpad dermatitis sums detailed in standards 3.14.1 to 3.14.3 is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•

STANDARD		Step Level					
		1	2	3	4	5	5+
Lameness							
10.20	Records of lameness found during the lameness evaluation (i.e., the numbers scoring '0,' '1,' and '2') and the total lameness sum for each flock during the final week prior to slaughter are required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
📌 [10.20]: See Appendix II: 3-Category Lameness Evaluation for scoring protocol and specification on calculating the flock's total lameness sum.							
Mortality Intervention Plans							
10.21	Documentation of any intervention plans implemented to reduce the mortality levels detailed in standards 3.17.1 to 3.17.3 is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Feed and Water							
10.22	Comprehensive ingredients lists, including any additives and/or mineral and vitamin mixes, given to each flock.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Air Quality Intervention Plans							
10.23	Documentation of any intervention plans implemented to improve air quality if levels exceed those detailed in standard 5.7 is required.	•	•	•	•	•	•
Outdoor Access							
10.24	The following records are required: a. date the chickens are first given outdoor access b. any day that outdoor access is denied c. reasons for any denial of outdoor access.			•	•	•	•
Transport							
10.25	The following records are required for each vehicle transporting chickens, whether to another operation or a slaughter and/or processing facility: a. starting and ending times for loading chickens into transport containers b. transport vehicle departure and arrival times c. reasons for any stops or delays en route d. number of chickens transported from the operation.	•	•	•	•	•	
10.26	Separate transport documentation, whether a bill of lading, delivery note, or other, is required for each operation if the vehicle is scheduled to pick up chickens from more than one operation.	•	•	•	•	•	
10.27	The following records are required for each vehicle or trailer transporting chickens, whether to an on-site slaughter and/or processing facility, an on-site or local mobile slaughter unit, or a local facility: a. starting and ending times for loading chickens into transport containers b. transport vehicle or trailer departure and arrival times c. reasons for any stops or delays en route d. number of chickens transported.						•

Appendix I: Identifying and Scoring Footpad Dermatitis

Standard 3.13 requires a footpad dermatitis monitoring program, which can be implemented at the operation and/or processing plant, that includes a random sampling of 100 feet from 100 chickens in each flock. The identification and scoring protocol below considers both the size and severity of lesions. The total maximum footpad dermatitis score is 200 (i.e., all 100 feet scoring '2'). The maximum thresholds for a flock's total footpad dermatitis sum are listed in standards 3.14.1 to 3.14.3 according to Step level.

PROTOCOL

Step 1: Determining the Sample Groups

- If the monitoring is conducted at the operation: Divide the total number of birds to be assessed into smaller groups (e.g., 4 groups of 25 chickens each) and assess them from different parts of the house or outdoor area.
- If the monitoring is conducted at the processing plant: Divide the total number of birds to be assessed into smaller groups (e.g., 3 groups of approximately 33 chickens each) and assess them across the entire run, for example 1 group at the beginning, 1 in the middle, and 1 at the end. Alternatively, determine a frequency interval of assessment. For example, if 1,000 chickens will be slaughtered, assess 1 out of every 10.










Step 2: Scoring

- Use the following chart to score 100 feet from 100 chickens from each flock with a footpad dermatitis score of '0,' '1,' or '2.'

Step 3: Calculating the Flock's Total Footpad Dermatitis Sum

- $(\# \text{ of feet scoring '0'} \times 0) + (\# \text{ of feet scoring '1'} \times 1) + (\# \text{ of feet scoring '2'} \times 2) = \text{Total Footpad Dermatitis Sum}$
- In the above calculation, the Total Footpad Dermatitis Sum is determined as follows:
 - a foot scoring '0' does not get any points
 - a foot scoring '1' gets 1 point
 - a foot scoring '2' gets 2 points
- For example:
 - Of the 100 feet from 100 chickens assessed: 65 score '0,' 30 score '1,' and the remaining 5 score '2.'
 - $(65 \times 0) + (30 \times 1) + (5 \times 2) = 0 + 30 + 10$, for a Total Footpad Dermatitis Sum of 40

Appendix I: Identifying and Scoring Footpad Dermatitis *continued*

Score: 0	Score: 1	Score: 2
(0 points each for score of 0)	(1 point each for a score of 1)	(2 points each for a score of 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No lesions or very small • No discoloration or slight on a limited area • No hyperkeratosis or mild • No scars or old 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild and/or superficial lesions • Substantial discoloration on the footpad • Dark papillae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe and significant lesions • Ulceration • Dark papillae • Abscesses and/or swollen feet (bumble foot)
<p data-bbox="338 431 453 456">no lesion</p>  <p data-bbox="279 776 512 800">small discoloration</p>  <p data-bbox="254 1118 537 1143">completely healed scar</p> 	<p data-bbox="961 431 1098 456">mild lesion</p>  <p data-bbox="877 776 1182 800">substantial discoloration</p>  <p data-bbox="863 1118 1197 1143">dark papillae, no ulceration</p> 	<p data-bbox="1581 431 1745 456">severe lesion</p>  <p data-bbox="1493 776 1833 800">dark papillae and ulceration</p>  <p data-bbox="1476 1118 1850 1143">abscess, swollen (bumble foot)</p> 

Adapted and reprinted with permission: "Foot-pad dermatitis in broilers: a photo guide to broiler foot health classification." Dr Lotta Berg, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

Appendix II: 3-Category Lameness Evaluation

Standard 3.15 requires a lameness evaluation conducted on 100 chickens per flock during the final week prior to slaughter. This 3-category lameness evaluation assesses and scores the mobility of chickens observed in 4 different locations within each house, on each floor if multi-level, or in each outdoor area. The total maximum lameness sum possible is 200 (i.e., all 100 chickens scoring '2'). The maximum thresholds for a flock's total lameness sum are listed in standards 3.16.1 to 3.16.3 according to Step level.

PROTOCOL

Step 1: Determining the Sample Groups

- Assess groups of chickens in 4 different locations for a total of 100 chickens per flock.
- For example, if the operation has 3 houses, each with 2 floors, this 100-chicken lameness evaluation will be conducted 6 times—once for each of the 6 flocks—and in 4 different locations for each flock.

Step 2: Scoring and Suggested Best Practices

- Use the following chart to score 100 chickens from each flock with a lameness score of '0,' '1,' or '2.'
- Watch one chicken at a time for at least 15 seconds.
- Each chicken's mobility must be assessed and scored from the side in order to observe foot placement and length of stride.
- Gentle nudging may be necessary to encourage movement.
- Chickens must always be approached from behind, if movement must be encouraged.
- Once the chicken is moving, back away to assess the gait and assign a lameness score of '0,' '1,' or '2' according to the chart below.

Step 3: Calculating the Flock's Total Lameness Sum

- $(\# \text{ of chickens scoring '0'} \times 0) + (\# \text{ of chickens scoring '1'} \times 1) + (\# \text{ of chickens scoring '2'} \times 2) = \text{Total Lameness Sum}$
- In the above calculation, the Total Lameness Sum is determined as follows:
 - a chicken scoring '0' does not get any points
 - a chicken scoring '1' gets 1 point each
 - a chicken scoring '2' gets 2 points each
- For example:
 - Of the 100 chickens assessed: 62 score '0,' 23 score '1,' and the remaining 15 score '2.'
 - $(62 \times 0) + (23 \times 1) + (15 \times 2) = 0 + 23 + 30$, for a Total Lameness Sum of 53

Appendix II: 3-Category Lameness Evaluation *continued*

Score: 0	Score: 1	Score: 2
(0 points each for score of 0)	(1 point each for a score of 1)	(2 points each for a score of 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot may or may not curl when lifted by the chicken • Smooth gait typically with even steps that may be uneven at times • Well-balanced • Able to walk quickly and/or run • Difficult to identify any abnormality when walking or running 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven gait • Foot does not curl when lifted by the chicken • Irregular, short strides • Poor balance • The chicken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ may use one or both wings to help balance while walking ○ squats within 15 seconds of standing or being forced to move by gentle nudging ○ may lie down after several steps 	<p>The chicken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is reluctant or unable to move, or shuffles on the ground if forced to move by gentle nudging • uses wings to help with movement • takes at most a few steps, if any
Normal	Moderately Lamé	Severely Lamé

Appendix III: Soiled Feather Assessment

Standard 5.4 requires that litter within housing structures to be of quality and quantity to (1) provide a comfortable environment and (2) allow for dust-bathing behavior. At the time of audit, if litter quality and/or quantity are found to be insufficient, 5-Step auditors will perform this Soiled Feather Assessment as an additional indicator of litter conditions by observing a minimum of 100 birds in the flock. Producers are encouraged to perform this assessment themselves throughout the life cycle of the flock.

FRONT / UNDERSIDE OF CHICKEN

Score 1: Lightly Soiled



Score 2: Significantly Soiled



Score 3: Severely Soiled



BACK / TOP OF CHICKEN

Score 1: Lightly Soiled



Score 2: Significantly Soiled



Score 3: Severely Soiled



Photos courtesy of 2 Sisters Food Group Ltd. Scoring guide adapted with permission from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Welfare Standards for Chickens, 2011)

Appendix IV: Sensory Evaluation of Air Quality

Standard 5.6 requires the assessment of air quality at least once each day. This can be conducted using calibrated meters or testing strips, or sensory evaluation. Most operations do not use calibrated testing equipment to regularly assess air quality due to cost or accessibility. Though it is encouraged to invest in calibrated equipment, the standardized protocol below, while subjective, can be used in its place. The maximum thresholds for air quality are listed in standard 5.7.

Score	Description
0	Zero: ammonia and dust not noticeable; easy to breathe
1	Weak: ammonia and dust noticeable; can breathe without effort
2	Moderate: ammonia and dust distinct; experience watery eyes and/or coughing
3	Strong: ammonia and dust irritating; experience stinging eyes and mouth, and/or excessive coughing
4	Very Strong: ammonia and dust causing severe reactions; experience stinging eyes and mouth, excessive coughing, and/or pain when swallowing
5	Overpowering: ammonia and dust unbearable; experience stinging eyes and mouth, excessive coughing, pain when swallowing, and pain when inhaling

Scores of '2' (moderate), '3' (strong), '4' (very strong), and '5' (overpowering) indicate that ammonia and dust are excessive and air quality must be addressed immediately for both human safety and the welfare, including health, of the chickens.