



CHICKEN STANDARDS

WHAT'S CHANGED AND WHY

VERSION 5

WHAT'S CHANGED?

We've reviewed our farm standards and these changes will apply from 1 November 2021.

These updates have been approved by our Technical Advisory Committee of farmers and industry experts, and Sector Board, following a public consultation. They will help you meet evolving supply chain demands and new legal requirements.

Find out about the main changes and why we made them in the summary below. The checklist at the end of this document covers all changes and everything a member needs to do differently from November.

The Red Tractor Team



[REDTRACTORASSURANCE.ORG.UK](https://redtractorassurance.org.uk)

MEMBERHELP@REDTRACTOR.ORG.UK

TELEPHONE: 0203 617 3670



[FACEBOOK.COM/REDTRACTORFOOD](https://facebook.com/redtractorfood)



[TWITTER.COM/RTFARMERS](https://twitter.com/RTFARMERS)



[INSTAGRAM.COM/REDTRACTORFOOD](https://instagram.com/redtractorfood)

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Red Tractor's reputation is built on traceable, safe food production that has been farmed with care. Maintaining our reputation is crucial to everyone.

DP.1.1

Aligning with other poultry standards, chicken farms must now indicate on their farm maps key attributes for health and safety, including first aid boxes, fire extinguishers and, where available, water sources for fighting fires. To improve biosecurity and reduce disease incidence members must also now demonstrate how large sites with birds of different ages (e.g. ex-airfield sites) can operate as all-in/all-out units. Farms must now have a farm location reference on their maps, either OS map or What3Words reference, to ensure that the farm can be located easily in the event of an emergency.

DP.2

In line with the existing standard for free range members requiring that farms must be capable of implementing a compulsory housing order (BI.14), additional criteria on welfare planning for housing free range flocks has been added to the avian influenza contingency plan.

STAFF AND LABOUR

Your business must have competent people who can do farm tasks properly. We want to help you equip your staff with the skills and knowledge they need.

PL.3.1

The British Poultry Passport is a world leading initiative to provide training and improve professionalism within the industry. Revisions to the standard aim to improve its impact by requiring that all new staff must enrol for the poultry passport within six months of starting their job. Staff who are in the process of obtaining their qualifications must complete at least two modules every 12 months.

PL.4

To protect members and workers all labour providers must be licensed as required by law (except where a valid exemption applies). A documented agreement must be in place. This will protect the reputation of members and ensure worker welfare is safeguarded.

Health and Safety is another key issue.

PL.5

By law, you must have a Health and Safety policy, in writing if you have more than five employees. The new standard requires all farms to have a written Health and Safety policy which should contain a simple, clear approach to managing Health and Safety which can be independently verified. Given farm injury and fatality figures, this is an important area of focus.

HOUSING SHELTER AND HANDLING

Delivering a safe, comfortable and hygienic environment for birds is essential on all Red Tractor farms. We have revised several standards across our chicken standards to improve the impact that they have on the outcome for birds.

HF.2.2

Heat stress continues to be a significant challenge during hot weather. Your heat stress policy must now be demonstrably implemented on the farm. It must be reviewed if there are any bird losses due to heat or cold stress.

HF.4

As bulk feed bins are not necessarily cleaned and/or disinfected at each turnaround, units must now have a written, and implemented, policy detailing how and when they will be cleaned. This will help ensure that feed is uncontaminated and palatable.

HF.5

Adequate lighting on all units is a legal requirement. Once per crop, the lux level in all breeder replacement and layer housing must be measured and recorded at bird head height across 80% of the building.

HF.5.5

The installation of windows in poultry sheds satisfies customer and consumer expectations of how birds should be reared. We have introduced October 2023 as the deadline for all broiler, poussin and free-range units to be meeting the minimum standard of windows at 3% of the floor area.

HF.8.5

To align with turkeys and ducks chicken hatchery units must now check all incubators for temperature, humidity and direction of turn twice daily. Records must be kept demonstrating this activity is happening.

HF.8.6

Similarly, to align with the turkey and duck standards, chick and egg disposal equipment in hatcheries must be checked by a trained operator to ensure that it is working correctly and ensuring humane slaughter. These checks must be documented.

FEED AND WATER

Making sure that birds receive a daily diet sufficient to maintain full health is clearly a key objective of Red Tractor standards.

FW.12

You need to demonstrate that you are managing medicated feed in a way that ensures withdrawal periods are met. You will now need a written medicated feed use procedure document to demonstrate how you do this.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

You will already proactively manage your bird health and welfare through regular planning and reviewing activities. We have revised some key standards in this area.

AH.1.1

For free range and Enhanced Welfare chicken production only slower growing breeds can be used. We have updated the list of slower growing breeds in line with current research and we are now requiring that only slower growing breeds can be used in free-range systems as their growth rates are better suited to this method of production. This means we can give a guarantee to consumers that only slower growing breeds are used in our free-range standards. We will be providing further details on the new breeds added to the list.

AH.4.1

Updating our standards with best practice, on all grower units, enrichment now needs to be provided and evenly placed in the shed by day three at the latest rather than day seven as before. Homegrown or locally produced straw bales can be used unwrapped and untreated. Perches on free-range and Enhanced Welfare production units can now be up to 80cm, higher than before to accommodate the greater activity of slower growing breeds. Members are reminded that enrichment must be replaced following the thinning of a flock to keep it at the correct level for the birds up to final depopulation.

AH.7.1

Aligning all Red Tractor poultry standards, there is a new requirement for a named welfare officer to coordinate welfare at the hatchery and on the farm. Their name and contact number must be displayed on farm/in the hatchery. There are specific areas of responsibility for the welfare officer, such as monitoring welfare policies and procedures.

AH.
10.3

We are strengthening our standards on Mycoplasma testing for breeder layers. Testing is in line with the Poultry Health Scheme requirements and testing records for *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* and *Mycoplasma synoviae* must be retained to ensure bird welfare and the prevention of disease.

HATCHERY EGGS

Our standards ensure that hatchery eggs are fit for purpose, and we are strengthening standards in some areas and ensuring they are in line with the standards for other poultry species.

HC.2

We are aiming to improve health and welfare in hatcheries by avoiding setting eggs from parent flocks who have tested positive from either *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* and/or *Mycoplasmas synoviae*. If it is unavoidable to set the eggs, then a documented mycoplasma containment plan must be implemented, which covers a range of parameters to safeguard the welfare of the progeny, parent stock and planned depletion to contain the spread of disease.

HC.4

Air filters in hatcheries must now be checked, cleaned or changed regularly and records kept.

HC.6

All eggs in hatcheries must now be fumigated or sanitised prior to setting. This kills bacteria on the shell and decreases the incidence of bacterial infections on the embryo.

- HC.9** Eggs must be stored in a temperature and humidity-controlled room and daily records of these checks must be recorded.
- HC.10 /HC.11** To improve traceability the identification of eggs must now include flock/house ID and the age of parent stock. The production records must now include the quantity of the consignment, the destination and the driver's name.
- HC.12** All vehicles carrying chicks must be able to control ventilation to improve welfare in transport.
- HC.14** Injured or sick chicks must not be transported – they should be humanely culled immediately as required by law.
- HC.15** In line with legislation, the time between hatch and unloading at the farm must not exceed 72 hours.
- HC.16** Chicks must be placed in clean, dry, ventilated containers to ensure that contamination and disease are minimised and that temperature and air flow in transport is optimal.

BIOSECURITY AND DISEASE CONTROL

Effective biosecurity measures are essential to prevent the spread of disease and protect food safety and bird health. We are providing extra clarity in this area to strengthen biosecurity.

- BI.2** Access to the farm must be limited to essential visitors only and visitor records must be kept. We have provided clarity on what these records must include.
- BI.3** The range area for fixed housing must now have a clearly defined perimeter fence, bringing it into line with standards for other poultry species. It can be on the farm map but must ensure that multi-age sites don't mix on the range and it must be secure enough to stop predation from foxes, etc.
- BI.4** Controls on access to all Red Tractor poultry sites must be in place and the risk of disease spread by vehicles must be minimised. Visiting vehicles must now have their wheels cleaned and disinfected if entering the general biosecure area, otherwise parking should always be off-site, unless road safety necessitates parking on site.
- BI.7** Hand cleanliness is crucial to disease control. Hands must be washed or sanitised prior to starting work, after handling deadstock, before and after meals and after visits to the toilet.
- BI.8** Units must operate a period free of all birds between flock cycles. Where large units (e.g., ex-airfield sites) have multiple ages of birds across the site at the same time, house(s) within separate general biosecure areas are to be single age and operate as all-in/all-out. Farms must be able to demonstrate that they can operate each single age unit as all-in/all-out.

BI.8.2

It is now only permitted to move birds to another building where free range birds are being moved from brood houses to finishing sites.

BI.8.3

The turnaround times between flocks on farm must now be no less than five calendar days. A new requirement, this will ensure that farms have enough time between flocks to clean and disinfect houses between new flocks arriving. Inadequate cleaning between turnarounds is weak disease and contamination management.

MEDICINES AND HUSBANDRY

Responsible and competent use of medicines and veterinary treatments is the bedrock of good animal welfare across all Red Tractor poultry species.

AM.2

Expired medicines and open medicines not used within specified timescale (in-use shelf life) must not be used. It is illegal to administer expired medicines, and medicines past their in-use shelf life may well have compromised efficacy.

AM.4

Incorrect storage of medicines can represent a health and safety risk and their efficacy can be affected. Medicines must not be stored in the same fridge as food and drink, plus a temperature check must be carried out, and recorded, at least once a week whenever medicines are stored.

AM.6

Records must be kept of all administered veterinary medicines. We have extended this to cover the length of withdrawal period for eggs, as they can sometimes go into the food supply chain.

AM.8.1

Most units will be familiar with our standard that does not allow for the prophylactic administration of antibiotics. The industry is committed to responsible antibiotic use on farm and as such we have extended this to apply to breeder replacement and layer units.

AM.9.1

Use of macrolides and fluroquinolones are only used as a last resort, under veterinary direction, on most Red Tractor poultry units already. We are extending this requirement to be applicable on breeder replacement and layer units.

FALLEN STOCK

Protecting Red Tractor's reputation is vital. Activists have been known to go to extraordinary lengths to create images that alarm consumers.

FS.2

Hatchery waste must now always be placed in a container that is locked, or only accessible to removal services and not general waste areas, while culled birds on farm must be stored in a locked container or locked room. For clarity, a locked room means an area with four walls and a roof.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Pollutants present a serious risk to the environment. We know that you are already storing agrochemicals in a manner that minimises the risk of contamination and pollution to crops, feedstuffs, animals, soils, groundwater and watercourses. There are revisions which are largely only applicable to those members who are growing their own feed for assured birds or spreading poultry muck on their own land. Plant protection product standards will still apply to those farms controlling vegetation around poultry houses and ranges.

EC.1
/EC.2

A slight revision of our standards will ensure that any spillages of agrochemicals and potential pollutants can be contained appropriately.

EC.1.1

Looking after your organic manure is a key part of looking after the environment. Existing requirements have been strengthened to cover temporary field heaps and effluent from manure heaps.

EC.12

There is a lot of consumer interest and pressure to minimise waste, particularly plastic. Aimed at minimising waste, farms must now consider opportunities to reuse, recycle and reduce waste.

DEPOPULATION

During depopulation, the health and welfare of birds and site biosecurity is at risk.

DE.5

There must be a system in place for a designated person to inspect forklifts and other catching equipment, including catchers' transport, for cleanliness prior to entry to the biosecure area. This now applies to catching frames that are not site specific which are to be cleaned and disinfected before arrival onto the farm.

CHECKLIST

CB	Broilers	CH	Hatcheries
CF	Free Range	CL	Breeder Layers
CP	Poussin	CD	Breeder Replacements
EW	Enhanced Welfare		

DP.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Does the farm or hatchery present an acceptable and tidy appearance to the public?	Yes	No	
DPI.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have a farm locator reference, either an OS reference or What3Words reference, on your farm map? Have you indicated where to find your first aid box, fire extinguisher (and if available, any other available water sources for fighting fires) on your farm map?	Yes	No	
	CB, CF, CP, EW, CL, CD	If you're rearing multi-age sites, does your map show segregation of each biosecure unit/house(s) and, where applicable, staff facilities?	Yes	No	N/A
DP.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CL, CD	Have you considered and documented any risks that are uniquely specific to your site, in your contingency / emergency plan?	Yes	No	N/A
	CF	Does your AI contingency plan provide details of how to accommodate free range birds as housed without compromising their welfare?	Yes	No	
PL.3	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is implementation of refresher training (where required) recorded on training record?	Yes	No	N/A
PL.3.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are all staff enrolled to the Poultry Passport within six months of starting their position? If so, are they progressing through training at a rate of two modules every 12 months? Are all courses in date?	Yes	No	N/A
PL.4	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are labour providers used? Are they licensed and do you have a documented agreement in place?	Yes	No	
PL.5	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have a Health and Safety policy in place? Can you demonstrate that you have effectively communicated it to your workers?	Yes	No	
TI.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Can you demonstrate through on-farm paperwork that incoming eggs/chicks are RTA? And that catching and transport is also RTA?	Yes	No	
VC.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are you undertaking site surveys for vermin activity on at least a quarterly basis?	Yes	No	

HF.1.1	CF, EW, CL, CD	Does your machinery (fans, ventilation, feed lines, etc.) minimise noise as much as possible?	Yes	No	
HF.2	CF, CH	Do you have a ventilation plan in place?	Yes	No	
HF.2.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CL, CD	Have you updated your heat and cold stress policy to ensure that it is reviewed in the event of any losses to heat or cold stress?	Yes	No	
HF.4	CB, CP, EW, CF, CL, CD	Do you have, and are you implementing, your cleaning and/or disinfection policy for your bulk feed bins?	Yes	No	
HF.5	CL, CD	Do you have your light level records for recording the light intensity once per crop at bird head height across 80% of the flock?	Yes	No	
HF.5.5	CB, CP, CF	Do you have a plan in place to ensure that windows equating to 3% of the floor area are fitted in all buildings which house birds by October 2023?	Yes	No	N/A
HF.8.4	CH	Are your setters and hatchers alarmed for high and low temperatures and mains failure?	Yes	No	
HF.8.5	CH	Are your operational incubators checked twice daily for temperature, humidity and direction of turn? Is this being recorded?	Yes	No	
HF.8.6	CH	Are your chick and egg disposal equipment being checked daily by trained operators to ensure it is working effectively? Is a record kept of the outcome of these checks?	Yes	No	
FW.12	CB, CP, CF, EW, CL, CD	Do you have a documented medicated feed use procedure?	Yes	No	
AH.1	CB, CP, CF, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is your health plan prepared and reviewed by the vet that has overall responsibility for the care of the animals?	Yes	No	
AH.1.1	CF	Are you only using slower growing breeds acceptable to the scheme?	Yes	No	
	CF, EW	Acceptable breeds now include the Redbro and Norfolk Black.	Yes	No	N/A
AH.4.1	CB, CF, CP, EW	Are you ensuring that environmental enrichment is now provided from day three? And are pecking objects and perches available right up to depopulation?	Yes	No	
	CF, EW	Are you aware that perching height can be from 10 – 80cm depending on the age of the birds?	Yes	No	
AH.7.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have a named welfare officer? Are their details displayed on farm/in the hatchery?	Yes	No	
AH.10.3	CL	Do you have your flock Mycoplasma gallisepticum and Mycoplasma synoviae testing records? Are birds being tested at the prescribed intervals? Are these results being retained for five years and communicated to the hatchery?	Yes	No	

HC.2	CH	Have you received the flock testing records of Mycoplasma gallisepticum and Mycoplasma synoviae from the breeder flocks for all incoming eggs? Do you have your Mycoplasma containment plan in place if setting of eggs from positive flocks is unavoidable?	Yes	No	
HC.4	CH	Do you have your weekly filter check records for your incoming air flow? Does this include how often they are cleaned or changed?	Yes	No	
HC.6	CH	Do you have a written fumigation procedure?	Yes	No	
HC.9	CH	Do you have your daily records of temperatures in incubator and hatcher rooms?	Yes	No	
HC.10	CH	Can you identify the flock/house ID and age of the parent flock for your hatching eggs?	Yes	No	
HC.11	CH	Do your transport records include quantity of eggs in each consignment, destination and driver's name?	Yes	No	
HC.12	CH	Can all vehicles carrying eggs and chicks control ventilation? Do you ensure that vehicles are locked if left unattended?	Yes	No	
HC.14	CH	Are all injured chicks humanely culled immediately? Are your mortality/cull records up to date?	Yes	No	
HC.15	CH	Do you have policies in place to ensure that the time between hatch and unloading at the farm does not exceed 72 hours?	Yes	No	
HC.16	CH	Do you ensure that chicks are placed in clean, dry and ventilated containers?	Yes	No	
BI.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have a farm or hatchery specific biosecurity policy and is it being implemented?	Yes	No	
BI.1.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is access for vehicles able to be secured?	Yes	No	
BI.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Have you updated your visitor records to ensure you are collecting all the required information?	Yes	No	
BI.3	CF	Is the range fence for fixed housing clearly defined?	Yes	No	
BI.4	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is there off-site parking for staff and visitors? If not, do you have facilities to wash and disinfect the wheels of all vehicles entering the general biosecure area?	Yes	No	
BI.8	CB, CP, EW, CL, CD	Can all single age units demonstrate that all houses can comply with biosecurity requirements in order to operate as all-in/all-out?	Yes	No	
BI.8.1	CF	Can each brood house operate a bird-free period between flock cycles?	Yes	No	

BI.8.3	CB, CP, EW, CL, CD	Can you ensure that your turnaround time is no-less than five calendar days?	Yes	No	
BI.10	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you ensure that staff, including employed and contracted staff, do not keep poultry or any other avian species?	Yes	No	
AM.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have an approved medicines list covering all categories listed in the standards?	Yes	No	
AM.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Expired medicines and open medicines not used within specified timescale are not being used.	Yes	No	
AM.4	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Medicines are not stored in the same fridge as food and drink. A temperature check is being carried out, and recorded, at least once a week whenever medicines are stored.	Yes	No	
AM.6	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are you keeping records of all administered veterinary medicines which include the length of withdrawal period for both meat and eggs (where applicable)?	Yes	No	
AM.7	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Have you ensured that expired and unusable medicines awaiting disposal are stored separately to in-use medicines?	Yes	No	
AM.8.1	CL, CD	There is no prophylactic administration of antibiotics.	Yes	No	
AM.9.1	CL, CD	Use of macrolides and fluoroquinolones are only used as a last resort.	Yes	No	
FS.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Have you ensured that carcasses are stored in a locked container or locked room (a room must have four walls and a ceiling)?	Yes	No	
	CH	Have you ensured that IMD and other hatchery waste is stored in locked containers or containers which are accessible only to removal services and not in general waste?	Yes	No	
EC.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Can any pollutant spills be fully contained?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.1.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is your organic manure stored in a manner that minimises the risk of contamination and pollution?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.2	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are you aware of how to store any potential pollutants if their packaging breaks?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.4	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are your plant protection products appropriate for their intended use?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.4.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are your PPPs mixed/ handled in a manner that minimises the risk of contamination and pollution?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.5	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are you complying with any buffer zone requirements of the PPP being applied?	Yes	No	N/A

EC.7	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Is all your PPP application equipment maintained and tested and do you have the relevant certificates and/or calibration records?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.8	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do your PPP application records include all of the relevant information?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.8.1	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have an Integrated Pest Management plan if using PPPs on homegrown crops?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.9	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Are your biosolids assured under the Biosolids Assurance Scheme?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.10	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have the calibration records for your manufactured fertilizer application equipment?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.11	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do your waste transfer notes include the Waste Carrier name and registration number?	Yes	No	N/A
EC.12	CB, CF, CP, EW, CH, CL, CD	Do you have systems in place to manage waste responsibly?	Yes	No	
DE.5	CB, CF, CP, EW, CL, CD	Are catching frames, that are not site specific, cleaned and disinfected before arrival onto the farm?	Yes	No	N/A