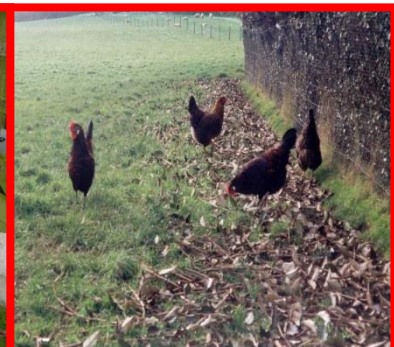


**Isle of Man
Government**

Reiltys Ellan Vannin



Welfare Code Domestic Fowls

October 2000

AN INTRODUCTION BY THE MINISTER

In recognition of the growing interest in animal welfare, and the importance of rearing animals in the island to the highest possible standard the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is introducing Welfare Codes for farm livestock. These Welfare Codes have been produced after consultation with all interested organisations, and will assist in the production of quality livestock under farm assured schemes.

The Code, which has been laid before Tynwald, embodies the latest scientific advice and the best current husbandry practices. It takes account of the five basic needs:

1. freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition,
2. appropriate comfort and shelter,
3. the prevention, or rapid diagnosis and treatment of, injury, disease and infestation,
4. freedom from fear,
5. freedom to display most normal patterns of behaviour.

An important section of the Code has been the adoption of an EC Directive on the welfare of battery hens which will provide, a statutory minimum space allowance of 450 sq. cm per bird.

In particular, the Code mentions the need for technical and managerial skills where specialist buildings and complex mechanical and electrical equipment exist and more emphasis is given to the importance of precautions against fire or other emergencies. More information on alternative systems such as free-range has also been included in view of the increased interest over recent years.

The preface to the Code identifies good stockmanship as a key factor in farm animal welfare. This Code should be an essential tool for every stockman. You and all involved with domestic fowls on your farm, are asked to read it carefully and to bear its recommendations in mind at all times. The note on page 4 explains the status of the Code in relation to the law of the land.

The Hon. A. F. Downie
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

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NOTE

The following Code, comprising paragraphs 1 to 74 is issued with the authority of Tynwald and has been prepared following consultation as required by section 30 of the Animal Health Act 1996 (Part III Welfare of Livestock) which reads as follows:

"The Department may after consultation with such organisations as appears to it to be representative of interests substantially affected-

- a) prepare codes containing such recommendations with respect to the welfare of livestock situated on agricultural land or on or in any vehicle, container or moveable structure as it considers proper for the guidance of persons concerned with the livestock: and
- b) revise any such code by revoking, varying, amending, or adding to the provisions of the code in such a manner as the Department thinks fit."

The following further extracts from the Animal Health Act 1996 explain the status of the Code in relation to the law of the land:

Section 28

"Any person who-

- a) causes unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to any livestock which are under his control, or
- b) permits any such livestock to suffer any such pain or distress of which he knows or may reasonably be expected to know,

shall be guilty of an offence under this act."

Section 30 (4)

"A failure on the part of any person to observe a provision of a code for the time being issued under this section shall not of itself render that person liable to proceedings of any kind; but such a failure on the part of any person may, in proceedings against him for an offence under section 28, be relied upon by the prosecution as tending to establish the guilt of the accused unless it is shown that he cannot reasonably be expected to have observed the provision in question within the period which has elapsed since that provision was first included in a code issued under this section".

PREFACE

This preface is not part of the code, but is intended to explain its purpose and to indicate the broad considerations upon which it is based.

The basic requirements for the welfare of livestock are a husbandry system appropriate to the health and, so far as practicable, the behavioural needs of the animals and a high standard of stockmanship.

Stockmanship is a key factor because, no matter how otherwise acceptable a system may be in principle, without competent, diligent stockmanship the welfare of the birds cannot be adequately catered for. The recommendations which follow are designed to help stockmen, particularly those who are young or inexperienced, to attain the required standards. The part that training has to play in the development of the stockman's awareness of welfare requirements cannot be overstressed. Detailed advice on the application of the Code in individual circumstances readily available through the DAFF Field Staff and in advisory publications. (1)

Nearly all livestock husbandry systems impose restrictions on the stock and some of these can cause an unacceptable degree of discomfort or distress by preventing the birds from fulfilling their basic needs. Provisions meeting these needs, and others which must be considered, include:

- comfort and shelter;
- readily accessible fresh water and a diet to maintain the birds in full health and vigour;
- freedom of movement;
- the company of other birds particularly of like kind;
- the opportunity to exercise most normal patterns of behaviour;
- light during the hours of daylight, and lighting readily available to enable the birds to be inspected at any time;
- floors / perches which neither harm the birds, nor cause undue strain;
- the prevention, of rapid diagnosis and treatment of vice, injury, parasitic infestation and disease;
- the avoidance of unnecessary mutilation; and
- emergency arrangements to cover outbreaks of fire, the breakdown of essential mechanical services and the disruption of supplies.

Not all husbandry systems in use for domestic fowls equally meet the physiological and behavioural needs of the birds. An attempt has been made, on the basis of the latest scientific knowledge and the soundest current practices, to identify those features of husbandry systems which place the welfare of birds at risk unless precautions are taken. The Code sets out what these precautions should be, bearing in mind the importance to the birds of their total environment and the fact that there is often more than one way in which their welfare can be safeguarded.

Certain aspects of livestock husbandry can present hazards to the health and safety of the stockman. Advice on these matters is available from the Department of Local Government and the Environment, Health and Safety Inspectorate.

The practice of rearing quail and other game birds for the table is on the increase. Much of the advice in this Code can be applied to the rearing of such birds and rearers should at all times bear in mind the needs of the birds which generally may be met by following the spirit of the Code.

CODE OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WELFARE OF DOMESTIC FOWLS

INTRODUCTION

1. The welfare of domestic fowls can be safeguarded and their physiological and behavioural needs met under a variety of management systems. The system, and the number and the stocking rate of birds kept at any one time, should depend on the suitability of the conditions and the skill of the stockman.
2. Consideration should be given to the question of animal welfare before installing more complex or elaborate equipment that has previously been used. In general the greater the restriction imposed on the bird and the greater the complexity of the system or of the degree of control which is exercised over temperature, air flow or food supply, the less the bird is able to use its instinctive behaviour to modify the effect of unfavourable conditions and the greater the chance of suffering if mechanical or electrical failures occur. Thus systems involving a high degree of control over the environment should only be installed where conscientious staff skilled in both animal husbandry and the use of the equipment will always be available.
3. Large flocks can be managed successfully, but in general the larger the size of the unit the greater the degree of skill and conscientiousness needed to safeguard welfare. The size of a unit should not be increased nor should a unit be set up unless it is reasonably certain that the stockman in charge will be able to safeguard the welfare of the individual bird.
4. All stockmen should know the normal behaviour of domestic fowls and watch closely for signs of distress or disease and, where necessary, take prompt remedial action.
5. The good stockman will know the signs which indicate good health in domestic fowls. He should be able to recognise impending trouble in its earliest stages and may often be able to identify the cause and put matters right immediately. If the cause is not obvious, or if the stockman's immediate action is not effective, veterinary or other expert advice should be obtained as soon as possible.
6. Important indications of health are alertness, clear bright eyes, good posture, vigorous movements in unduly disturbed, active feeding and drinking, and clean and healthy skin, shanks and feet. Attention should be paid to any departure from the normal.

7. The early signs of ill-health may include changes in food and water intake, in preening, in "chatter" and in activity. In laying birds there may also be a drop in egg production and changes in egg quality such as shell defects.
8. Ailing birds, and any birds suffering from injury such as open wounds or fractures, or from prolapse of the vent should be segregated and treated or, if necessary, be humanely killed without delay. (2)

HOUSING

General

9. Advice on welfare aspects should be sought when new buildings are to be constructed or existing buildings modified. Some intensive systems depend on specialised buildings and complex mechanical and electrical equipment, which require a high level of technical and managerial skills to ensure that husbandry and welfare requirements are met. Consideration should be given to the incorporation of weighing, handling and loading facilities.
10. Ventilation, heating, lighting, feeding, watering and all other equipment should be designed, sited and installed so as to avoid risk of injuring birds.
11. All floors, particularly slatted or metal mesh ones, and perches should be designed, fitted and maintained so as to avoid distress or injury to the birds. Remedial action should be taken if any of these occurs.
12. Even where ladders are provided, nest boxes, roosting areas and perches should not be so high above floor level that birds have difficulty in using them or risk injury.
13. The design and usage of some battery cages of the kind at present in use for laying hens places severe restrictions on the birds' freedom to turn round without difficulty, groom themselves, get up and sit down, rest undisturbed, stretch their legs and body and perform wing-flapping and dust-bathing behaviour as well as to fulfil other health and welfare needs. Cages should be designed to comply with or better current EC standards and maintained so as to minimise discomfort and distress and to prevent injury to the birds being caused by such restrictions.
14. The type and arrangement of cages should allow for efficient working and for each bird to be properly inspected, birds in bottom cages are often difficult to see and should not be neglected. In addition, where cages are kept in more than three tiers adequate provision should be made for the inspection of all tiers for example by the installation of gantries, or platforms. (See also paragraphs 30 and 40)

15. Cages should be of sufficient height to allow standing birds free movement of the head and neck.
16. The fronts of rearing cages should be equipped and maintained so that birds have access to feed and water but cannot escape and fall to the floor.
17. Droppings should not be allowed to fall on birds in lower tiers of cages. Droppings pits below battery cages should be closed off to prevent birds gaining access.

Fire and other emergency precautions

18. Farmers should make advance plans for dealing with emergencies such as fire, flood or disruption of supplies, and should ensure that all staff are familiar with the appropriate emergency action. At least one responsible member of the staff should always be available to take the necessary steps.
19. Knowledge of fire precautions by the farmer and all staff should be a major priority. Expert advice on all fire precautions should be sought from the Senior Fire Safety Officer at Fire Service Headquarters.
20. In the design of new buildings or alteration of existing ones there should be provision for livestock to be released and evacuated quickly in the case of an emergency. Materials used in construction should have sufficient fire resistance and adequate doors and other escape routes should be provided to enable an emergency procedure to be followed in the event of a fire. Where possible straw storage should be separated from livestock accommodation to reduce the risk to stock from fire and smoke.
21. All electrical, gas and oil services should be planned and fitted so that if there is overheating or flame is generated, the risk of flame spreading to equipment, litter or straw (where used) or to the fabric of the building is minimal. It is advisable to site main power on/off controls outside buildings. Consideration should be given to installing fire alarm systems which can be heard and acted upon at any time of the day or night.
22. In case a 999 call has to be made, notices should be prominently displayed in poultry houses stating where the nearest phone is located. Each phone should have fixed by it a notice giving instructions to the Fire Brigade on how to reach the poultry houses.
23. There is usually some warning of interruption in the supply of feedingstuffs and, so far as possible, arrangements should be made to lay in adequate stocks of feed or water to offset the worst effects of such a contingency.

Ventilation and temperature

24. Ventilation rates and house conditions should at all times be adequate to provide sufficient fresh air for the birds in particular, accumulations of ammonia, hydrogen sulphide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and dust should be avoided. (3)
25. Care should be taken to protect confined birds from draughts in cold conditions.
26. Birds, particularly those in cages, should not be exposed to strong direct sunlight or hot surroundings long enough to cause heat stress as indicated by prolonged panting.
27. A newly hatched bird has poor control of its body temperature. Environmental conditions during the early part of a chick's life should therefore allow it to maintain its normal body temperature without difficulty. Whatever method of heating is used, the behaviour of the chick should be regarded as the best indicator of the adequacy of the environment. Young chicks should not be subjected to conditions which cause either panting due to the overheating or prolonged huddling and feather ruffling due to under-heating. After about four to five weeks birds can tolerate a fairly wide range of temperatures; but every effort should be made to avoid creating conditions which will lead to chilling, huddling and subsequent smothering.
28. Close confinement affects the birds' ability to maintain their normal body temperature, but under any management system ambient temperatures hot enough to cause prolonged panting may occur, particularly when humidity is relatively high. All accommodation should therefore be designed that even when fully stocked its ventilation is adequate to protect the birds from overheating under any weather conditions that can reasonably be foreseen.

Lighting

29. Young chicks may be kept in light 24 hrs per day up to 2 wks of age. For birds older than 2 wks of age provision should be made for a period of darkness in each 24-hour cycle, but where birds do not have access to daylight they should be given at least eight hours lighting per day.
30. Enough light should be available to enable all birds to be seen clearly when they are being inspected. Supplementary lighting may be needed for the inspection of birds in the bottom tier in cage systems (see also paragraphs 14 and 40)

Mechanical equipment and services

31. All equipment and services including feed hoppers, drinkers, ventilating fans, heating and lighting units, fire extinguishers and alarm systems

should be cleaned and inspected regularly and kept in good working order. (4) All automated equipment should incorporate a fail-safe device and, where the birds' welfare is dependent upon such equipment, an alarm system to warn the stockman of failure. Defects should be rectified immediately or other measures taken to safeguard the health and welfare of the birds. Alternative ways of feeding and of maintaining a satisfactory environment should therefore be ready for use. All equipment should be constructed and maintained in such a way as to avoid subjecting the birds to excessive noise.

32. All electrical installations at mains voltage should be inaccessible to the birds and properly earthed. (5)

Stocking rates

33. Irrespective of the type of enclosure or system of management used, all domestic fowls should have sufficient freedom of movement to be able, without difficulty, to stand normally, turn around and stretch their wings. They should also have sufficient space to be able to perch or sit down without interference from other birds.
34. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that birds kept under any system can be prone to stress, injury and disease if management and husbandry are not of a high standard. Within the present limits of scientific knowledge it is not possible to relate stocking rate to welfare in any simple manner. Stocking rate is only one aspect of a complex situation involving such things as breed, strain and type of bird, colony size, temperature, ventilation, lighting and quality of housing. The observance of any particular rate cannot, by itself, ensure the welfare of the birds.
35. The following figures are a guide to the maximum stocking rates acceptable in most circumstances for domestic fowl husbandry systems in current use. (6) Apart from cage systems, these rates may be safely increased where suitable perching is provided. A perch of not less than 15 cm is generally appropriate for a bird but, even where such perching is provided for every bird, stocking should not be at more than 25 birds per square metre of available floor space.

SYSTEM	DENSITY (Liveweight in relation to floor area)	QUALIFICATIONS
Cages		
Birds being reared for laying	250 cm ² / kg	For bird between 1 and 2 kg liveweight
Adult laying birds	<p>These are subject to, legal minimum requirements from 1st January 1995 EEC directive 86/166/EEC states that each cage shall have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a minimum cage area for each bird of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000 cm² where one hen is kept in the cage • 750 cm² where two hens are kept in the cage • 550 cm² where three hens are kept in the cage • 450 cm² where four or more hens are kept in a cage 2) a height over the minimum cage area of not less than 35 cm and at least 40 cm over 65% of that area; 3) a slope not exceeding 14% or 8 degrees for floors with a rectangular wire mesh and 21.3% or 12 degrees for other types of floor. 	
Deep Litter		
Birds being reared for laying	17 kg / m ²	
Adult laying birds	17 kg / m ²	No more than 7 birds/ m ²
Table Chickens	34 kg / m ²	
Straw yards		
Birds being reared for laying	10 kg / m ²	
Adult laying birds	8 kg/ m ²	No more than 3 birds/ m ²
Housing for free-range birds	As for deep litter systems	

36. If disease (particularly respiratory) or any vice becomes evident, by observation or by receipt of unsatisfactory grading returns from egg packing stations or by rejections from processing plants, expert qualified advice should be sought to deal with the problem. Stocking and ventilation rates should also be checked and variations in stocking and ventilation should be considered in order to minimise the likelihood of recurrence of the problem.

FEED AND WATER

37. Birds should have easy access to adequate, nutritious, and hygienic feed each day, and to adequate fresh water at all times except in the case of therapeutic or prophylactic treatment. Care should be taken at each change of system to ensure that the birds find the feed and water points. Birds in cages should be provided with a minimum length of 10 cm feed trough space per bird; each bird should also have access to two drinkers unless each cage is provided with a water trough of the same length as the feed trough. Systems which call for the regular complete withholding of feed and water on any day should not be adopted. (See also paragraph 39 on induced moulting). However, feed, but not water, may be withheld for up to 12 hours prior to slaughter.
38. Stale or contaminated feed or water should not be allowed to accumulate and should be replaced immediately. Efforts should be made to minimise the risk of drinking water freezing.
39. In no circumstances should birds be induced to moult by withholding feed and water.

MANAGEMENT

General

40. Frequent inspection of the stock is essential because the condition and reactions of the birds are the main guides to their welfare. An inspection must be made at least once daily (4) in addition to the looking-over which birds receive during routine management work (see also paragraph 14 and 30). Injured or dead birds should be removed promptly, as should individual sick birds.
41. It is desirable to establish a regular work routine. Care should be taken not to frighten the birds with sudden unaccustomed movement or noise, but without placing too much emphasis on quietness.
42. Precautions should be taken by adequate control measures to protect the birds from and avoid disturbances by foxes, rodent and other animals.

43. Mouldy litter should not be used. There should be frequent checks to ensure that litter does not become excessively wet or dry, or infested with mites or other harmful organisms.
44. Premises and equipment should be regularly cleansed. Thorough disinfection should be carried out before restocking and at other suitable times to reduce the danger of continuing infection.
45. Vaccinations, injections and similar procedures should be undertaken by competent, trained operators. Care should be taken to avoid injury and unnecessary disturbances of the birds.
46. Artificial insemination is a highly-skilled procedure and should be carried out only by competent, trained personnel maintaining a high standard of hygiene and taking care to avoid injury and unnecessary disturbance of the birds.

Beak Trimming

47. Beak trimming may be carried out for chicks that will become laying hens provided it is carried out before 10 days of age and carried out by qualified staff otherwise it should only be carried out only as a last resort, that is, when it is clear that more suffering would be caused in the flock if it were not done.
48. When an outbreak of vice occurs it should be tackled immediately by appropriate changes in the system of management, for example, by reduction of the lighting intensity.
49. If beak trimming is necessary it should be done by a skilled operator or under his supervision by means of a suitable instrument to remove:
 - (i) not more than a one-third part of both its upper and lower beaks, measured from the tip towards the entrance to the nostrils, if carried out as a single operation; or
 - (ii) not more than a one-third part of its upper beak only, measured as aforesaid, and the arrest of any subsequent haemorrhage from the beak by cauterisation.

Dubbing (7)

50. If dubbing is necessary it must be done within the first 72 hours of life, using curved scissors. Dubbing of older birds is a difficult and severe operation which must be done only by a veterinary surgeon.

Toe-cutting (7)

51. To avoid injury to hens during mating, the last joint of the inside toes of male breeding birds may be removed. This must be done within the first 72 hours of life. A veterinary surgeon must carry out the operation if it is performed after the first 72 hours of life.

Dewinging (7)

52. Dewinging, pinioning, notching or tendon severing, which involve mutilation of wing tissues, must not be undertaken. When it is necessary to reduce the effects of flightiness, the flight feathers of one wing may be clipped.

Blinkers (7)

53. The use of blinkers which pierce the nasal septum is illegal. Other forms of blinkering are not recommended.

Castration and devoicing (7)

54. Surgical castration and devoicing must not be undertaken.

DISPOSAL OF UNWANTED CHICKS AND HATCHERY WASTE

55. Unwanted chicks awaiting slaughter should be treated as humanely as those intended for retention or sale.
56. Chicks should always be humanely killed by a skilled operator. The method which should be used is to place them in an atmosphere with the highest obtainable concentration of CO₂ and a source of 100% CO₂ should therefore be used as the disposing agent. This is the most humane method and detailed advice on its use can be obtained by contacting DAFF. However, where very small numbers of chicks are involved they may be killed humanely by dislocation of the neck or by decapitation. Whatever method used the chicks should be thoroughly inspected afterwards to ensure that all are dead.
57. Methods of killing which involve suffocation by tightly packing the unwanted chicks in a confined space, or by drowning, or in which irritant

liquids such as carbon tetrachloride are allowed to come into direct contact with the chicks, are inhumane and must not be used.

58. All hatchery waste should be treated (for example, by rapid maceration) so as to kill instantaneously any living embryos.

HANDLING AND TRANSPORT OF STOCK ON THE PREMISES (8)

General

59. The proper handling of birds requires skill, and it should be undertaken only by competent persons who have been appropriately trained. It should be carried out quietly and confidently, exercising care to avoid unnecessary struggling which could bruise or otherwise injure the birds. Care must be taken in catching birds in loose-housed systems in order to avoid creating panic and subsequent injury to and smothering of the birds. Particular care is also needed so as to avoid injury to birds being placed in or removed from cages, especially where the whole of the cage front does not open.

Day-old chicks

60. Chicks for despatch should be healthy and vigorous, and should be placed in suitably ventilated boxes without overcrowding. Care should be taken to ensure adequate ventilation of the boxes, particularly when they are stacked, and to prevent the chicks from direct sunlight and cold draughts.
61. Packing materials used inside boxes should be dry and free from moulds.
62. Chicks should be transferred to the brooders as soon as possible.

Growing and adult birds

63. The design, size and state of repair of any container used to carry birds should allow them to be put in, conveyed and taken out without injury. Care should also be taken when crates are loaded on to vehicles, and in their transportation and unloading. Adequate ventilation for the birds is essential at all times.
64. Birds should be protected from bad weather and from excessively hot or cold conditions. They should not be allowed to become stressed (as indicated by prolonged panting) by being left in containers exposed to strong direct sunlight.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS: RANGE BIRDS

Management

65. Land on which range birds are kept for prolonged periods may become 'fowl sick', i.e. contaminated with organisms which cause or carry disease to an extent which could seriously prejudice the health of poultry on the land. The time taken for land to become fowl sick depends on the type of land and density of stocking. A European Community Regulation (1943/85)(6) on the labelling of eggs requires that eggs labelled 'free-range' must originate from a range system with a stocking rate not exceeding 1,000 birds per hectare. In addition, the Regulation also requires the ground to which such birds have access to be mainly covered with vegetation. The stocking rate to be used in this country should generally be lower. Factors such as soil type, drainage and size of colony and frequency of flock rotation are very important in deciding the number of birds that a particular area can carry. Heavy, poorly drained soil can carry fewer birds than land which is light and well drained. In general land can be stocked more heavily by birds in small flocks of 100 or so when accommodated in well spaced and regularly moved houses than when kept in larger flocks in static houses (See paragraph 35). Flocks and portable houses should be moved regularly to avoid fowl sick or continuously muddy conditions leading to ill-health or discomfort of the birds.
66. It is important to ensure that the land to which the birds have access is adequately covered with suitable, properly managed vegetation.
67. Precautions should be taken to protect the birds against dogs, cats and other predators.
68. Shelter from rain and sun should always be available. Windbreaks should be provided on exposed sites.
69. Attention is also directed to the relevant recommendations in paragraphs 40 to 54 inclusive.

Housing

70. Housing used by range birds should be of sufficient standard to ensure that the birds are not subject to distress caused by extremes of temperature.
71. When birds are transferred to range houses, precautions should be taken to avoid overcrowding and suffocation, particularly during the first few nights. Cannibalism is a danger under this system, and birds should not be confined for too long during hours of daylight or subjected to direct sunlight during confinement. Attention is also directed to paragraph 12.

72. All birds must have ready access to range and there should be sufficient openings so spaced and of sufficient size to allow a reasonable proportion of birds to enter or leave at any one time.
73. Unless the house is moved frequently it is good practice to protect the ground immediately adjacent to it, e.g. by providing slatted or wire mesh platforms, covered verandas or areas of gravel.

Feed and water

74. Feed and water should never be allowed to remain in a stale or contaminated condition. In freezing conditions, particular attention should be given to the provision of water. (See also paragraphs 23 and 37).

REFERENCES

(1) Training courses which follow the Code recommendations are arranged for stockmen by DAFF Knockaloe. Proficiency testing in relevant subjects is available through the National Proficiency Tests Council.

(2) The Cruelty to Animals Act 1997, lays down provisions concerning the standard methods of humane killing of poultry.

(3) The Health and Safety Executive recommends that, for human safety, the following levels should not be exceeded:

Name of Gas	Long term exposure Limit (ppm) (8 hour day)	Short term exposure Limit (ppm) (15 minutes)
Ammonia	25	35
Carbon Monoxide	30	200
Carbon Dioxide	5,000	15,000
Hydrogen Sulphide	10	15

(4) The Welfare of Livestock Regulations 1996 requires that laying hens and all automatic and mechanical equipment upon which such stock depend to be thoroughly inspected at least once each day.

(5) Any installation or extension involving mains electricity should comply with the Regulations for the Electrical Equipment of Buildings issued by the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

(6) For labelling purposes only, Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1943/85 (OJ No 181 of 13.7.85) requires that poultry enterprises must comply with the following minimum criteria in order to mark their small egg packs with the terms shown:

(a) 'Free-range eggs':

- Hens to have continuous daytime access to open-air runs
- The ground to which hens have access is mainly covered with vegetation
- The maximum stocking density is not greater than 1,000 hens per hectare of ground available to the hens or one hen per 10 m².
- The interior of the building must satisfy the conditions at (c) or (d).

(b) 'Semi-intensive eggs':

- Hens have continuous daytime access to open-air runs.

- The ground to which hens have access is mainly covered with vegetation.
- The maximum stocking density is not greater than 4,000 hens per hectare of ground available to the hens or one hen per 2.5m²
- The interior of the building must satisfy the conditions at (c) or (d).

(c) 'Deep-litter eggs'

- The maximum stocking density is not greater than seven hens per square meter of floor space available to the hens.
- At least a third of this floor area is covered with a litter material such as straw, wood shavings, sand or turf.
- A sufficiently large part of the floor area available to the hens is used for collection of bird droppings.

(d) 'Perchery (Barn eggs)':

- The maximum stocking density is not greater than 25 hens per square meter of floor space available to the hens.
- The interior of the building is fitted with perches of a length sufficient to ensure at least 15 cm of perch space for each hen.

(7) The Cruelty to Animals Act 1997 prevents any minor operation from being performed without due care and humanity.

(8) Regulations for the protection of poultry when being carried by water, rail or road, as contained in the Welfare of Livestock During Transport Order 1997. The recommendations made in paragraphs 59 to 62 inclusive relate to handling and transport operations which are not covered in the Order.



Department of Environment, Food & Agriculture
The Slieau Whallian, Patrick Road
St Johns, Isle of Man, IM4 3AS