



IFOAM EU position on poultry
production

Chris Atkinson

- IFOAM EU – a short introduction
- EU Review of poultry standards – timetable?
- IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing - May 2012

I

IFOAM EU – a short introduction

- Independent regional group within the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
- Office in Brussels since 2003
- 300 members in EU-27, Accession countries and EFTA

EU Review of poultry standards – timetable?

- Should be underway now.
- Expert Group (EGTOP) reported June 2012 – proposals usually follow quickly
- However - Commission now heavily involved in reacting to Court of Auditors Report and with a wider review of organic legislation

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Background –

- acknowledges that current rules are 'insufficiently developed'
- Calls for an approach based on 'progressive steps' supported by 'targeted and practical research'

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

General principles –

- ‘integrated with crop and pasture management at the farm level’
- ‘access to free range throughout the breeding, rearing and production stages (weather conditions and health situation permitting)’
- ‘housing & range is geared to optimising health and welfare which thus determines limits on housing & flock size, stocking densities & rotation and enrichment of pasture...’

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Pullets and day olds–

- Full use of organic pullets and day olds within 5 years of new rules
- National plans to be produced to underpin progress
- Research to support development of dual purpose breeds – prefer not to kill male chicks.
- Calls for rigorous enforcement of current 'organic must be used when available' criteria

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Breed and strains–

- ‘..slow growing and suitable strain the following criteria must be assessed:
 - ☐ Daily growth
 - ☐ Gait
 - ☐ Prevalence of breast blisters
- ‘..evaluate strains against the above...on EU-level .. evaluation system must be ready one year after this proposal has entered into force & the list must have been initiated ..within 2 years after the system is in place’.

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Stocking density–

- For meat birds in first 4 weeks – remove the 10 bird/m² restriction & allow 21kg/m²

Popholes –

- Link to 'useable area' to guarantee that 'multilevel systems' have sufficient popholes – some inconsistency in current application based on considering only floor or ground level area.

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Access to pasture–

- Acknowledge that 1/3 of life provision is weak and leads to inconsistent implementation
- Recommend strengthening to refer to physical condition of birds and require documentation of weather and other conditions that might prevent allowing access to range

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Access to pasture

Parent flocks–

- Recommend that a veranda might be acceptable if biosecurity concerns cannot be addressed.

All other flocks

- At least 50% of the required area must be covered with vegetation.

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Access to pasture

All other flocks (continued)

- Birds should have access to shelter within 20 meters anywhere in the outdoor area
- The distance from the pop-holes to the far end of the outdoor area should not exceed 150 meters
- 'with static houses, shelter should be natural vegetation consisting of woody plants.. artificial coverage should be provided until the trees and bushes have reached a size that provides shelter'

IFOAM EU Position paper on poultry and rearing, May 2012

Laying pullets–

- Flock size up to 10,000
- Minimum indoor area
 - from week 0–7: 24 animals/m² usable area.
 - from week 8–18: 12 animals/m² usable area.
- Minimum length of perches
 - week 0–7: 4 cm per animal.
 - week 7–18: 12 cm per animal.
- Access to pasture – fully feathered and no later than 10 weeks

End