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How various laying hen standards compare to the CIWF criteria for higher animal welfare: Laying Hens

			Minimum requirements for higher welfare systems								Additional recommendations for higher welfare systems				
Certification	Label / Initiative	Country	Are laying hens cage-free?	Are pullets cage-free? ¹	Are comb systems forbidden? ²	Do hens have enough space? ³	Do hens have sufficient nest boxes to lay their eggs on?	Do hens have access to perches?	Are hens provided with litter on the floor? ⁴	Do hens have additional opportunities for pecking, scratching & dustbathing? ⁵	Do hens have access to natural lighting?	Is beak trimming forbidden?	Do hens have access to an outdoor range?	Do hens have access to a wintergarden?	Is the elimination of male chicks after hatching prohibited?
LEGEND			YES	YES - pullets reared cage free and any initial confinement ≤ 2 weeks	YES	YES - Maximum 7 hens/m ² of usable area and Maximum 15 hens/m ² of floor area	YES - Colony : 1 m ² of nest area/120 hens Individual : 5 hens/nest max	YES - at least 18 cm/hen of usable perching space ⁶	YES - Litter on at least 1/3 of the floor area and 250 cm ² of litter area/hen (meets EU legislation) ⁷ Litter present from day 0	YES - ≥ 2 types of enrichment in the barn (dustbathing, scratching, pecking) ⁸	YES - Daylight-permeable surfaces represents at least 3% of the floor surface	YES - Beak trimming is forbidden	YES - Covered range (eg trees, bushes, artificial shelters)	YES - Well-designed and enriched veranda or wintergarden, not included in the stocking density calculation	YES - Male chick culling prohibited. Any in-ovo sexing must be performed by ED 9
LEGEND				YES - pullets reared cage free, length of initial confinement not specified or > 2 weeks		YES - Maximum 9 hens/m ² of usable area And Maximum 18 hens/m ² of floor area	YES - Colony : 1 m ² of nest area/120 hens Individual : 7 hens/nest max (meets EU legislation)	YES - 15 cm/hen of usable perching space (meets EU legislation)	YES	YES - ≥ 1 type of enrichment in the barn (dustbathing, scratching, pecking) OR range access provided	YES		YES - Veranda or wintergarden provided	YES - Male chick culling prohibited	
EU Organic Standards		EU	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
EU Barn Standards		EU	YES	NO - no pullet standards	NO - not specified	MAYBE - Total usable area: 9 hens/m ²	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
EU Free-Range Standards		EU	YES	NO - no pullet standards	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Hen's Ask ⁹		EU	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	MAYBE - for new sheds only	YES
Certified Humane		Global	YES	MAYBE - on litter	YES	NO - up to 11 hens/m ² of total usable area	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Certified Humane (free-range, pasture raised)		Global	YES	MAYBE - on litter	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Demeter (Bio - Dynamic, Research Institute)		Global	YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE (YES in EU) - quantity not specified	MAYBE - perch length not specified	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Australian Certified Organic Egg Standards of Australia (Barn)		Australia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - not carried out routinely	YES	NO	NO
Egg Standards of Australia (Free Range)		Australia	YES	YES	NO - not specified	NO - up to 12 hens/m ² of usable area	YES	MAYBE - 15 cm per hen but 7.5 cm/hen allowed in some circumstances	NO - only recommended < 250 cm ² /hen	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Free Range Egg and Poultry Australia Ltd		Australia	YES	NO - no pullet standards	YES	NO - up to 10 hens/m ² of total usable area	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
Humane Choice		Australia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Organic Food Chain		Australia	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - unclear	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
RSPCA Approved (Barn)		Australia	YES	YES	NO - not specified	MAYBE - total usable area: 9 hens/m ² (But 7 hens/m ² for floor-based systems)	YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - recommended	MAYBE - permitted, but guidance to phase out beak trimming	NO	NO	NO
RSPCA Approved (Free-Range)		Australia	YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - recommended	MAYBE - permitted, but guidance to phase out beak trimming	YES	NO	NO
Produtor do Bem (Level 1, Indoor)		Brazil	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Produtor do Bem (Level 2, Indoor Plus)		Brazil	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Produtor do Bem (Level 3, Free Range)		Brazil	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
China Chain Store & Franchise Association ¹⁰		China	YES	YES	YES	NO - up to 11 hens/m ² of total usable area	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO
Biocohérence		France	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	MAYBE - national legislation in place
Etiquette Bien-Etre Animal : Level D ¹¹		France	YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Etiquette Bien-Etre Animal : Level C ¹¹		France	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - Total usable area: 9 hens/m ²	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Etiquette Bien-Etre Animal : Level B ¹¹		France	YES	YES	YES		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Etiquette Bien-Etre Animal : Level A ¹¹		France	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
Label Rouge		France	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	MAYBE - national legislation in place
Nature et progrès		France	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	MAYBE - if range unavailable	MAYBE - national legislation in place
KAT (barn, free-range)		Germany	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	MAYBE - only for free-range	MAYBE - only for free-range	YES
KAT organic		Germany	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Neuland		Germany	YES	MAYBE - on litter	YES	MAYBE - total usable area: 6 hens/m ² , up to 4 tiers allowed	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Tierschutz (1 star)		Germany	YES	YES	MAYBE - 1 week restriction permitted	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES
Tierschutz premium (2 star)		Germany	YES	YES	MAYBE - 1 week restriction permitted	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Agriqualita		Italy	YES	NO - no pullet standards	NO - not specified	MAYBE - total usable area: 9 hens/m ²	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Notes	
¹ Pulleys	If the standard is requiring a floor based system and/or an outdoor access for pullets, we assume that the system is cage-free and the standard is marked green.
² Combi systems	If the standard clearly specifies that combi systems are prohibited OR requires free access to all tiers/the floor/the litter within an aviary system OR requires free-range access, the standard is marked green If the standard allows a temporary confinement up to 1 week OR the standard allows confinement > 1 week but provides range access, the standard is marked orange If the standard doesn't specify any of the criteria above, the standard is marked red
³ Density	If multi-tier systems are limited to max 3 levels (floor + max. 2 tiers) with a stocking density ≤ 7 hens/m ² of usable area, the standard is marked light green. If the standard indicates a maximum indoor stocking density ≤ 9 hens/m ² of usable area, without specifying any limitation at floor level, the standard is marked orange.
⁴ Litter	If the standard specifies the litter substrate (eg. straw, sawdust), we assume that adequate litter was provided from day 0
⁵ Enrichment	All systems with outdoor access automatically scored as yes. If the standard doesn't require any other dustbathing substrate than litter, we assume that there isn't additional area for dustbathing.
⁶ Perches	CIWF Best recommendation: At least 22 cm/bird usable perching space is provided.
⁷ Litter	CIWF Best recommendation: Litter is provided over the whole floor area, at least 560cm ² per hen.
⁸ Enrichment	CIWF Best recommendation: Minimum of 4 pecking substrates per 1000 hens and extra opportunities for dustbathing.
⁹ Hen's Ask	The Hen's Ask is not a certification scheme but a set of criteria defined by Eurogroup for Animals and its members to define higher welfare standards for laying hens in Europe.
¹⁰ China Chain Store & Franchise Association	A set of guidelines that provide best practices for cage-free egg production suited to China for small- and medium-sized egg producer enterprises.
¹¹ Etiquette Bien-Etre Animal	The specifications will be available for free download from 29 October 2024
¹² Welfare	An outcomes-based certification scheme based on the Welfare Quality® and AWIN protocols
¹³ South African Poultry Association	Set of guidelines compiled by the Southern African Poultry Association as a guide for all poultry and poultry products produced in South Africa.
For EU based standards:	If the standard doesn't clearly address a criteria that is covered by EU regulation (barn, free-range or organic rules), we assumed compliance with the EU legislative requirements.