

Guidance on sampling

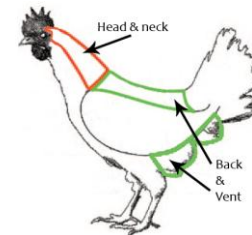
Welfare outcome assessments to be carried out in one house only, on the oldest flock on site. (For schemes where individual houses are certified separately, assessments to be carried out in all houses but only recorded and fed back on the oldest flock on site.) If multiple houses at same age, choose a house at random. Where individual birds are assessed, ensure samples are taken from a range of the functional locations in a unit; these can include: litter area, slatted area, raised perches, lower tier, upper tier, range. Ensure samples are taken from a range of geographical locations within the house/range, for example a sample on the range close to the popholes and a sample in the middle of the range. Birds should be sampled to provide a reasonable representation of the proportion of birds in different locations at the time of the visit. For example, if 20% of the birds are on the range then two different samples, each assessing 5 birds, should be from the range (up to a maximum of 5 out of 10 samples on the range). Ensure the birds chosen are a random sample in that location, e.g. sample every 5th bird, and avoid being drawn to certain birds.

3 or more birds out of the 50 to be assessed jointly with the stockperson (record assessor's score only).

1. Feather loss

Sample size: 50 birds (3 or more assessed jointly with the stockperson)

Method of assessment: Assess and score 5 birds in each of 10 different areas of house and/or range. Visually assess the head/neck area back/vent area of the bird (without handling birds).



Score separately for **head/neck** area and **back/vent** area:

Scoring:

- 0 = No/Minimal feather loss**
No bare skin visible, no or slight wear, only single feathers missing
- 1 = Slight feather loss**
Moderate wear, damaged feathers or 2 or more adjacent feathers missing up to bare skin visible < 5cm maximum dimension
- 2 = Moderate/Severe feather loss**
Bare skin visible ≥ 5cm maximum dimension

2. Bird dirtiness

Sample size: 50 birds (3 or more assessed jointly with the stockperson)

Method of assessment: Assess and score 5 birds in each of 10 different areas of the house and/or range. Visual assessment of one side of the bird, except the feet and legs.

- Scoring:**
- 0 = Clean**
The bird is clean
 - 1 = Moderate dirtiness**
There is soiling on at least one part of the bird but no area ≥ 5cm maximum dimension
 - 2 = Substantial dirtiness**
There is soiling on one or more parts of the bird ≥ 5cm maximum dimension

3. Beak trimming

Sample size: Whole flock

Method of assessment:

- a) Refer to chick placement records and/or ask the unit manager to determine whether /when the birds' were beak trimmed.
- b) Visually assess the birds' beaks during the assessment.

Record:

- a) - **Flock not beak trimmed**
 - Flock beak trimmed before 10 days of age
 - Flock beak trimmed as emergency procedure under veterinary advice
- b) **Number** of any birds seen which have more than 1/3 beak removed.

4. Antagonistic behaviours

Sample size: Whole flock

Method of assessment: Observe and listen to the behaviour of birds in the house for one minute (after allowing time for birds to return to undisturbed behaviour) and during the rest of the time spent in the house or on the range.

Antagonistic behaviours include two distinct behaviours:

Aggressive behaviour - fighting, aggressive pecking at or chasing other birds.
A social behaviour to establish pecking order.

Injurious feather pecking - includes pulling out feathers, pecking at wounds or vent.
Believed to be redirected foraging behaviour.

Both are often signalled by a loud squawk or vocalisation.

Record: **Number** of incidents of antagonistic behaviour observed or heard. Identify, if possible, whether either aggressive behaviour and/or injurious feather pecking are observed.

5. Flightiness

Sample size: Whole flock

Method of assessment: Observe the behaviour of birds during the assessment.

Record:

- Calm** - In general, the birds appear undisturbed by your presence or actively approach you
- Cautious** - In general, the birds' behaviour is disturbed by your presence but the birds do not appear actively alarmed
- Flighty** - The birds appear actively alarmed by your presence

6. Birds needing further care

Sample size: Whole flock

Method of assessment: Assess the whole flock for sick or injured birds that would benefit from hospitalisation (removal from the main flock) or should be culled.

This would include obviously sick birds (with fluffed up feathers and an inactive, unresponsive appearance) and birds with body wounds that have fresh blood that might attract cannibalistic attention from other birds. Include birds in hospital pen that should be culled.

Record: **Number** of any sick/injured birds found that would benefit from hospitalisation or culling. Record if possible the type of sickness/injury: sick, loose droppings, skin lesions, eye problem, lameness, other.

7. Mortality

Sample size: Whole flock

Method of assessment: Refer to records and/or ask the unit manager

Record:

- a) Mortality of previous flock
- b) Mortality to date
- c) Mortality to 40 weeks (where applicable)

Record if possible, causes of mortality