

3. Animal production

3.1 Basic principles

Healthy, productive and long-lived farm animals that provide high-quality food and manure must be kept in as natural and species-appropriate a manner as possible.

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3.1.1 Livestock ceilings

The size of the livestock must be in line with the utilised agricultural area. The number of animals on an organic farm may only be such that a level of 170 kg of nitrogen/ha and year is not exceeded. Organic farms with a livestock that produces amounts of nitrogen in excess of 170 kg/ha and year can enter into a contractual cooperation with other organic farms (manure agreement). All cooperating farms together must not exceed an aggregate total of 170 kg of nitrogen per ha AA and year per farm from their own livestock and from purchases of farmyard manure.

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3.1.2 Purchases of animals

The offspring must come from the farm itself or from another organic farm. Where purchases of additional animals become necessary, such bought-in animals must, in principle, be organic animals. In case there are not enough organic animals available, it is permissible under certain circumstances to purchase conventionally reared breeding animals. For more detailed provisions in this regard, see the respective chapters for the different animal species.

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In the event of disasters (e.g., epidemics, fires, ...), it is permissible to purchase conventionally reared animals to renew or rebuild a farm's livestock, provided that there are no organic animals available and that an approval from the competent authority has been obtained prior to such purchase.

3.1.3 Conversion periods

In connection with any purchases of conventionally reared animals, conversion periods must be observed before such animals and their products can be declared as 'organic'. For more detailed provisions in this regard, see the respective chapters for the different animal species. For general information on conversion periods, see chapters 1.4.4 and 8.2.

3.1.4 Breeding of animals

When breeding farm animals, room must also be left to accommodate the diversity of breeds. Genetic engineering, cloning, embryo transfer, **and the purchase of animals bred using these methods are prohibited.**

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3.1.5 Animal care

3.1.5.1 Husbandry requirements

All animals kept in husbandry systems where the wellbeing of the animals depends on regular care provided by humans must be checked in on at least once a day. This also applies to mechanical installations and equipment whose proper functioning is crucial to the wellbeing of the animals. Defects must be rectified immediately; where this is not possible, appropriate measures must be taken to safeguard the wellbeing of the animals.

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Feeding or keeping animals in conditions leading to anaemia is prohibited, and so is force-feeding. Husbandry practices, including stocking density and accommodation, must be appropriate for the developmental, physiological, and ethological needs of the animals.

Hoof care must be carried out regularly and competently as necessary and according to horn condition. The loading and transporting of animals must be carried out with the proper care and, as far as possible, without causing stress to the animals. Having loading facilities on the farm is recommended. The use of electric shocks to get the animals to move and of medication to calm them down is prohibited.

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3.1.6 Feeding

3.1.6.1 Origin of feed

Generally, the animals must be fed with the farm's own organically grown feed. Purchased feed shall come primarily from BIO AUSTRIA-certified farms in Austria. Before purchasing concentrated feed (cereals, maize, grain legumes, etc.) from non-BIO AUSTRIA-certified organic farms (agricultural producers and/or dealers), such feed must pass BIO AUSTRIA's approval procedure for arable crops.

Only such feed that is listed in the Austrian Catalogue of Inputs to Organic Farming (*Betriebsmittelkatalog*) and designated as BIO-AUSTRIA-certified therein may be purchased as organic compound feed. In BIO AUSTRIA-certified compound feed, any accidental and technically unavoidable contamination with GMOs is tolerated up to no more than 0.1 %.

Prior to using supplementary feed (supplementing the supply with vitamins, minerals, and active ingredients), it must be determined whether the feed complies with the EU Organic Regulation and the BIO AUSTRIA guidelines. Where a product is about to be used which is not listed in the Catalogue of Inputs, its conformity with organic farming guidelines must be verified by consulting the inspection body before any such use. Getting a prescription for conventional supplementary feed from a veterinarian is not permitted.

Before importing feed from abroad, a relevant application for approval must be submitted to BIO AUSTRIA. For more detailed information in this regard, see www.bio-austria.at/formulare.

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3.1.6.2 Exceptions

3.1.6.2.1 In-conversion feed

In the following paragraphs, all percentages relate to the dry matter content of feed of plant origin and are calculated annually. Feed rations may, on average, contain up to 30 % of in-conversion feed if such feed is being purchased. Where in-conversion feed comes from the respective farm itself, this percentage may be increased to 100 %.

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Up to 20 % of feed rations may come from grazing on or harvesting permanent pastures, areas with perennial feed crops, or from protein crops in the first year of conversion if these areas are part of one's own farm and had not been part of the farm during the previous five years. If both in-conversion feed as well as feed from areas in the first year of conversion are used, then the total amount of such feed taken together must not exceed the above specified maximum amounts for in-conversion feed.

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3.1.6.2.2 Conventional feed

Where organically grown feed is not available, conventional feed may be used under the following circumstances:

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- Conventional spices and herbs up to a maximum amount of 1 % of the feed ration, if they were produced or processed without chemical solvents
- For pigs and poultry, the following conventional plant and animal protein feedstuffs may be used up to an amount of 5 % and no longer than until 31 December 2020, provided that they were produced or processed without chemical solvents:
 - rape seed*, sunflower seed, linseed and pumpkin seed cakes
 - potato protein
 - maize gluten* only for poultry
 - all protein feedstuffs made from milk or milk products; curd and sour milk may only be fed to animals if they are of organic quality.

* When using a product marked with an asterisk “*” the dealer must certify that it is of domestic origin, or the organic farm must obtain a warranty declaration for the respective product from its manufacturer stating that the genetic engineering ban has been complied with.

From 1 January 2021 on, feeding up to 5 % of conventional feedstuffs will be limited to young poultry and piglets up to 35 kg.

3.1.6.2.3 Feed for trout-like fish

The following products may be fed only to trout-like fish:

- feedstuffs from organic aquaculture production
- fish meal and fish oil from processing residues of fish from organic aquaculture production
- fish meal, fish oil, and other fish ingredients from processing residues of sustainably fished wild fish for human consumption.

3.1.6.2.4 Emergencies

In emergencies such as extreme weather conditions, the authority may permit the use of conventional feed during a limited time period. If, due to an emergency, purchases of conventional basic feed become necessary, then an approval must be obtained from BIO AUSTRIA. Conventional maize silage is not recognised as basic feed for ruminant animals – not even in case of an emergency recognised as such by the competent authority.

3.1.6.3 Further approved feed additives

| Feed materials of mineral origin | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Carbonic acid shell-bearing limestone, carbonic acid algae lime (Maerl lime), lithotamnum, calcium gluconate, calcium carbonate, defluorinated monocalcium phosphate, defluorinated dicalcium phosphate, magnesium oxide (anhydrous magnesia), magnesium sulphate, magnesium chloride, magnesium carbonate, calcium magnesium phosphate, magnesium phosphate, monosodium phosphate, calcium sodium phosphate, sodium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, sodium carbonate, sodium sulphate, potassium chloride | |
| Other feed materials | |
| Saccharomyces cerevisiae, Saccharomyces carlsbergiensis | |
| Technological additives | |
| Preservatives | E 200 sorbic acid, E 236 formic acid, E 237 sodium formiate, E 260 acetic acid, E 270 lactic acid*, E 280 propionic acid, E 330 citric acid* |
| Antioxidants | 1b306(i) tocopherol-containing extracts from vegetable oils 1b306(ii) highly tocopherol-containing extracts from vegetable oils with a high delta-tocopherol content* |
| Emulsifiers | Ic322 lecithin: only for fish feed made from organically produced raw materials |
| Binders, anti-caking agents, coagulants | E 412 guar gum E 535 sodium ferrocyanide: maximum dose 20 mg/kg of NaCl (calculated as ferrocyanide anion) E 551b colloidal silica E 551c kieselguhr (purified diatomaceous earth) 1m558i bentonite E 559 kaolinitic clays, asbestos-free E 560 natural mixtures of steatites and chlorite E 561 vermiculite E 562 sepiolite E 566 natrolite-phonolite 1g568 clinoptilolite of sedimentary origin E 599 perlite |
| Silage additives | Only permitted for silage production if due to weather conditions no adequate fermentation is possible: 1k enzymes* and microorganisms* 1k236 formic acid 1k237 sodium formate 1k280 propionic acid 1k281 sodium propionate |
| Sensory additives | |
| 2b flavouring substances | Only extracts from agricultural products |
| Castanea sativa Mill. | Sweet chestnut wood extract |
| Nutrition-physiological additives | |
| Vitamins* and provitamins* | Obtained from agricultural products. For monogastric animals and fish, only synthetically obtained vitamins may be used that are identical to the vitamins obtained from agricultural products For ruminants, only the synthetically obtained vitamins A, D, and E may be used that are identical to the vitamins obtained from agricultural products. |
| Betaine anhydrate | Only for monogastric animals, of natural origin, and, where available, of organic farming origin. |

| Nutrition-physiological additives | | | EU/ BA |
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| Trace elements | E1 iron | 3b101 iron(II) carbonate (siderite) 3b103 iron(II) sulphate monohydrate 3b104 iron(II) sulphate heptahydrate | |
| | iodine | 3b201 potassium iodide 3b202 calcium iodate, anhydrous 3b203 coated granulated calcium iodate, anhydrous | |
| | cobalt | 3b301 cobalt(II) acetate tetrahydrate 3b302 cobalt(II) carbonate 3b303 cobalt(II) carbonate hydroxide(2:3) monohydrate 3b304 coated granulated cobalt(II) carbonate 3b305 cobalt(II) sulphate heptahydrate | |
| | E 4 copper | 3b402 copper(II) carbonate dihydroxy monohydrate 3b404 copper(II) oxide 3b405 copper(II) sulphate pentahydrate 3b409 dicopper chloride trihydroxide (TBCC) | |
| | E 5 manganese | 3b502 manganese(II) oxide 3b503 manganese(II) sulphate monohydrate | |
| | E 6 zinc | 3b603 zinc oxide 3b604 zinc sulphate heptahydrate 3b605 zinc sulphate monohydrate 3b609 zinc chloride hydroxide monohydrate (TBZC) | |
| | E 7 molybdenum | 3b701 sodium molybdate dihydrate | |
| | E 8 selenium | 3b801 sodium selenite 3b8.10, 3b8.11, 3b8.12, 3b8.13 and 3b8.17 inactivated selenium yeast | |
| Zootechnical additives | | | EU |
| Microorganisms* | | | |
| Enzymes | Not permitted for BIO-AUSTRIA farms! | | |
| * When using a feedstuff or additive marked with an asterisk "*" the dealer must certify that it is of domestic origin, or the organic farm must obtain a warranty declaration for the respective product from its manufacturer stating that the genetic engineering ban has been complied with! | | | |
| 3.1.6.4 Prohibited feed additives The use of antibiotics, coccidiostats, and other medicinal products, growth promoters, and synthetic amino acids as feed additives is prohibited. | | | |
| 3.1.6.5 Feeding of herbivores (cattle, sheep, goats, horses, fenced game, llamas, and alpacas) At least 60 % of the feed must come from the respective farm itself or – where this is not possible – from other organic farms in the same region. | | | |

Roughage for ruminants

At least 60 % of the daily feed rations for herbivores must at all times be roughage. In cattle feeding, the average amount of concentrated feed on a farm is no more than 15 % of the total annual intake of dry matter.

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Feeding of young herbivores (calves, lambs, kids, horses)

Young mammals are fed based on natural milk, preferably mother's milk (! no organic milk replacers), and this for a minimum period of:

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- cattle and horses: three months
- sheep and goats: 45 days

Calves must be given structured roughage from the second week of their lives.

3.1.6.6 Feeding of pigs and poultry

At least 20 % of the feed must come from the respective farm itself or – where this is not possible – be produced by other organic farms or feedstuff businesses from the same region.

Fresh, dried, or ensiled roughage must be added to the daily rations for pigs and poultry. Piglets are reared with natural milk, preferably mother's milk (! no organic milk replacers), for a minimum period of 40 days.

3.1.7 Grazing

During the vegetation period, herbivores must be given access to pasture land when the state of the ground and the weather conditions permit it. **If at least 0.1 ha of pasture/livestock unit (LU) is available for the dairy cows, then the dairy cows must be put out to pasture. If the available area of the farm does not allow pasture grazing of the dairy cows, the animals must be given green fodder (30 to 35 kg of fresh matter or at least one third of their daily fodder requirement).** It is up to the farm manager to decide which areas are to be used to meet the grazing requirements.

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3.1.7.1 Grazing requirements

In the 2020 grazing season, one can choose between two options for calculating the number of roughage-consuming LUs to be put out to pasture:

- 1 roughage-consuming LU per hectare of grazeable grassland, or
- at least 50 % of the roughage-consuming LUs on the farm.

The farm manager decides which animals or animal groups are to be put out to pasture. The same applies to deciding which areas are to be grazed and how long the animals will be left outside.

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3.1.7.2 Determination of roughage-consuming LUs to be put out to pasture

The number of livestock according to the cattle database is to be used to calculate the number of roughage-consuming LUs. For sheep, goats, and horses, the animal population according to the list of animals in the multiple application or the VIS database shall be used. In each case, the reference date for the count shall be 1 April of the respective year.

| Animal category | Roughage-consuming LU/animal |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cattle | |
| Calves up to ½ year | 0.4 roughage-consuming LU |
| Aged from ½ year - 2 years | 0.6 roughage-consuming LU |
| Older cattle | 1 roughage-consuming LU |
| Sheep and goats | |
| Up to an age of one year | 0.07 roughage-consuming LU |
| Older than one year | 0.15 roughage-consuming LU |
| Equidae (e.g., horses and donkeys) | |
| Breeds with a height to withers of up to 1.48 m and a final weight of up to 300 kg: | 0.5 roughage-consuming LU |
| Bigger and heavier breeds: | 1 roughage-consuming LU |

Bulls older than one year of age and calves do not need to be put out to pasture and are not to be taken into account when calculating the number of livestock. For them, access to open-air grounds (exercise area) is sufficient. Breeding bulls kept tethered without access to an exercise area lose their 'organic' status.

If on 1 April of a given year borrowed livestock ('Lehmvieh') is registered on a farm, it will be taken into consideration in the count just like the farm's own animals, while 'tenant livestock' ('Zinsvieh') (animals not belonging to the farm, which are brought to the land of that specific organic farm during the grazing season) will not be taken into account.

3.1.7.3 Determination of the pasturable area

The pasturable area is calculated as the total grassland of a farm, minus the "non-pasturable areas", plus 20 % of the total arable land. Herding pastures and mowed meadows are taken into account with a factor of 0.6. Mountain pastures and common pastures are not considered in this calculation.

Pasturable area (in ha) = all grassland areas of the farm + 20 % of the total arable land – non-pasturable areas

The following areas can be subtracted as "non-pasturable":

- Grassland areas with gradients greater than 25 % (applies only to cattle and horse pastures)
- Waterlogged grassland soils
- Nature conservation areas where grazing is prohibited or severely restricted in time by contract-based nature conservation schemes or regulatory requirements
- Water protection areas subject to an official grazing ban
- Field parcels smaller than or equal to 0.2 ha
- In the case of organic-certified branches of farms with poultry (e.g., laying hens, ducks, geese), the required open areas for these species may be subtracted when determining the pasturable area for roughage eaters (cattle, sheep, goats, horses).

Where land areas are needed for animals for one's own consumption, these cannot be subtracted when determining the area of grazing land for roughage eaters (cattle, sheep, goats, horses).

3.1.7.4 Pasture size and documentation

Herbivores must be put out to pasture whenever the circumstances (ground and weather conditions) permit it. Impeding circumstances include, for example, extreme drought and lack of water, long rainy periods, and very softened ground, sudden winter weather, or storms.

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It is mandatory to keep up-to-date pasture records (pasture diary). Grazing on mountain pastures and common pastures counts toward the fulfilment of the grazing requirement. Circumstances which do not allow pasture grazing must be recorded and substantiated. By 30 June 2020, every farm shall draw up a grazing plan indicating how pasture grazing will be implemented in 2021.

3.1.7.5 Common pastures/mountain pastures

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Using common mountain pastures or common pastures and marketing their products as 'organic' is possible if the following conditions are met:

- The grazing areas are either organically farmed, or the conventional grazing areas have not been treated with any input prohibited in the organic farming segment for at least three years. Conventional grazing areas must be subject to inspection, or there must exist proof of participation in the "Alpine Pasturing and Herding" measure of the Austrian Agri-Environmental Programme ÖPUL.
- All conventional animals must come from extensive farming.
- Conventional and organic animals must be distinguishable at all times, e.g., through ear tags.
- During mountain pasturing, all organic guidelines (husbandry, feeding, medication, ...) must be verifiably observed.
- Animal products can only be declared organic if they are verifiably separate from conventional products at all times.
- Common mountain pastures or common pastures and the animals brought there must have been registered with the organic farming inspection body, or there must be lists of animals brought there that are available for inspection.

3.1.8 Disease prevention and control

As our fellow creatures, our farm animals are dependent on sufficient and regular attention and care. This should be done with great diligence so that the needs of the animals are satisfied and the necessary care or veterinary treatment can be provided immediately in case of illness, injury, and damage. Sick or injured animals must be accommodated in a manner consistent with these special needs and, where necessary, separately from others. There must be sufficient available staff with the necessary qualifications, knowledge, and professional skills in order to attend to the animals.

Sick or injured animals shall be treated immediately and, if necessary, placed in a sick bay/pen.

3.1.8.1 Permitted methods

Animal health must be safeguarded primarily by preventive measures. If an animal falls ill or is injured, it must be treated immediately. Phytotherapeutic and homeopathic treatments are to be preferred to treatments with chemically synthesised medicinal products. Farmers are not allowed to produce homeopathic medicines and nosodes.

If it is to be expected that no adequate therapeutic effect can be achieved with the above-mentioned methods of phytotherapy (plant extracts, plant essences) and homeopathy, chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicines and antibiotics may be used by veterinarians. The preventive use of these medicines is prohibited.

Vaccinations are permitted.

3.1.8.2 Prohibited substances

Prohibited are:

- the preventive use of coccidiostats and other artificial growth or performance enhancers
- hormones or similar substances used to control reproduction (e.g., oestrus synchronisation), except where treatments are applied to individual animals.

3.1.8.3 Waiting periods

The specified waiting periods for chemically synthesised medicinal products and antibiotics shall be doubled. If no statutory waiting period has been specified, the waiting period shall be at least 48 hours.

3.1.8.4 Number of treatments

An organic animal must not be treated with chemically synthesised allopathic medicines more than three times a year. Treatment is not to be understood as a single administration, but as the treatment of a disease from its onset to its cure. Thus, a treatment may involve the repeated administration of one or several medicinal products and may extend over a period of several days. The recurrence of the same disease at a later date is not part of such treatment.

Organic animals whose productive lifecycle is less than one year may only be treated once with chemically synthesised allopathic medicines. If such animals are treated more often, they must be marketed as 'conventional'. However, there also exists the possibility that these animals go through the conversion period (see chapter 8.2) again.

The following do not count toward the number of treatments:

- all treatments against parasites (this also includes coccidia)
- vaccinations
- treatments ordered by authorities within the scope of disease eradication plans
- the use of anaesthetic/analgesic agents for surgical procedures such as dehorning or castration

3.1.8.5 Records

The use of medicinal products shall be documented in the records as follows:

- Detailed data about the animal or the group of animals
- Diagnosis
- Date, duration, and type of treatment
- Medicinal product used, including type of active agent and dosage
- Statutory waiting period as well as period after which the animal can be marketed again as an organic animal
- Name of veterinarian (stamp and signature)

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3.1.8.6 Identification of treated animals

Treated animals must be clearly identified as such. In the case of small animals such as poultry, lots or groups shall be identified.

3.1.8.7 Surgical interventions in animals

- The use of rubber bands for the castration and amputation of body parts (secondary teats, tail) is prohibited.
- Preventive or systematic interventions such as tail-docking, cutting of teeth, trimming of beaks, dehorning, and the like are prohibited.

However, the competent authority may authorise some of these interventions for reasons of safety, if they are intended to improve health, or for reasons of animal welfare or hygiene. In such cases, any suffering on the part of the animals shall be reduced to a minimum by applying adequate anaesthesia and/or analgesia. Authorised interventions may only be carried out by a veterinarian or any other competent person qualified under animal welfare legislation. It is stated in the chapters on the respective animal species which interventions are permitted.

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3.1.8.8 Teat dips

The teat dipping agents used must have been listed in the Organic Farm Inputs Catalogue (*Bio-Betriebsmittelkatalog*), unless the veterinarian prescribes a different product. This prescription must contain exact details of the animal, the diagnosis, and the duration of treatment.

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3.1.9 Disinfection of barns, facilities, and equipment

Barns, facilities, and equipment must be cleaned and disinfected in such a way as to prevent the animals from becoming infected. Only cleaning agents and disinfectants containing the following ingredients may be used:

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- alcohol
- caustic soda
- caustic potash
- formaldehyde
- potash and sodium soaps
- lime, milk of lime, and quicklime
- sodium hypochlorite
- natural plant essences
- cleaning and disinfecting agents for milking equipment
- nitric and phosphoric acid for milking equipment
- water and steam
- hydrogen peroxide
- citric, peracetic, formic, lactic, oxalic, and acetic acid

A list of regulation-compliant cleaning agents and disinfectants can be found in the Catalogue of Inputs as amended from time to time.

3.1.10 Pest control in barns

Preference should be given to mechanical and biotechnical methods to control insects and parasites in barns (e.g., poison-free fly ribbons). To control rodents such as mice or rats in barns, chemical agents (rodenticides) may only be used in trap systems.

If there is no other option, active substances may be used which are also permitted in plant protection products and are listed in chapter 2.1.4.3. Products consisting of these permitted active substances are indicated in the Catalogue of Inputs as amended from time to time. In this context, the instructions for BIO AUSTRIA-certified farms shall be taken into account.

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3.2 Cattle farming

Animal-friendly cattle farming satisfies the physiological needs of the animals and creates all the necessary conditions so that cattle can engage in their species-typical behaviour. Therefore, barns for organic cattle offer sufficient space for the animals to rest and move around. The feed is suitable for ruminants and is offered to the animals, if possible, all day, for consumption at their own choice. Furthermore, the possibility of spending time outdoors and good animal care contribute significantly to keeping organic cattle healthy and help increase their life expectancy and performance.

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3.2.1 Animal breeding

BIO AUSTRIA farms respect performance limits in dairy cattle farming. Herds of dairy cattle with an average milk yield of more than 10,000 kg of milk are not consistent with the breeding goals of BIO AUSTRIA.

In dairy cattle breeding, bulls with an above-average breeding value in terms of “Fitness” and “Useful life” (both greater than 110) are used, while the use of bulls with a very high kilograms-of-milk breeding value is refrained from.

3.2.2 Purchases of animals

The offspring must come from the respective farm itself or from another organic farm. Any purchases of animals must be entered in the records. If not enough organic animals are available, conventional breeding animals may be purchased under the following conditions:

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- Calves for breeding may be of conventional origin when a new herd is being built up and the available quantities of organically reared animals are insufficient. After weaning, they must be kept in compliance with organic farming guidelines. Purchases of such animals are permitted up to a maximum age of six months.
- Conventional female breeding animals which have not yet calved may be purchased in an annual amount of 10 % of the number of cattle older than twelve months. For herds including fewer than ten animals, one animal per year may be bought in.

In the event of a significant increase in the number of animals, a switch of breeds, or the establishment of a new branch of the farm, this percentage may be increased to up to 40 % (the number of animals older than 12 months at the time of submitting the application serves as the basis of calculation), after obtaining approval by the competent authority.

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Furthermore, this exception can be claimed for endangered farm animal breeds (to be certified by an extract from the stud book or by the breeding association), in which case the purchase of conventional cows is possible, as well.

- Breeding bulls may be of conventional origin if no organic animals are available.
- In case of the stillbirth or death of calves (up to the age of six months) in suckler cow farms, it is permitted to use conventional calves as replacements provided that a certification of disposal of the carcass from the rendering plant is made available. The animals used for breeding will attain organic status at the end of the required conversion period. The animals used for fattening will, under no circumstances, attain organic status and must be marketed as 'conventional'.

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In the event of disasters (e.g., epidemics, fires, ...), it is permissible to purchase conventionally reared animals to renew or rebuild the livestock, provided that there are no organic animals available and that an approval from the competent authority has been obtained prior to such purchase.

3.2.3 Conversion periods

Whenever conventionally reared animals are purchased by an organic farm, the following conversion periods must be observed before the animals or their products can be declared as organic:

- cattle for meat production: 3/4ths of their lives, but at least twelve months;
- dairy cattle: at least six months.

3.2.4 Permitted surgical interventions

If required by a farm, the competent authority may authorise the following surgical interventions in the bovine sector:

- The destruction of the horn buds if the intervention is carried out in calves under six weeks of age by a competent person using sedation, local anaesthesia, and post-operatively effective analgesics (form: "*Betriebsbezogene Ausnahmegenehmigung*" ("Farm-specific Exemption")).
- The dehorning of bovine animals over six weeks of age by a veterinarian using sedation, local anaesthesia, and post-operatively effective analgesics (form: "*Fallweise Ausnahmegenehmigung*" ("Case-by-case Exemption")).
- The installation of a nose ring in breeding bulls with appropriate anaesthesia and/or pain treatment (form: "*Fallweise Ausnahmegenehmigung*" ("Case-by-case Exemption")).

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The following procedure is permitted without having to submit an application to the competent authority:

- The castration of male bovine animals, if the operation is carried out by a veterinarian or a qualified castrator who legitimately engages in this trade, with effective anaesthesia and post-operatively effective analgesia.

In this context, the suffering of the animals shall be minimised by means of appropriate anaesthesia and/or analgesia.

3.2.5 Barns

3.2.5.1 Minimum barn areas

| Barn area (net area available to the animals) | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Animal category | Live weight | Minimum area |
| Breeding and fattening cattle | up to 100 kg | 1.6 m ² /animal when kept in groups; 1.5 m ² /animal in individual pens |
| | up to 200 kg | 2.5 m ² /animal |
| | up to 350 kg | 4.0 m ² /animal |
| | over 350 kg | 5 m ² /animal, but at least 1 m ² /100 kg |
| Dairy cows | | 6 m ² /animal |
| Breeding bulls | | 10 m ² /animal |

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3.2.5.2 Barn floor design and livestock housing

Half of the minimum barn area must have a continuous solid floor of non-slippery design. The barn must provide comfortable, clean and dry lying or resting areas of sufficient size for all animals to lie down or rest at the same time without disturbing each other. The lying areas must not be perforated and must be provided with dry bedding. The bedding must be straw or any other suitable natural material. It can be improved and enriched with minerals as referred to in chapter 2.1.2.4.1. **The lying area must be at least one third of the minimum barn area.**

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3.2.5.3 Feeding and drinking places

In cases of rationed or time-limited feed intake, the width of the feeding place must be such that all animals are able to take in feed at the same time (animal to feeding place ratio 1:1). If the animals are fed *ad libitum* in group housing with all-day feeding, the animal to feeding place ratio must not exceed 2.5:1. Functional drinking facilities with clean water must be made available to the animals all day long.

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| Minimum dimensions for feeding places in group housing systems | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Animal weight ¹ | Feeding place width ² | Animal weight ¹ | Feeding place width ² |
| up to 150 kg | 40 cm/animal | up to 500 kg | 60 cm/animal |
| up to 220 kg | 45 cm/animal | up to 650 kg | 65 cm/animal |
| up to 350 kg | 55 cm/animal | over 650 kg | 75 cm/animal |

¹ average value of the group
² these values may be reduced by up to 10 % for individual feeding places with rationed feeding if the total feeding place length is equal to the product of the number of animals multiplied by the feeding place width.

3.2.5.4 Lighting

Where there is no permanent access for the animals to outdoor areas, barns shall include windows or any other open or transparent sections that allow daylight to enter, with such sections corresponding to at least 3 % of the barn's floor area. In the part of the barn assigned to the animals, a light intensity of at least 40 lux shall be provided for at least eight hours per day.

3.2.5.5 Barn climate

Closed barns must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation systems. These must be operated or controlled continuously and maintained in such a way that their proper functioning is guaranteed. Harmful draughts in the area assigned to the animals must be avoided.

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3.2.5.6 Tethering of animals

Generally, keeping animals tethered is prohibited. The animals must be kept in groups. Tethering or isolating animals is only permitted for individual animals if this is a temporary measure for safety, animal welfare, or veterinary reasons, e.g., in the case of illness, during mating, or for care measures.

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The following exemptions from the tethering ban are only applicable for cattle:

- On “small farms”, i.e., farms with an average annual livestock of no more than 35 bovine LU, animals may be kept tethered provided that the husbandry system scores 24 TGI points (TGI = animal friendliness index), the animals have access to pasture land during the grazing season, and have access to open-air areas at least twice a week when pasture grazing is not possible.

A minimum of 180 days of access to exercise areas is required unless the farm's available space is very limited.

- If only one category of animal is kept, the permissible number of bovine LU for small farms is reduced to 20 LU.
- For safety reasons, breeding bulls may be kept tethered. They lose their organic status if they are kept without access to exercise areas.

The bovine LU calculation table is provided in [Annex 8.1](#).

3.2.5.7 Cow trainers

The use of cow trainers is not permitted.

BA

3.2.6 Pastures and exercise areas

Cattle must have permanent access to open-air areas and, during the vegetation period, to pastures whenever ground and weather conditions permit. If at least 0.1 ha of pasture/LU is available for the dairy cows, then the dairy cows must be put out to pasture. If the available area of the farm does not allow the dairy cows to graze, the animals must be given green fodder (30 to 35 kg fresh matter or at least one third of the daily feed requirement) (see chapter 3.1.7). If the cattle are allowed to graze on pastures on at least 180 days (120 days if the farm's space is restricted) during the grazing period and are kept in loose housing, the obligation to provide access to exercise areas all year round can be omitted.

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In the case of animals with a life cycle of more than one year, the number of days of access to outdoor exercise areas, spread over the year, shall not be less than 180, with the exception of farms where space is restricted. Under the above-mentioned conditions, access to outdoor exercise areas shall also be possible in winter. For animals in sick bays as well as in calving pens, access to exercise areas is not required.

3.2.6.1 Minimum open-air exercise areas

| Animal category | Live weight | Outdoor area (free-range areas other than grazing areas) |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Breeding and fattening cattle | up to 100 kg | 1.1 m ² /animal |
| | up to 200 kg | 1.9 m ² /animal |
| | up to 350 kg | 3 m ² /animal |
| | over 350 kg | 3.7 m ² /animal; at least 0.75 m ² /100 kg |
| Dairy cows | | 4.5 m ² /animal |
| Breeding bulls | | 30 m ² /animal |

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3.2.6.2 Design of exercise areas

Where necessary, exercise areas shall be provided with facilities offering protection from rain, sun, cold temperatures, or heat. Care must be taken to prevent overgrazing, poaching of soil, erosion, or other kinds of environmental damage. It is recommended that permanently accessible exercise areas have a continuous solid floor or be designed with slatted floors.

LL

Generally, the following requirements apply:

- Open sides can be designed as closed in the base area, but must in any case allow the animals a view of the surroundings (not higher than the head height of the animals).
- Sides with windbreak nets or openings created by mobile elements (curtains, vertical blinds, sliding elements) fall also under the category of open sides. Mobile elements may be temporarily closed due to weather conditions.
- The distance between the open sides and adjacent buildings or walls etc. shall be at least 3 m.

If no clear separation between the barn and the exercise area is recognisable, the required minimum barn and exercise areas can be added together, provided the following is observed:

- At least 25 % of all outer side lengths must be designed as open sides.
- At least 10 % of the minimum barn and exercise areas must remain without roofing.
- All areas of this housing system shall be permanently accessible to the animals (except during cleaning).

If the barn and the exercise area are clearly separated,

- at least 10 % of the minimum exercise area shall be without roofing, and
- at least 25 % of all outer side lengths of the exercise area must be designed as open sides.

3.2.6.3 Group use of exercise areas

The use of the exercise area in groups may be permitted under the following conditions:

- restricted farm space (not enough space to create sufficiently large exercise areas for all groups of cattle)
- use of one exercise area by two animal groups at the most
- individual approval by the inspection body (subject to detailed requirements).

Where calves are present as well, group use of the exercise area by two exercise groups per day is possible, even if the available farm space is not restricted. Access to the exercise area is to be provided equally to all animal groups concerned for about the same amount of time (for as long as possible). In stanchion-tied barns, the required TGI score must be achieved.

- Loose housing: Calves as well as one other group of cattle from a loose housing barn are allowed to share the exercise area
- Tied housing on small farms: Calves must be allowed daily access to the exercise area, the other group(s) from tied housing at least twice a week. For small farms this means that there will be no more than three tied-housing groups, in addition to the group of calves
- Mixed housing (stanchion-tied barn and additional loose barn): as soon as a non-calf group is kept in the loose barn, only one other group apart from the calves may use the joint exercise area.

3.2.6.4 All-year outdoor husbandry

A covered, dry and bedded lying area with wind protection must be made available to each animal, which offers sufficient space so that all animals can lie down at the same time without disturbing each other.

If the feed requirement cannot be sufficiently met by grazing on pastures, additional feed must be provided. Even at low temperatures, it must be ensured that the quantity and energy content of the available feed is sufficient to cover the energy needs of the animals.

The floor in permanently used feeding and drinking areas must be solid. Sick and injured animals must be kept separate and protected.

3.2.7 Keeping of calves

All bovine animals up to an age of 6 months are considered calves.

Calf care:

- Calves must be given colostrum.
- If they are fed using buckets, feeding devices with teats must be used.
- Housing calves in stanchion-tied barns is prohibited.
- Calves must not be kept in individual pens if they are older than one week. Housing systems such as igloos or huts where the animals share the exercise area are not considered individual pens.
- If there is only one calf of an age group on the farm, this is not considered single penning.

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- During the first eight weeks, calves shall not be kept in groups if:
 - there exists a written order from a veterinarian;
 - a disease of a calf makes separation necessary for treatment. Such treatment must be documented as required;
 - an infection of other calves must be prevented (e.g. diarrhoea);
 - the umbilical cord has not yet fallen off;
 - dehorning or castration has been carried out. In this case, individual housing is possible for a maximum of 14 days after the procedure;
 - the difference in age between the calves present is more than four weeks;
 - despite individual farm counselling, an expedient group composition is not possible, for example, if different types of use (e.g., breeding calves/milk fattening calves) make it difficult or impossible to keep the animals in one group, as the feeding requirements are different;
 - suckling is observed in individual animals or the group.

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Other exceptions for health or behavioural reasons within the first eight weeks must be discussed with the inspection body.

- From the eighth week of their lives onward, calves may only be removed from the group if a veterinarian orders that animals be kept in individual bays for treatment.
- Calves kept in groups must not be restrained for more than one hour during feeding time.
- In view of their physiological condition, calves up to one week old that are kept in a barn need not necessarily have access to an exercise area. When kept outdoors (calf hutch, igloo), the animals must be offered barn and exercise areas.
- As for the minimum barn and exercise areas for calves, the requirements set out in chapters 3.2.5.1 and 3.2.6.1 shall be complied with.

3.3 Sheep and goat farming

Animal-friendly sheep and goat husbandry allows the animals to satisfy their physiological as well as their behavioural needs. This requires, among other things, species-appropriate nutrition and appropriate feeding methods. Regular access to pasture and exercise areas benefits animal health and enhances the robustness of the animals. The barns shall provide sufficient space so that all animals have a resting place and are able to engage in their species-typical behaviour. Sheep generally keep to their sleeping places. Goats prefer elevated places, have a pronounced exploratory behaviour, and need structures they can climb up on. A highly stable herd structure and social contacts between the animals ensure a peaceful herd.

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3.3.1 Purchases of animals

The offspring must come from the respective farm itself or from another organic farm. Any purchases of animals must be entered in the records.

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If not enough organic animals are available, conventional breeding animals may be bought in under the following conditions.

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- Breeding lambs and breeding kids may be of conventional origin when a new stock is being built up and if sufficient quantities of organic animals are not available. After weaning, they must be kept in compliance with organic farming guidelines. Purchases of such animals are permitted up to a maximum age of 60 days.
- Conventional female animals which have not yet lambed or kidded may be bought in annually for the renewal of the herd to an extent of up to 20 % of the number of sheep or goats over six months of age. In the case of herds with fewer than five sheep or goats, one animal per year may be bought in.

In the event of a significant growth of the herd, a switch of breeds, or the establishment of a new branch of the farm, this percentage may be increased to up to 40 % (the number of animals older than six months at the time of submitting the application serves as the basis of calculation) after obtaining approval by the competent authority.

- Furthermore, this exemption can be claimed for endangered farm animal breeds (to be certified by an extract from the stud book or by the breeding association), in which case the purchase of conventional dams can be approved, as well.
- Rams or bucks may be of conventional origin without any restrictions if no organic animals are available.

In the event of disasters (e.g., epidemics, fires, ...), conventionally reared animals may be purchased to renew or rebuild the livestock, provided that no organic animals are available and an approval has been obtained from the competent authority prior to such purchase.

3.3.2 Conversion periods

Whenever conventionally reared animals are purchased by an organic farm, a six-month conversion period for meat and milk must be observed before the animals or their products can be declared as organic.

EU

3.3.3 Permitted surgical interventions

If required by a farm, the competent authority may authorise the following surgical interventions in caprine husbandry:

- The destruction of the horn buds in female kids intended for use as dairy goats until four weeks of age, after effective anaesthesia and post-operatively effective analgesia by the veterinarian (form: "Betriebsbezogene Ausnahmegenehmigung" ("Farm-specific Exemption")).

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- Tail docking in female breeding lambs (not applicable to goats), provided that the lambs are not more than seven days old, the operation is carried out by way of sharp cutting action with simultaneous cauterisation, effective analgesia is applied which also acts post-operatively, and a veterinarian has confirmed that such a procedure is necessary for the farm's operations.

The following intervention is permitted without having to submit an application to the competent authority:

- Castration, if the procedure is carried out by a veterinarian or a qualified castrator who legitimately engages in this trade, with effective anaesthesia and post-operatively effective analgesia.

3.3.4 Barns

3.3.4.1 Minimum barn areas

| Barn area* for group housing | Barn area* for individual pens |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.5 m ² per sheep/goat, rams, bucks 0.35 m ² per lamb/kid After separation from the dam (separate housing): 0.5 m ² per lamb/kid (up to 6 months of age) 0.6 m ² per young lambs, young goats (6 – 12 months of age) | 3 m ² per breeding ram, buck Individual housing during lambing for: 2/1.85 m ² per mother sheep/goat with 1 lamb/kid 2.30/2.20 m ² per mother sheep/goat with 2 lambs/kids |
| * Net area available to the animals | |

3.3.4.2 Barn floor design and livestock housing

Half of the minimum barn area must have a continuous solid floor of non-slippery design. There must be comfortable, clean and dry lying or resting areas of sufficient size for all animals to lie down or rest at the same time without disturbing each other. These areas must not be perforated and must be provided with dry bedding. The bedding must be straw or any other suitable natural material. It may be improved and enriched with minerals as referred to in chapter 2.1.2.4.1. **The lying area must be at least one third of the minimum barn area.**

Group housing: The barns must be built in such a manner that there are no dead ends. Possible narrow sections must be designed such that even animals of lower rank will be able to pass through. Herd management must be carried out in a way that regrouping will take place as infrequently as possible in order to maintain the stability of the herd.

Housing in individual bays: Lambs/kids and young sheep/young goats must not be kept in individual bays. When housed in individual bays, visual contact with other animals must be ensured. Sheep/goats may be kept in individual bay installations only if this type of housing is interrupted sufficiently by pasture grazing or **access to exercise areas on at least 180 days per year.**

3.3.4.3 Feeding and drinking places

In cases of rationed or time-limited feed intake, the width of the feeding place must be such that all animals are able to take in feed at the same time (animal to feeding place ratio 1:1). If the animals are fed ad libitum in group housing with all-day feeding, the animal to feeding place ratio must not exceed 2.5:1 for sheep and 1.5:1 for goats. Functional drinking facilities with clean water must be made available to the animals all day long.

| Minimum dimensions for feeding places in group housing systems | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Animal category | Feeding place width |
| Mother sheep/goat also with lambs/kids | 40 cm/animal |
| Lambs/kids, young sheep/goats up to 6 months of age (without mother sheep/goat) | 20 cm/animal |
| Young sheep/goats (6 months to 12 months of age) | 30 cm/animal |
| Ram / Buck | 50 cm/ram, 60 cm/buck |

3.3.4.4 Lighting

Where there is no permanent access for the animals to outdoor areas, barns shall include open or transparent sections that allow daylight to enter, with such sections corresponding to at least 3% of the barn's floor area. In the part of the barn assigned to the animals, a light intensity of at least 40 lux shall be provided for at least eight hours per day.

3.3.4.5 Barn climate

Closed barns must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation systems. These must be operated or controlled continuously and maintained in such a way that their proper functioning is guaranteed. Harmful draughts in the area assigned to the animals must be avoided.

3.3.4.6 Animal care

Sheep must be sheared at least once a year where required for the respective breed. The condition of the hooves must be checked regularly, and, where necessary, hoof care must be carried out.

3.3.4.7 Tethering of animals

Generally, keeping animals tethered is prohibited. The animals must be kept in groups. Tethering or isolating animals is only permitted for individual animals if this is a temporary measure for safety, animal welfare, or veterinary reasons, e.g., in the case of illness.

3.3.5 Pasture and exercise area

Sheep and goats must have permanent access to outdoor areas and, during the vegetation period, to pastures whenever ground and weather conditions permit (see chapter 3.1.7). If the animals are allowed to pasture on at least 180 days (120 days if the farm's space is restricted) during the grazing period, the obligation to provide access to exercise areas all year round can be omitted.

In the case of animals with a life cycle of more than one year, the number of days of access to outdoor exercise areas, spread over the year, shall not be less than 180, with the exception of farms where space is restricted. Under the above-mentioned conditions, access to outdoor exercise areas shall also be possible in winter. For animals in sick bays as well as in lambing pens, access to an exercise area is not necessary.

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3.3.5.1 Exemption from grazing obligation (in addition to chapter 3.1.7)

Granting a temporary exemption from grazing is permitted in case of veterinary treatment against endoparasites after positive faecal testing. If the symptoms indicate an acute infection with endoparasites (e.g., throat oedema, anaemia, emaciation), these animals may be exempted from the grazing requirement immediately after the start of treatment. The supporting documents regarding the temporary exemption from pasture grazing (affected animals, results of faecal testing, duration of treatment, duration of the exemption) shall be kept on the farm.

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3.3.5.2 Minimum open-air exercise areas

| Outdoor areas (free-range areas, except pastures) | |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sheep/goats | 2.5 m ² /animal |
| Lambs/kids | 0.5 m ² /animal |

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3.3.5.3 Design of exercise areas

Where necessary, exercise areas shall be equipped with facilities offering protection from rain, sun, cold temperatures, or heat. Care must be taken to prevent overgrazing, poaching of soil, erosion, or other kinds of environmental damage. It is recommended that permanently accessible exercise areas have a continuous solid floor or be designed with slatted floors.

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Generally, the following requirements apply:

- Open sides can be designed as closed in the base area, but must in any case allow the animals a view of the surroundings (not higher than head height of the animals).
- Sides with windbreak nets or openings created by mobile elements (curtains, vertical blinds, sliding elements) fall also under the category of open sides. Mobile elements may be temporarily closed due to weather conditions.
- The distance between the open sides and adjacent buildings or walls etc. shall be at least 3 m.

If no clear separation between the barn and the exercise area is recognisable, the required minimum barn and exercise areas can be added together, provided the following is observed:

- At least 25 % of all four outer side lengths must be designed as open sides.
- At least 10 % of the minimum barn and exercise areas must remain without roofing.
- All areas of this housing system shall be permanently accessible to the animals (except during cleaning).

If the barn and the exercise area are clearly separated,

- at least 10 % of the minimum exercise area shall be without roofing, and
- at least 25 % of all four outer side lengths of the exercise area must be designed as open sides.

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Where farms do not have a pasture for their milk goats, the exercise area must be designed such that the animals will actually want to use it and that it is accessible at all times. Accessibility must be ensured by providing a sufficient number of exits of adequate size. In order to make the exercise area attractive to goats, it must be equipped with facilities such as climbing structures, weather protection, brushes, or feeding racks.

BA

3.3.5.4 All-year outdoor husbandry

A roof-covered, dry and bedded lying area with wind protection must be made available to each animal, which offers sufficient space so that all animals can lie down at the same time without disturbing each other. If the feed requirement cannot be sufficiently met by grazing, additional feed must be provided. Also, in low temperature conditions it must be ensured that the quantity and energy content of the existing fodder is sufficient to meet the energy requirements of the animals. The floor in the permanently used feeding and watering areas must be solid. Sick and injured animals must be kept separate and protected.

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