Egg Standards Australia

National egg quality assurance program

Farm Standard

For Egg Producers

Revision 01, version January 2012

AUSTRALIAN EGG
CORPORATION LIMITED

Egg Standards Australia

Farm Standard for Egg Producers

Introduction and Scheme Rules

Contents

Introduction 2
1.1 Objectives 2
1.2 Participation 2
1.3 Terms, Definitions, Legislative and Normative References 3
1.4 Database Information 3
1.5 Cautionary Notes 3
Scheme Rules 4
1.6 Certification Requirements 4
1.7 Control and Monitoring 4
1.8 Requirement Categories and Application of Non-Compliances 5
1.9 Certification Decisions 6
1.10 Appeals 7
1.11 Complaints 7
1.12 Revision Updates and Coding 7
1.13 Notification of Change 7

Introduction

This Egg Quality Assurance Scheme was developed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) representing businesses (including Egg Standards Australia, farms, grading floors, industry specialists) and regulatory organisations.

The positioning of the Egg Producer Standard in the egg supply chain can be represented as follows:

The **Farm Standard for Egg Producers** encompasses the general requirements for the production of shell eggs from the following types of egg production systems: Caged, Barn, and Free Range (including Organic) as set out in Egg Producer Requirements.

This Standard replaces the farm elements of the AECL Code of Practice for Shell Egg Production, Grading, Packaging and Distribution, Revision 02 of February 2010.

1.1 Objectives

The primary objectives of this Standard are:

- To set out the requirements for best practice in the production of eggs at farm level.
- To provide a uniform mechanism for recording and monitoring pullet growing and egg production quality assurance criteria on the farms with a view to achieving continual improvement in standards.
- To provide a means of demonstrating best practice at farm level.

1.2 Participation

The Egg Standards Australia (ESA) Quality Assurance (QA) Scheme is voluntary and application for certification is open to all Egg Producers.

Certification to the Standard, however, will only be granted to farms that meet the relevant requirements as set out in these Scheme Rules.

1.3 Terms, Definitions, Legislative and Normative References

Terms and Definitions

Throughout the Standard, various terms are used. The meaning and definition of these terms is given in the Reference Information in Appendix 1.

Legislative and Normative References

This Standard incorporates the key legislative requirements, at the time of writing, relevant to egg production and has been based on the following best practices / standards:

- Recognised international quality management standards (such as ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System – Requirements).
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as outlined by Codex Alimentarius (1997 3rd edition).
- Relevant Australian legislative requirements including Standard 4.2.5 - Primary Production and Processing Standard for Eggs and Egg Product.
- Equivalent International Codes of Practice.
- ISO Guide 65 (1996) General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems.

The Egg Standards Australia requirements have been designed to incorporate existing Commonwealth, State and Territory food safety related legislation at a minimum. A list of the reference documents and legislation considered in the development of this Standard is included in Appendix 1: Reference Information.

It is also recommended that Producers consult with their agricultural, veterinary, scientific and regulatory advisors. Check currency of legislative requirements.

1.4 Database Information

The name of each certified Egg Producer will be listed on a published ESA register / database. (Privacy permissions)

1.5 Cautionary Notes

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this Standard, ESA cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions.

The requirements of this Standard will help Egg Producers to comply with the general provisions of the food act and/or regulations and other relevant State / Territory legislation, however does not replace the obligations of the Participants to comply with the regulations.

ESA is not liable for any costs or potential or estimated loss of earnings resulting from having to comply with any requirement of this scheme or in regard to the consequences of being found to be in breach of any requirement.

All references to legislation in the text of this Standard are given on an "as amended" basis. Scheme participants therefore need to be aware of the legislation relevant to their businesses.

Scheme Rules

1.6 Certification Requirements

1.6.1 Application Process

Egg Producers seeking certification must apply directly to ESA.

Upon application, ESA will respond to the Applicant and provide the required information relevant to participation including a copy of this Standard (where required), self-assessment checklist (where required), application process, fees, expected timelines, etc. After which, a full independent audit will be carried out.

When the farm is deemed to have complied with the requirements of the Standard as determined by independent audit, the farm will be considered for certification under the Scheme.

When certified, the farm will be issued with a certificate of compliance.

The farm will be required to complete a Declaration at each audit. A sample of this declaration is reproduced in Appendices 2.1 and 2.2.

1.6.2 Producer Eligibility

Only farms meeting the formal registration requirements, where required, of the relevant regulatory agency can apply. e.g. State regulatory requirements such as a Food authority or State Health department.

Farmers that have been convicted of an offence under legislation relating to bird health, welfare, use of remedies, feeds, carcass / by-products disposal, environmental protection, farm safety or food safety in the previous 3 years may not be eligible for certification to this Standard. In addition, if, during the period of validity of the certificate, a Participant is convicted of such an offence, the Participant is obliged to advise ESA. The certificate may be revoked and the Participant may be withdrawn from the Scheme. Failure to inform AECL of a conviction will also be deemed as not having met the conditions of membership. The Board of the Certification Body (ESA) are the decision makers in this instance. Guidelines to be developed.

1.7 Control and Monitoring

1.7.1 Control

Overall control of the Scheme will be exercised by the Board of the Certification Body (ESA). This Board is representative of the relevant sectors of the food industry and collaborates with the Technical Advisory Committee, which is responsible for drafting the Standard and formulating required amendments.

The decision of the Board of the Certification Body on any matter relating to the control or operation of the Scheme is final.

1.7.2 Monitoring

Monitoring of Applicants' and Participants' compliance with the requirements of the Standard will be carried out by ESA or its nominated agents through audits.

After initial certification, each Participant will be independently audited at determined intervals. The maximum interval between successive audits will be 18 months. Qualified independent Auditors with specific and relevant experience will carry out these audits and a full report will be issued directly to the Participant.

ESA reserves the right to carry out audits or spot checks on an announced or unannounced basis for the purpose of verifying compliance with the requirements of the Standard or to determine that corrective / preventive actions specified during audit are in place. The period of notice of such checks / audits will be decided by ESA based on the applicable circumstances.

ESA (or its appointed agents) reserves the right to request producers to provide samples for independent analysis (feed, water, dust, faeces, birds, eggs, etc) to establish compliance with the Standard. Results of such sampling shall be simultaneously available to ESA and to the producer. AECL reserves the right to protect the integrity of the industry QA program.

Auditors are entitled to seek access to relevant regulatory reports (reports required to be maintained by the Producers). e.g. food authority audits, council requirements, water analysis / licencing where applicable.

The full onus of responsibility for compliance with the requirements of this Standard is on the farms (Egg Producers) participating in the Scheme and not on ESA or its agents or any other third party.

1.8 Requirement Categories and Application of Non-Compliances

1.8.1 Categories

For audit purposes, non-compliances against the requirements of this Standard are classified as **Critical, Category 1 or Category 2.**

Critical: A critical non-compliance is raised when, because of a breach of a requirement, a serious and immediate hazard exists or is likely to occur which could be any of the following; food safety problems; major welfare issues; bird health issues; chemical or veterinary medicine misuse; major breaches of environmental responsibility. These requirements are printed in **bold, underlined typeface** and are identified in the text as **(Critical).**

Category 1: Category 1 non-compliance is raised when there is evidence that core best practice is not being observed. These requirements are printed in **bold typeface** and are identified in the text as **(Category 1).**

Category 2: Category 2 non-compliances are raised where best practice has not been fully complied with, but where departure from best practice will not immediately compromise the operation of the Egg Quality Assurance Scheme. These requirements are printed in normal typeface.

1.8.2 Application of Non-Compliances

Critical:
Where a **Critical** non-compliance has been identified, an applicant farm cannot be certified to this Standard and an existing certified Participant cannot continue to supply eggs under the Quality Assurance Scheme. The auditor will immediately advise ESA of the situation and the certification may be suspended pending a review of the situation. The review will be based on the circumstances surrounding the non-compliance. A full recall of all potentially affected eggs may be required as directed by ESA.

Note: the Participant can re-apply when evidence is available that the problem has been rectified.

Category 1:
Where a **Category 1** non-compliance has been identified during audit, the farmer must give an immediate commitment in writing to implement corrective action within a maximum 1-month period, (or as otherwise specified by the auditor) and must subsequently be able to demonstrate that each such non-compliance has been addressed.

All **Category 1** non-compliances must be closed out to be eligible for certification. ESA reserves the right to carry out independent verification of the implementation of such corrective action.

Category 2:
Farmers against whom **Category 2** non-compliances have been raised must give an immediate undertaking in writing to the ESA auditor to implement corrective action within a 3–month period (or as otherwise specified by the auditor) and must submit evidence within this period that demonstrates that each such non-compliance has been addressed.

All **Category 2** non-compliances must be closed out to be eligible for certification. ESA reserves the right to carry out independent verification of the implementation of such corrective action.

1.9 Certification Decisions

The Board of the Certification Body (ESA) makes the decision to grant, extend, or withdraw approval to/from an Applicant or Participant in the Egg Quality Assurance Scheme. The decision is made primarily on the basis of the audit findings, but other factors (such as failure to meet regulatory compliance or other food safety requirements, or previous audit history) may be taken into consideration in arriving at the certification decision.

In the event that certification is withdrawn, the certificate must be returned to ESA and the Participant will be removed from the register of certified Participants.

1.10 Appeals

An Applicant or Participant may appeal the certification decision directly to the Board of the Certification Body (ESA). The appeal should be received in writing within two weeks of receipt of communication of the audit result. The appealing Applicant / Participant will be informed in writing of the Appeals Procedure at the time of appeal. All such appeals will be discussed and the decisions of the Board of the Certification Body (ESA) in relation to appeals will be final.

In the event that the Board of the Certification Body (ESA) maintains the decision to refuse the licence to use the ESA Mark, the Applicant or Certified Applicant concerned may then have the decision of the Certification Body reviewed and it may apply for such review to be conducted by an arbitrator appointed by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators of Level 6, 50 Park Street, Sydney, NSW.

1.11 Complaints

An Applicant or Participant may make a complaint with regard to the audit(s) or any other aspect of the operation of the Scheme. All complaints must be in writing and must be addressed to ESA. All such complaints will be acknowledged and followed up.

1.12 Revision Updates and Coding

Users should note that from (date to be advised), only this Standard for Egg Producers (Revision 01) will apply. When future changes occur, updates will be issued in whole or in part and the obsolete sections must be destroyed.

This Standard will be reviewed from time to time in the light of new knowledge, changing industry practice and changing health standards. The Standard is viewed as a living document, which will be updated to reflect the latest scientific and field based developments. All reviews will be conducted and authorised by the Technical Advisory Committee and issued to all Participants.

At the bottom of each page, a banner shows the title of the document, the revision, date of issue and the number of pages in the document. This information can be used in the event that updates are issued to correctly insert the amended provisions / requirements

1.13 Notification of Change

In the event that changes to the following occur, ESA and the Grading Floor (where relevant) must be immediately informed and a new application must be made:

- Change of ownership of the production unit(s).
- Significant change in practices or procedures since last approval / certification such as change in/or addition of a different method of production.
- If eggs from such changes are to be ESA branded and there is a different production method from the previous audit, a new audit would be required in the first instance. On-going it would fall in with the annual audit of that business.

AUSTRALIAN EGG
CORPORATION LIMITED

Egg Standards Australia

Farm Standard – Egg Producer Requirements

Contents

Introduction 3
3.1 General Requirements 3
3.2 Management Responsibility 4
3.3 Flock Sourcing 4
3.4 Hygiene and Disease Control 5
3.5 Veterinary Medications 5
3.6 Egg Production Shed and Environment 6
3.7 Site Security and Surrounds 6
3.8 Personnel and Visitor Controls 7
3.9 Hygiene Program 7
3.10 Flock Welfare 8
3.11 Feed 8
3.12 Water 9
3.13 Egg Collection, Storage, Delivery, Direct Sale or Supply 10
3.14 Storage and Handling of Chemical Substances 11
3.15 Environmental Protection 11
3.16 Laying Sheds, Buildings and Equipment: General 11
Caged Production System 12
3.17 Caged Sheds Construction 12
3.18 Lighting 14
Free Range Production 13
3.19 The Land 14
3.20 Free-Range Shed Construction 14
3.21 The Manure Pit / Washings Collection 14
3.22 Flock size / colony size 14
3.23 Feeding Space 14

3.24 Drinking Space 15
3.25 Perching 15
3.26 Nest Boxes 15
3.27 Litter 15
3.28 Lighting 16
3.29 Pop Hole Requirement 16
Barn Production System 16
3.30 Barn Shed Construction 16
3.31 Manure Pit 16
3.32 Lighting 17
3.33 Stocking Density 17
3.34 Feeding Space 17
3.35 Drinking Space 17
3.36 Perches 17
3.37 Nest Boxes 18
3.38 Litter 18
3.39 Scratch Area 18
3.40 Pop Holes 18
Organic Production System 18
3.41 Organic Requirements 18

Introduction

This section of the Standard contains all the production related requirements with which each licensed Egg Producer must comply.

The layout of the information is intended to ensure clarity and to assist the reader in correctly interpreting the details.

Requirements are presented in a numbered format as follows:
a) The Participant must...
b) A record specifying the following must be available
    i. Date of…
    ii. Name of the...

These are the specific requirements against which each licensed Egg Producer will be audited and each such requirement contains the word "must".

Recommendations are shown in a panel (bullet points, italics, text on green background) and set out the recommendations for best practice.

Occasionally, there are notes included under the section and footnotes at the bottom of the page. These notes / footnotes are only intended to clarify aspects of the requirements or to provide additional information that is relevant to the section. However, licensed Egg Producers are encouraged to seek advice from recognised sources and consult the relevant guidelines / publications and legislation.

Each licensed Egg Producer also needs to be fully aware of the conditions of participation as set out in the **Introduction and Scheme Rules** and the relevant appendices where referenced.

3.1 General Requirements

a) Participants must have a current quality policy on display at the farm which must include a commitment to the objectives of the ESA Egg Quality Assurance Scheme and to complying with all current food safety, regulatory and customer requirements
b) **If a critical non-compliance is identified during auditing, routine Management Checks or at any other time, the Grading Floor must be notified immediately (Critical).**
   Note: The Grading Floor must then immediately implement the procedures for critical non-compliances outlined in Scheme Rules 1.8.2. Critical Non-Compliances: Existing certified Egg Producer participants.
c) Each Egg Producer participating in the Scheme must complete an initial Producer Declaration Form (see Egg Producer Declaration Form Appendix 2.2) at the time of the audit.

d) **Where required under legislation each Egg Producer must be registered with the regulatory authority (e.g. State Food authority, Health Department, local council) for their production system and evidence of this registration must be available (Category 1).**
e) **Egg laying sheds and designated free-range paddocks / areas must be dedicated to laying birds only. Where livestock have access to the area, a bio-security risk assessment must be conducted[1] (Category 1).**
f) All records specified in this Standard that relate to the previous two years production must be available for inspection.
g) All Egg Producers must have received a copy of this Standard and associated documents and be familiar with the contents.
h) **All Egg Producers must ensure that all staff in contact with the birds have received in-house training on the requirements of this Standard and this training must be documented (Category 1).**

3.2 Management Responsibility

a) Each egg producing business must appoint a designated person responsible for the implementation of the requirements of this Standard and must be able to demonstrate an awareness of the current legislative requirements and Codes of Practice that are relevant to this Standard.
b) **Each egg producing business must demonstrate an understanding of HACCP principles including a process flow chart, hazard assessment, hazard control and corrective action (Category 1).**

Note: A HACCP Plan is included in Appendix11 for reference and may be used by the producer for guidance and training.

3.3 Flock Sourcing

a) Evidence must be available to prove that all pullets were sourced from an approved[2] Pullet Grower.
b) **A delivery/dispatch docket or other means of tracing flock movement from the Pullet Grower (as specified in Pullet Grower requirements 2.12) must be available for inspection (Category 1).**

Note: effective co-ordination of the delivery of point of lay pullets is desirable to ensure welfare and disease control, especially with regards to transmissible diseases (e.g. avian influenza).

1. See Code of Practice for Biosecurity in the egg industry Reference in Appendix 1.
2. There are transition arrangements for details regarding the application of this requirement e.g. 2 year lead-in time.

3.4 Hygiene and Disease Control

General

a) **Flock production records (daily/weekly) must be maintained and must include an egg production graph or trend sheet (Category 1).**
b) **Any unusual increase in mortality or a major decrease in bird performance that may cause concern must be reported to management/veterinarian as appropriate and investigated immediately (Category 1).**
c) **Evidence must be available to demonstrate that the Producer informed the relevant authority if an Emergency Animal Disease was suspected in accordance with the local legislation (Category 1).**

Pest Controls

a) **Each Egg Producer must operate and document a vermin control program which includes an assessment of the vermin risk to each farm unit (including fly control) (Category 1).**
b) **The documentation must include a map of all bait points (internal and external) and a specification of all products used (Category 1).**
c) The bait points must be positioned in risk areas, placed according to manufacturer's recommendations, and where they do not expose eggs, birds, poultry feed, or water to risk of contamination.
d) Bait points must be checked according to a plan for positioning and replenished as necessary and a record of the checks made maintained.
e) All bait and bait boxes must be labelled "poison", handled in a safe manner, secured in position, tamperproof and identified on the bait map of the unit.
f) The sheds must be screened against wild birds.
g) Domestic pets and other animals must not enter the egg production/handling sheds.
h) There must be evidence that vegetation control and maintenance around the sheds is being addressed.

3.5 Veterinary Medications

a) **Prescribed medicines must be used according to prescription and records must be maintained to demonstrate usage (Category 1).**
b) **Eggs must not be supplied for human consumption during any labelled withholding period (Critical).**
c) Secure storage facilities that comply at a minimum with the requirements in Appendix 4: "Medications Storage" must be provided for all medications.

3.6 Egg Production Shed and Environment

a) All surfaces within the shed must permit effective removal of organic matter, cleaning and disinfection.
b) There must be no obvious unsafe features (e.g. exposed electrical wiring, sharp edges or projections) likely to cause injury to birds.
c) Birds must not be placed in sheds where the disinfectants used are likely to give rise to egg taint or where surfaces have been treated with chemicals that have a withholding period, until after the expiry of the withholding period.
d) **Dead birds must be removed on a daily basis and held in a sealed vermin-proof container pending disposal[3] or as otherwise required by the responsible authority (Category 1).**
e) There must be a procedure for removal and disposal of dead birds and a record of this must be maintained. This must be equivalent to that in Appendix 12 Shed Management Checklist at a minimum.

3.7 Site Security and Surrounds

Note: Bio-security is central to the control of disease in the flock and Egg Producers must therefore put controls in place to assess and manage the risks associated with the movement of high risk personnel between sheds and farms (catching teams, advisory staff, veterinarians, service personnel).

a) Access to the egg production farm must be controlled to prevent any entry of unauthorised personnel or vehicles at all times.
b) Vegetation must be kept under control to minimise rodent cover and wild birds.
c) The exterior of the shed must be kept free of any debris.

3.8 Personnel and Visitor Controls

Personnel Controls

a) **Entry to sheds / paddocks must be assessed and managed in line with established procedures that are developed based on the bio-security risks (Category 1).**
b) Where footbaths are used, they must be inspected daily (e.g. for excessive organic matter); the disinfectant solution must be replenished as required and a record maintained.
c) **Staff (including catchers) who frequently interact with the laying flock must be risk assessed and managed in line with established procedures that are developed based on bio-security risks. Compliance must be demonstrated through records (e.g. staff declarations as per National Farm Biosecurity Manual, as listed in Appendix 1).**

3. AECL Environmental Guidelines for the Australian egg industry 2008, referenced in Appendix 1.

d) **Contact with any other live birds (commercial poultry, wild water fowl, or other birds for food or hobby purposes) is a high risk activity and must be treated in line with the above established procedures. (Category 1).**
e) **Hand cleaning and sanitising facilities must be available on each site and hands must be cleaned / sanitised before entering the bird area of the shed (e.g. alcohol based sanitiser) (Category 1).**
f) **Hands must be cleaned with perfume free cleansers/sanitisers before handling eggs (Category 1).**

Visitor Controls.

g) **Entry to the site must be assessed and managed in line with established procedures that are developed based on the bio-security risks (Category 1).**
h) **A site visitors log (which can exclude service and feed delivery vehicles if recorded elsewhere) must be maintained and this must record at a minimum (all Category1):**
    i) **Date,**
    ii) **Name and Organisation,**
    iii) **Poultry contact in last 48 hours**
    iv) **Reason for visit**
    v) **Time in time out**
    vi) **Vehicle registration number, if applicable**
    vii) **Entry approval signature**

i) **These visitors entering high risk areas such as production sheds, must be provided with protective clothing (e.g. disposable coats, protective footwear, and hairnets) and requested to shower in, if this is a company policy and based on the risk assessment (Category 1).**
j) All visitors entering low risk farm areas must comply with the minimum standards and procedures upon entry to and exit from the farm site.
k) All visitors and contractors must be made aware of the Biosecurity Policy on arrival and must comply with the bio-security procedures.
l) Routine maintenance should be conducted, where possible, between batches prior to final disinfection where a batch system (all-in all-out) is practiced.
m) Tools and equipment brought onto the farm and taken into the production area must be visually clean.

3.9 Hygiene Program

a) **A documented cleaning and disinfection program must be in place for all egg production areas, equipment and vehicles associated with the birds and eggs specifying the tasks, frequencies, and materials to be used (Category 1).**
b) There must be supervision by management to ensure the requirements as set out in the Hygiene Program have been carried out effectively and a checklist must be completed, signed off and verified.
c) **Where an infectious disease or food safety issue has arisen, there must be evidence that the hygiene program has been reviewed and corrective action taken as required. (Category 1).**

3.10 Flock Welfare

a) **The Egg Producer must have a procedure that specifies how the health and welfare of the stock is assured and the checks required must be recorded in a checklist which must meet the requirements of Appendix 12: Shed Management Checklist at a minimum (Category 1).**
b) All feeding and watering systems must be checked for efficient operation at least twice each day to ensure all birds have access to feed and water.

Handling and transportation

c) The catching and transportation of hens (including pullets, spent hens) must be conducted as per Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines - Land Transport of Livestock (2008).
d) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence with regard to the welfare of the flock.
e) A record of all collection of live birds at end of cycle must be maintained and the information in the records must include the following at a minimum:
    i) Date,
    ii) Number of spent hens collected
    iii) Transport Company name, contact details and vehicle registration
    iv) Destination
f) Evidence that the transporter is aware of the conditions and requirements for the Land Transport of Poultry[4] and the birds will not be more than 24 hours in transit. The Egg Producer must ensure that good hygiene practices are in place for transport crates and modules used for transporting poultry are not used for any other purpose.
g) The stock-person must be able to demonstrate competence in culling of sick or injured birds.

3.11 Feed

a) **Only feed sourced from Stock Feed Manufacturers Council of Australia (SFMCA), FeedSafe compliant manufacturers or produced on the farm in compliance with the SFMCA[5] guidelines for home mixers or other approved/recognised systems that are accredited by an independent third party are acceptable (Category 1).**
b) The Egg Producer must retain all feed/feed ingredient delivery records. Properly labelled finished feed samples from each delivery must also be retained for 3 months after the supply has been used. The label must show batch number, ration type, date of delivery and the supplier.

4. Land Transport of Livestock, Edition One, Dec. 2008, B10 Specific requirements for the land transport of poultry.
5. Stock feed Manufacturers Council of Australia (SFMCA), reference appendix 1.

c) In the event that a feed/feed ingredient delivery is unsuitable, the rejection of this delivery and the appropriate corrective actions taken must be recorded.
d) Vehicles used for carrying poultry manure must not be used for carrying prepared feed / feed ingredients without being effectively cleaned and sanitised.
e) There must be a cleaning and maintenance program for storage silos and feed delivery systems and records maintained.
f) Feed spills must be cleaned up as soon as practicable to prevent the attraction of birds and rodents to the production area.

3.12 Water

a) Only water that is safe for poultry consumption must be used on the farm.
b) **A sample of the water to be used on the farm (or should that source change) must be tested[6] at least annually for *E. coli*. The test results demonstrating that the organism was absent in 100ml, must be retained. (Category 1).**
c) **If there is a failure (i.e. detection of the organism), corrective measures must be taken and the supply treated within 24 hours and re-tested within 7 days. In the event that there are two consecutive failures, the Grading Floor must be notified and the water supply and treatment process must be reviewed (Category 1).**
d) Water from any other source that does not meet the Standard (Poultry water Guidelines) must be prevented from use in the production sheds unless treated (e.g. by chlorination) and verified by laboratory tests as safe to use.
e) **The use of unsanitised surface water for the birds is prohibited (Critical).**
f) Where chlorinated water is used, the treatment must achieve a level of 1.0–2.0 parts per million (ppm) free available chlorine (FAC) at the point of use.
g) When chlorinating water, there must be a minimum of 2 hours contact time between chlorine and the water prior to use in the sheds.
h) Testing for free available chlorine (or equivalent e.g. ORP[7]) must be conducted and recorded weekly. (As per the HACCP Plan in Appendix 11)
i) **Weekly monitoring and maintenance of water sanitation systems must be carried out and recorded (Category 1).**
j) **The storage tanks must be covered at all times to ensure a fresh supply of clean water and such that contamination is minimised (Category 1).**
k) A minimum of 48 hour calculated water requirements must be available in storage or auxiliary supply in case of breaks, repairs or failure of pumping equipment.
l) Birds must have access to water at all times
m) **Water availability and consumption must be monitored (minimum twice daily in-shed inspection) and recorded as evidence of best animal welfare management practice (Category 1).**
n) **The production farm must ensure that there is a system to raise an immediate alert should the primary water supply (e.g. main storage tank or bore pump) fail. (Category 1).**

6. The samples must be sourced from entry points to the sheds and represent all water usage e.g. drinking, fogging, and analysed by a NATA accredited laboratory using the following or equivalent: ISO method 9305-1 *E.coli* absence in 100ml.
7. Oxide Reducing Potential: a measure of the sterilising capability of chemical sterilising agents

o) Drinkers must be provided in numbers as per the waterer space, Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals- Domestic Poultry 4th Edition.[2]

Note: Refer to the National Farm Biosecurity Manual and the National Water Biosecurity Manual listed in Appendix 1: Reference Information

3.13 Egg Collection, Storage, Delivery, Direct Sale or Supply

a) A regular egg collection program must be in place and documented at a frequency determined according to the HACCP program to ensure the production of a safe food product.
b) **Eggs must not be washed within the egg laying area (Critical).**
c) Egg belts and nest pads must be constructed so that they can be readily cleaned, serviced and maintained.
d) A documented cleaning program must be in place for all equipment used for egg collection (automatic and manual) to be cleaned in a manner that minimises contamination of eggs.
e) Nest pads in automatic nest box systems and materials in manual nest box systems must be maintained in a clean state to minimise contamination of eggs.
f) Unacceptable[3] eggs must be segregated, identified and controlled pending disposal (Category 1).

Storage

g) Eggs must be stored in a temperature controlled cool room at a target 15°C and a maximum 18°C in a manner that minimises condensation and contamination and within 24 hours of collection,
h) A daily temperature monitoring program must be in place and maintained. Temperature measuring equipment is to be appropriately located and calibrated.
i) The egg cool room must be separated from the egg laying area.
j) The cool room must be managed in a manner so that eggs are protected, identified and segregated at all times.
k) The eggs must be clearly identified in the cool room to permit full traceability at dispatch (Category1).

Delivery

l) Each shipment must be clearly identified with the following information and a record maintained (all Category 1):
  i) ESA Site Code (ID number)
  ii) Shipment date
  iii) Date of lay or collection
  iv) Quantity and/or quality of eggs

3. The definition of **unacceptable egg** makes it clear that eggs are unacceptable if they have cracks in their shells or which are dirty. FSANZ Food Standard 4.2.5.

Direct Sale or Supply:

m) Eggs identified as cracked and /or dirty must not be sold / supplied directly for human consumption (i.e. these eggs must be clean with no visible cracks, faeces, soil or other foreign matter) (Category1).

3.14 Storage and Handling of Chemical Substances

a) Chemical inventory, storage and use must be documented and handled according to manufacturers instructions.
b) The use for which each chemical is intended must be clearly identified and displayed (e.g. on a notice board in the store) and a Material Safety Data Sheet must be available for each chemical on site.
c) Where dangerous goods are stored on site, storage must meet the conditions specified in the current licence/permit.

3.15 Environmental Protection

a) **Effective facilities for collecting, storing and disposal of litter / manure must be in place to prevent pollution and the spread of disease (Category 1).**
b) A manure management program must be in place that meets the applicable requirements of the responsible authorities or the conditions of the permit if they apply or otherwise comply with the provisions set out in Appendix 5: Poultry Manure Management.
c) A record of manure disposal must be maintained.

3.16 Laying Sheds, Buildings and Equipment: General

a) Temperature recording devices must be positioned within the bird area and temperatures recorded at least daily.
b) Data on shed parameters must be recorded in a manner equivalent to Appendix 13.
c) Buildings and equipment must be designed so as to:
    i) Maintain good conditions of hygiene, temperature and air quality,
    ii) Maintain equipment in good condition and to the required specification.
d) Buildings must be constructed and maintained in a manner so as to minimise any risk of fire or attraction for pests.
e) Ancillary rooms (for example, cool rooms and grading rooms, food stores, egg stores, changing rooms, break rooms, toilets and other stores) must be self-contained, of sound structure and with appropriately sealed doors.
f) Feeding and watering equipment (see the specification information in the following sections) must be designed, constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a manner that:

i) Birds must have easy access to feed and water so as to minimise aggressive competitive behaviour.
ii) Spillage of feed and water is minimised.
iii) Injury to the birds is avoided.

g) Mechanically ventilated sheds must :
   i) have a back-up power supply and be equipped with an effective, detectable alarm that provides an immediate warning of power failure or temperature fluctuations outside defined limits.
   ii) Include a battery back-up system that ensures that the alarm operates independently of the power supplies that control shed ventilation, heating, cooling and temperature sensors.

h) Flooring must be designed, fitted and maintained so as to avoid distress or injury to the birds (see the specification information in the following sections).

i) There must be a program of daily inspection of egg handling facilities including egg belts, collection tables and egg conveyors, for cleanliness and proper operating.

Caged Production System

3.17 Caged Sheds Construction

a) Floors, other surfaces, fittings and equipment must be designed, constructed and maintained so as to minimise the risk of injury and disease, and to adequately support the birds.

b) Multi-deck cages must be arranged so that birds in the lower tiers are protected from excreta from above and so that all birds are fully visible for regular inspection and individual birds can be easily removed from cages as required.

c) The design and size of cage openings must be such that birds can be placed in them and removed from them without causing injury or unnecessary suffering.

d) Cages must have doors the full height and width of the cage. (Category 1)

e) <u>At least 550cm² of cage area[4], measured in a horizontal plane, which may be used without restriction, must be provided for each laying hen; or cages must meet legislation requirements. (Critical)</u>

f) Cages must be at least 40 cm high over 65% of the cage area and not less than 35 cm at any point or meet legislation requirements.(Category 1)

g) The floors of the cages must be constructed so as to support adequately each of the forward pointing toe of each foot. Floor slope must not exceed 8 degrees. (Category 1).

h) A feed trough, which may be used without restriction, must be provided. Its length must provide at least 10 cm feeding space per bird in the cage. (Category 1)

4. Model Code of Practice Domestic Poultry, 4th Edition A 1.4, Referenced Appendix 1.

i) **Not less than 10 cm water trough per bird or no fewer than two independent nipple or cup drinkers must be provided within reach of each cage. The splash cup under a nipple drinker is not an independent drinking point. (Category 1)**

3.18 Light

a) There must be a documented lighting program in place and birds must be exposed to light for a minimum of 8 hours per day.
b) Hens must be provided with a minimum of 6 hours of darkness per night.
c) In a multi-level system of housing, light must be available at all levels to permit observation of the birds as required.
d) During inspection of poultry the light intensity on the birds must be adequate to allow birds to be thoroughly inspected and any problems identified. During inspection of poultry the light intensity may need to be supplemented (e.g. by use of a torch or by turning up the overall lighting in the shed).

Free Range Production System

3.19 The Land

a) **Outdoor stocking density can be up to but must not exceed 2 birds per m². (Critical)**

Note: It is strongly recommended that regular rotation of birds onto fresh range areas occurs and that environmental management is practiced.

b) **Eggs from flocks farmed in Free range systems must not be labelled as Free range until such time that the flock is provided with daily access onto the range area (Category 1).**
c) Free-range areas must be maintained and controlled to minimise the presence of wild waterfowl and other bird species on the range.
d) A perimeter fence must be erected on the land unless there is an existing secure boundary.
e) **The birds must have unrestricted access to an outdoor range for a minimum of 8 hours per day during summer daylight hours and a minimum of 6 hours per day during winter daylight hours, except under adverse weather conditions or outbreaks of serious diseases (Category 1).**
f) Shelter/shade from inclement weather must be provided on the range.
g) The ground to which the birds have access must be well drained and provide access to vegetative cover.
h) The surrounds of the shed or the ground surrounding the pop-holes must be maintained to minimise muddy conditions (e.g. laid in gravel, concrete, or alternative surfaces).

i) **No other livestock (mammals[5] or avian species) must be allowed onto the range as a safeguard against avian diseases (Category 1).**
j) Rubbish, litter material, farm machinery or manure must not be allowed to accumulate on the range area.
k) **Domestic septic tank soak ways sited on the range area must be fenced and not accessible to poultry (Category 1).**

3.20 Free Range Shed Construction

a) Floors, other surfaces, fittings and equipment must be designed, constructed and maintained so as to minimise the risk of injury and disease, and to adequately support the birds.

3.21 The Manure Pit / Washings Collection

a) Where present on free range production sites:
    i) Manure deposits outside the pop-hole openings must be removed after each batch.
    ii) Ramps to free range area must be scraped and cleaned after each batch.
b) The droppings pit, where applicable, must be leak proof. Where the pit is totally below floor level, the capacity of the pit must adequately accommodate the manure produced by a colony/flock of birds, unless belts or scrapers are incorporated into the system.

3.22 Stocking Density

a) Maximum permissible stocking density within the shed is 30 kg live weight per m^2 of usable space (Category 1).

3.23 Feeding Space

a) Feeding facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide ready access for all birds and to minimise any droppings contaminating feed or water.
b) There must be no more than 100 birds per pan feeder, or at least 2 cm feed trough (measurable both sides) per bird for flat chain feeders.
c) Electric pulse wires that deter birds from perching over feed or water containers or to prevent egg pecking must be live only for necessary training periods.
d) Where hutch / small mobile housing exist and feed is provided outside in the range, it must be maintained in a safe and secure environment, protected from wild water fowl and other contamination.

5 Where specialised dogs and Alpaca's are used to protect the flock and the risk associated with their use is identified, this is acceptable.

3.24 Drinking Space

a) Drinking facilities must be distributed in such a way as to provide ready access for all birds.
b) Where nipple drinkers are used, there must be at least one nipple drinker per 20 birds.
c) The allocation of drinkers must not be less than 1 bell drinker per 120 birds.
d) Where hutch/ small mobile housing exists and water is provided outside in the range, it must be maintained in a safe and secure environment, protected from wild water fowl and contamination.

3.25 Perching where present or installed

a) Perches must have no sharp edges.
b) The horizontal distance between perches must be at least 30 cm and the horizontal distance between the perch and the wall must be at least 20 cm.
c) Overhead perches must be positioned to minimise fouling of any birds, feeders or watering devices below.

3.26 Nest Boxes

a) Individual nest boxes must provide not less than 1 box per 7 birds. Automatic/communal systems must provide not less than $1m^2$ of nesting area per 120 birds.
b) Nest boxes and roosting areas must be easily accessible and must not be so high above the floor levels that birds may be injured when ascending or descending.
c) Nesting systems must be provided with a floor substrate, which encourages nesting behaviour.
d) Nest litter, where used, must be kept clean, dry, friable and moisture absorbent.
e) Nest liners, where used, must be kept clean and dry.
f) All nest systems must be inspected daily to ensure that surfaces are free of gross contamination.

3.27 Litter (where provided)

a) Litter must be free of gross contamination from livestock, wild birds or rodents upon arrival.
b) Litter must be absorbent and maintained in a dry and friable condition.
c) Litter must be suitable to use as a soil conditioner, compost or fertiliser to allow environmentally responsible disposal.
d) The source of the litter must be identified. (Note: if wood is used, only untreated wood by-products are permitted and no wood by-product where formaldehyde or resin has been used in the manufacture of the wood is permitted).