

Poultry inspections

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Poultry is an important part of Scotland's rural economy and food chain, so it's important that we make sure high standards and practices are being followed.

Our inspections programme helps to protect consumers interests, such as food safety and prices. It also helps reduce food fraud and maintain standards of welfare for laying hens.

Some of our checks are to comply with Scottish rules and some are for European rules.

We carry out inspections on behalf of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate and Food Standards Agency and also work in partnership with local authorities when certain issues arise, such as consumer complaints or labeling details.

What we will look for

Poultry inspections are generally unannounced and our inspectors will make sure eggs are **Class A** standard.

Class A is the standard retailers require for human consumption.

We can inspect any part of your business that is involved in the production chain. This includes hatcheries, rearing units, production sites, packing centres and wholesale and distribution centres.

During an inspection we may take egg samples to test for the residue of medicines, check egg quality, labelling and records, and conduct ultra violet and weight sampling tests.

Specifically, our inspector will check:

- poultry welfare
- egg marketing
- free range meat marketing
- for salmonella testing
- hygiene standards

Inspection outcomes

If you fail any part of your inspection, we will give you clear guidance as to why and a timeframe to make changes.

However, if you fail to make the necessary changes, it could result in further action, which could range from increased inspections, to financial penalties or official warnings.

In some cases, eggs may be restricted or stopped from being marketed.

If you do fail part or all of your inspection, we will refer to this as a breach and any further action will be assessed depending on how serious the breach is.

If you pass your inspection with no breaches we will classify you as a lower risk and, depending on the size of your business, we will reduce the frequency you are inspected.

Further information

You can sign up to receive alerts on exotic and notifiable animal diseases through the APHA alerts service.

[APHA alerts](#)

For support and questions, please get in touch with the Scottish Government's poultry unit.

Scottish Government

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[GB poultry register](#)

The guidance pages and documents below explain the regulations and rules that underpin our poultry inspections.

[Egg marketing explanatory guidance \(EMR1\)](#)

[Egg production guidance – cage, barn, free range and organic \(EMR14\)](#)

[European Commission guidance – production and marketing of hatching eggs and chicks \(EMR9\)](#)

[The Registration of Establishments Keeping Laying Hens \(Scotland\) Regulations 2003](#)

Information from the European Union

[Commission Directive 2002/4/EC](#)

[Council Regulation EC/5/2001](#)

You can also download application forms to register different aspects of your business with us. Please make sure you have read the above guidance before completing any application.

[Application to register as a packing centre \(EMR 2\)](#)

[Application to register as an egg production facility \(EMR 3\)](#)

[Application to register hatching, breeding or multiplying facility \(EMR 10\)](#)

For guidance or an application form to register a poultry production facility, please contact 0300 244 9972.

Technical notes

[Codes of practice for the welfare of laying hens](#)

[TN662: Laying Hens: Supplement to the Codes of Practice](#)

[TN598: Perch Designs For Extensive Systems](#)

[TN670: Culling small numbers of poultry on farm](#)

[Perch Design 2014](#)

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